

# Guidelines for the Civil Society Fund – DRAFT

The Civil Society Fund is an independent support facility funded by the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs and managed by CISU – Civil Society in Development. The guidelines for the Civil Society Fund are made by CISU in dialogue with CISU’s members and users and approved by the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

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## 1. Introduction

### 1.1. Purpose

The **purpose** of the Civil Society Fund is to *support the strengthening of civil societies to improve lives of people living in poverty<sup>1</sup> in the Global South*.

The Civil Society Fund supports partnerships between civil society actors and movements<sup>2</sup> in the Global South<sup>3</sup> and Denmark. Global **partnerships are valuable** as they bring together actors with different capacities, perspectives, and allies that can collaborate and complement each other's work for reaching common goals. Good partnerships are built on mutual trust and respect.

The Civil Society Fund does not prioritise specific development issues over others but are guided by a human rights-based approach.

The Global South partners are closest to the problems and best situated to develop solutions. Therefore, the development and implementation of interventions funded by the Civil Society Fund must be **led by the Global South partners**, who must in turn be anchored in and accountable towards the communities wherein they work.<sup>4</sup>

**The Danish partners** typically contribute with experience, perspectives, and network, as well as access to decision makers and funds from institutional donors and private foundations in Denmark and Europe. Also, the Danish partners are strong allies and advocates for marginalised people in the Global South and can play an active role in cross-border solidarity work.

The partnerships must be meaningful and relevant to all partners involved and most importantly, the work done must be relevant for the communities benefitting hereof. This is ensured by **giving local communities a voice to express needs and power in deciding** the solutions addressing those needs.

Sustainability of the work supported by the Civil Society Fund is furthered **if local communities are the principal change agents in interventions and if the Civil Society Fund is not the only contribution of resources**. Communities and partners can contribute to the work themselves e.g. by hosting meetings in the

#### Role of Civil Society:

The role of civil society is diverse. Civil society is often the framework for people fighting collectively for rights, improved living conditions, and a fair distribution of the resources of society. Civil society is an important counterbalance to the authority of the state and the private interests of the market as civil society holds both the state and the market accountable for their actions and priorities. At the same time, civil society is also a key partner and contributor in relation to the state and market in the pursuit of solutions to challenges in society.

**Eligible countries** for Civil Society Fund projects and programmes: All countries on OECD's DAC list, which can be found on [www.cisu.dk](http://www.cisu.dk).

#### Definition of Locally Led

**Development:** an ongoing development process where local actors have agency in framing, design, delivery (including control over resources), and accountability, with or without the support of international development cooperation.

<sup>1</sup> See the definition of poverty in section 1.1. Principles.

<sup>2</sup> The concept civil society is a generic denomination for those groups, movements, and activities in society that belong neither to the public nor the private sector.

<sup>3</sup> 'Global South' is generally referring to a grouping of countries and people that experience economic marginalisation within the global system and have elements of a shared history of colonisation and exploitation ([Too Southern to be Funded](#))

<sup>4</sup> Definition of local led development is inspired by the DAC paper ([Framing DAC member approaches to enabling locally led development](#)) and the DAC working group meeting on Measuring progress on locally led development from 2 May 2024.

community hall free of charge or supplementing agricultural inputs to a farming project with seeds gathered from local farmers. Thus, own contributions are more than money; it is manhours, voluntary work, venue hosting, food, and other things. All interventions supported by the Civil Society Fund are expected to include own contributions. However, it is only a requirement for larger grants to contribute with financial resources.

**The Civil Society Fund supports a variety of work** by organisations and movements; from short-term projects with a tight focus on a specific task, to longer development processes that require long-term strategies and flexibility to react to opportunities as they appear. The Civil Society Fund recognises that based upon context, priorities, experiences, and position different approaches and strategies can be applied to achieve sustainable change.

## 1.2. Principles

The Civil Society Fund is based on the following principles, which all grants must comply with. The assessment of compliance is based on the application. Additional resources related to the principles are available at [www.cisu.dk](http://www.cisu.dk).

### Human Rights

Fundamental human rights must be respected, protected, and fulfilled. A human rights-based approach focuses on enabling people to demand their rights and holding duty-bearers accountable. The approach focuses on eliminating unequal power relations and unequal distribution of resources. The approach rests on four fundamental principles: Participation, Accountability, Non-discrimination, and Transparency (PANT).

*Applicants must demonstrate how the intervention use a human rights-based approach to work with rights holders and/or duty bearers to promote the situation of the rights holders.*

### Do no harm

It is important to be aware of the effect that any involvement has on others, and as such it is necessary to analyse relations, consequences, and risks in the context in which an intervention takes place. Actors working with people living in poverty and marginalisation must be aware of the position or role they play in each context and acknowledge their own biases. The aim is to minimise any negative impact and increase the positive impact on the situation.

*Applicants must demonstrate extensive knowledge of the context and understanding of how their involvement has consequences for the affected people. Also, applicants must demonstrate readiness to adjust an intervention if the context changes.*

### Poverty orientation

The Civil Society Fund supports work that directly or indirectly secure participation, interests, and rights of people living in poverty. Poverty has several dimensions and is not only about income but also personal security, access to resources such as education and jobs, health and access to land and water, and the possibility to influence decisionmakers. Many people are trapped in one or more forms of poverty in various ways, and various types of poverty often affect each other.

*Applicants must demonstrate knowledge of the target groups and describe the form of poverty they face and how the intervention addresses this.*

## Sustainability

An intervention should not advance social justice at the expense of climate, environment, and nature. And vice versa; interventions that advance climate, environment, and nature may not impair the conditions of the people living in poverty and marginalisation.

*Applicants must justify how the work done is sustainable – socially and environmentally.*

### 1.3. The Development Triangle

The development triangle is a good tool to describe the different elements in a development intervention. The triangle illustrates the elements and the potential synergies between them.

All three elements are central to good development work but the balance between them can vary, depending on the context and the capacities and experiences in the partnership. It is not a requirement to include all elements in an intervention, but it must be explained why some elements are chosen over others to reach the goals.

- **Capacity building** strengthen the capacity of partners, networks, platforms and/or target groups. Capacity can include strategic and organisational capacity, technical and thematical capacity to conduct projects and programmes, as well as networks and alliances with other actors. Capacity building is often a prerequisite for making sustainable change and can form the basis for engaging in advocacy.
- **Strategic deliveries** can be tangible inputs such as goods and services, that strengthen or are necessary to better work with the two other elements of the triangle. Strategic deliveries can be necessary but will never in themselves create lasting and sustainable change.
- **Advocacy** is the planned action to influence formal or informal decision-makers and the public to bring about lasting improvements for poor or marginalised groups. Civil society driven advocacy is based on the capacity of civil society and the knowledge gained from strategic service.

## 2. Who can apply

The Civil Society Fund supports partnerships between civil society actors and movements in the Global South and Denmark. There are different requirements to the partners and there must be a clear division of roles and responsibilities in the implementation of the intervention. This division must be jointly agreed upon and clear to partners as well as the target groups of the intervention.

### 2.1. Requirements for the Danish partner organisation

The Civil Society Fund accepts applications from popular, Danish organisations that meet the minimum requirements for support laid down by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark:

- ✓ The organisation needs to be private, and it must have legal domicile as well as activities in Denmark.
- ✓ The chairperson or most members of its governing body must be Danish citizens or foreigners with their permanent address in Denmark unless the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark grants an exemption.

- ✓ The organisation must have an approved set of statutes.
- ✓ The accounts of the organisation, including the annual accounts, must be subject to auditing.
- ✓ If the organisation applies for up to DKK 500,000, it must have a minimum of 25 paying contributors. If the organisation applies for more than DKK 500,000, it must have a minimum of 50 paying contributors. They may be members, volunteers in the association or other persons providing a financial contribution. The contributions must have been given in the current year or the latest financial year. There are no requirements to the size of the contribution. For umbrella organisations, at least one of its member organisations must satisfy the above requirement.
- ✓ If the organisation has existed for at least one year, it may apply for more than DKK 500,000. If the organisation has existed for less than one year, it may apply for a maximum of DKK 500,000.

### Responsibility

- The applicant organisation's governing body must be able to take on full responsibility for the application and for any subsequent grant.
- If several Danish organisations apply jointly, there must always be one lead organisation which holds the administrative and legal responsibility for the grant and contract with CISU. Only the lead organisation needs to live up to the above requirement.
- If the lead organisation is an umbrella organisation, at least one of its member organisations must fulfil the above requirement.

More information about the governing body's responsibility is available in the Grant Administration Guide available at [www.cisu.dk](http://www.cisu.dk).

### They cannot apply

- The Civil Society Fund is unable to support interventions eligible for support from other funds funded by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark such as the Centre for Church-Based Development (CKU), the Danish Youth Council (DUF), Disabled People's Organisations Denmark (DPOD), the Danish Refugee Council's Diaspora Programme and the Danish Institute for Parties and Democracy (DIPD).
- The Civil Society Fund does not accept applications from organisations that have signed a strategic partnership agreement, fund agreement or similar agreement with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark.
- The Civil Society Fund does not accept applications from foundations engaged in commercial activity, consulting firms, educational establishments or entities set up by law, including the so-called folk high schools (højskoler).

## 2.2. Requirements for the Global South partners

### 2.2.1. The Global South partner(s)

The Global South partner(s) must be based in the country where the activities will be implemented and will be responsible for implementing the local activities. It can be from any country on OECD/DAC's list of ODA recipients (link to the list).

The Global South partner(s) must be capable of taking on the necessary administrative and financial responsibility of the grant as described in the Grant Administration Guide. If a partner is an informal organisation, e.g., a social movement, or is otherwise prevented from being able to receive and administer funds according to CISU's requirements for financial management, another organisation – even one that does not belong to civil society or is based in a DAC country if this can be justified – may act as a link

between the Danish organisation and the Global South partners. This other organisation must be able to administer the funds according to CISU's requirements for financial management. This could be the case, for instance, in countries where civil society organisations in general or certain groups are subject to legislation that restricts their right to organise or their access to international funding or organisations that are forced to work underground.

GLOBAL SOUTH PARTNERS MUST BE	GLOBAL SOUTH PARTNERS CANNOT BE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Global South Partners MUST form part of civil society in the country and locality where activities will be implemented.</li> <li>✓ The partner's management MUST be locally anchored. If the partner has a governing body, the chairperson, <i>and</i> the majority of members of its governing body must be citizens or foreigners with their permanent address in the country concerned. If managed differently, similar anchoring must be shown in the application.</li> <li>✓ If the Global South partners are locally based chapters of international civil society organisations, including those to which the Danish organisation is affiliated, the partners MUST be registered in the country concerned and have its own governing body as described above.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Individuals and families.</li> <li>- The national government or political parties.</li> <li>- Public authorities or bodies.</li> <li>- Private businesses.</li> <li>- On the UN's or EU's list of terrorist organisations, which are continuously updated. The Danish organisation is responsible for checking this.</li> </ul>

### 2.2.2. Other actors as part of an intervention

Interventions may include cooperation with other actors such as *authorities, research institutes and educational establishments, or the private sector*. They may play a part in, for example, activities, assignments, training, capacity building, and advocacy that have specific relevance to and advance the purpose of the Civil Society Fund and of an intervention.

**For instance**, interventions aimed at economic development may include relevant private businesses or social enterprises as actors as long as this does not conflict with the rules on state subsidies. Activities with public institutions may also feature in the intervention if they are included strategically to ensure the rights of target groups. Cooperation with research institutes and educational establishments can support the accumulation of knowledge and documentation for the purpose of supporting interventions and advocacy with evidence-based knowledge.

It is also possible to cooperate with authorities that are duty bearers and who are key to succeed with an intervention and bring about sustainable change. However, the purpose of the intervention must target civil society, and civil society must play a significant role in that cooperation.

### 2.2.3. Several interventions in the partnership

The purpose of the Civil Society Fund is to strengthen civil societies. Strong, independent, and sustainable civil society actors in the Global South are central, and although the Fund supports long-lasting cooperation

between the same partners partnerships must work towards the objective that all partners are able to be self-sustaining.

If an intervention is an extension of previous cooperation it will be assessed based on the following:

- It does not merely repeat a former intervention. A new intervention that is an extension of a former intervention must build on results and experiences and contain new desired changes, a new or adjusted strategy or a new or extended target group.
- Interventions that are an extension of a former intervention build on results and experiences from them. The expectations of learning, reflection, and positive changes are increasing with each extension.

### 3. Types of support

Depending on the experience and capacity of the Danish organisation, partnerships can apply for the following grants.

Type of applicant	Number of grants in <u>one</u> calendar year					Max total in grants per year (DKK)	
	Small projects	Large projects	Small-size programme	Medium-size programme	Large-size programme		
No prior grants from CISU (or donors like CISU)	3	0	0	0	0	450.000	
Have completed two CISU grants above 100.000 and have received less than 500.000 on average in grants from CISU in the last three years	3	3	0	0	0	2.550.000	
Have received more than 500.000 on average in grants in the last 3 years	2	3	2	0	0	5.000.000	
Have received more than 3 mio. on average in grants in the last 4 years	0	0	1	1*	0	5.000.000 (including own contribution)	* A Danish organisation can only hold one active medium-size or large-size programme at a time.
Have received two medium-size programmes (above 3 mio per year) within the past 10 years	0	0	0	0	1*	8.500.000 (including own contribution)	* A Danish organisation can only hold one active medium-size or large-size programme at a time.

#### 3.1. Project support

##### 3.1.1. Purpose

Project support enables the strengthening of organisations and partnerships for the benefit of local communities in the Global South. The project modality can for example support organisations to:

- Build partnerships *and/or*
- Strengthen organisational capacities *and/or*
- Try out new approaches *and/or*
- Expand on impactful approaches *and/or*
- Foster popular engagement.

Projects are defined by a set of goals that can be realized within a specified timeframe. Project goals should be used to guide implementation and showing whether the approach is successful, or changes are required. Projects must contribute to improving the lives of people living in poverty and marginalisation in the



communities wherein the project activities take place, as reflected in the purpose statement of the Civil Society Fund.

**Organisations can apply for small projects up to 150,000 DKK or larger projects up to 700,000 DKK.**

Eligibility requirements and assessment criteria are different depending on the size of the project support applied for. See illustration below.

### 3.1.2. Requirements

PROJECT SUPPORT		
	Up to 150,000 DKK	Up to 700,000 DKK
<b>Eligibility</b>	<p>No requirements of previous project experience.</p> <p>No requirements of previous cooperation in the partnership applying for support.</p> <p>Danish organisations receiving strategic programme support from CISU cannot apply.</p>	<p>The Danish applicant must have completed two projects with a budget of more than 100,000 DKK funded by CISU or a donor with similar reporting requirements to those of CISU.</p> <p>Previous cooperation in the partnership applying for support is required.</p> <p>Danish organisations receiving strategic programme support from CISU above 3 million a year cannot apply.</p>
<b># applications</b>	Maximum 3 applications per Danish organisation per year.	<p>Maximum 3 applications per Danish organisation per year.</p> <p>Danish organisations receiving strategic programme support below 3 million a year can submit 1 application per year.</p>
<b>Application deadlines</b>	Three deadlines per year.	

### 3.1.3. What can be supported

Each organisation can obtain grants across the Project Support and Strategic Programme Support modalities for a maximum total amount of up to DKK 5 million per year. Grants for Funding Diversification and Capacity Analysis are not included in the grant ceiling.

CAN	CANNOT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Activities</b>, including costs for mobilization, coordination, studies, materials, training, travel, security measures, salaries.</li> <li>• <b>Monitoring</b>, including costs for travel, meetings, salaries.</li> <li>• <b>Investments</b>, meaning the purchase of equipment that last beyond the project.</li> <li>• <b>Administration</b>, including costs for financial management, reporting, digital solutions, auditing.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Major constructions or the purchase of buildings.</li> <li>• Activities (e.g. training) only benefitting an individual/a few individuals.</li> <li>• Interventions with the partial or full objective of distributing a party-political or religious message.</li> <li>• Emergency aid or humanitarian interventions.</li> </ul>

### 3.1.4. Assessment criteria

Each applicant is assessed using the below set of criteria. The assessment is also guided by three overall principles: 1) There is no rigid formula<sup>5</sup>, 2) adaptability of requirements, and 3) flexibility when working in fragile contexts.

*There is no rigid formula* means that there is always room for the assessment committee to look at the overall picture in terms of an integrated assessment of applications in view of the purpose of the fund.

*Adaptability of requirements* means that the larger the budget, the stricter the requirements regarding the capacity of the organisations involved and the desired changes of the intervention. There are also higher requirements for organisations that have longer experience and more grants from CISU and/or the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark compared to organisations that have less experience and have received fewer grants.

*Flexibility when working in fragile contexts* means that the assessment of the interventions considers the context and risk analyses and the strategy and allow for greater flexibility in terms of cost types (e.g., for security measures or flexible funds) and balancing of the development triangle (e.g., a higher level of strategic services or less advocacy).

Overall weight	Criteria	Up to 150,000	Up to 700,000	Weighting of sub-criteria	
				Up to 150,000	Up to 700,000
1 Relevance 30%	1. Relevance	1.1 The project contributes to the purpose and principles of the Civil Society Fund.		50%	50%
		1.2 The project is relevant in the context in which it will take place and is based on local needs.		50%	50%
2 + 3 Capacity (= Partnership + Target group) 30%	2. Partnership	2.1 The Global South partner(s) have the relevant experience, capacities, and resources to implement the project and manage the financial and reporting requirements.		25%	15%
		2.2 The Danish partner has the relevant experience, capacities, and resources to support project implementation and manage the financial and reporting requirements.		20%	10%
		2.3 The Global South partner(s) is the primary decision maker in the partnership.		25%	25%
		2.4 The project strengthens the partners and/or the relationship between them.			20%

<sup>5</sup> In Danish: *Skøn under regel*.

	<b>3. Target group</b>	3.1 The target group(s) are well defined and relevant.	30%	15%	
			3.2 The target group(s) have been included in the process of designing the project.	15%	
<b>4 + 5 Approach/input (= Results + Cost level) 40%</b>	<b>4. Expected results</b>	4.1 The results expected from the intervention are clear and there is a clear connection between the activities the expected results of the intervention. The project justifies their use of the elements of the development triangle.	30%	20%	
			4.2 The strategy is coherent and builds on learnings from previous projects or experiences in the partnership and by the partners.	10%	
		4.3 The responsibilities and contributions of partners and other actors are clear and relevant.	20%	15%	
		4.4 The intervention contributes to sustainable improvements for the target group.	25%	15%	
			4.5 The monitoring approach clearly shows the ways of examining and following up on whether the intervention meets the expected results.		15%
	<b>5. Cost level and community contribution</b>	5.1 The cost level of the project and the total budget are well-founded and measure up to the activities and expected results of the project.	25%	20%	
		5.2 The partners and local communities provide relevant non-financial contributions.		5%	

### 3.1.5. Internal competition

Applications will be scored individually but will compete for the amount allocated for each round of applications. If there is applied for more money than available, the applicants with the highest score will receive a grant. In case, more than one applicant shares the same score, the applicant with the smallest budget amount will be granted and so forth. This is to allow for more grants being given.

See section 4.4 for more details on the scoring system used.

## 3.2. Strategic Programme Support

### 3.2.1. Purpose

Locally led development is at the centre of Strategic Programme Support. The funding modality provides strong partnerships with the possibility to engage with their target groups, strengthen civil society, and deliver on their strategy. It allows civil society organisations and movements to implement programmes based upon the strategic plans<sup>6</sup> of the Global South Partner(s), thus, ensuring relevance and decision-making power of local actors.

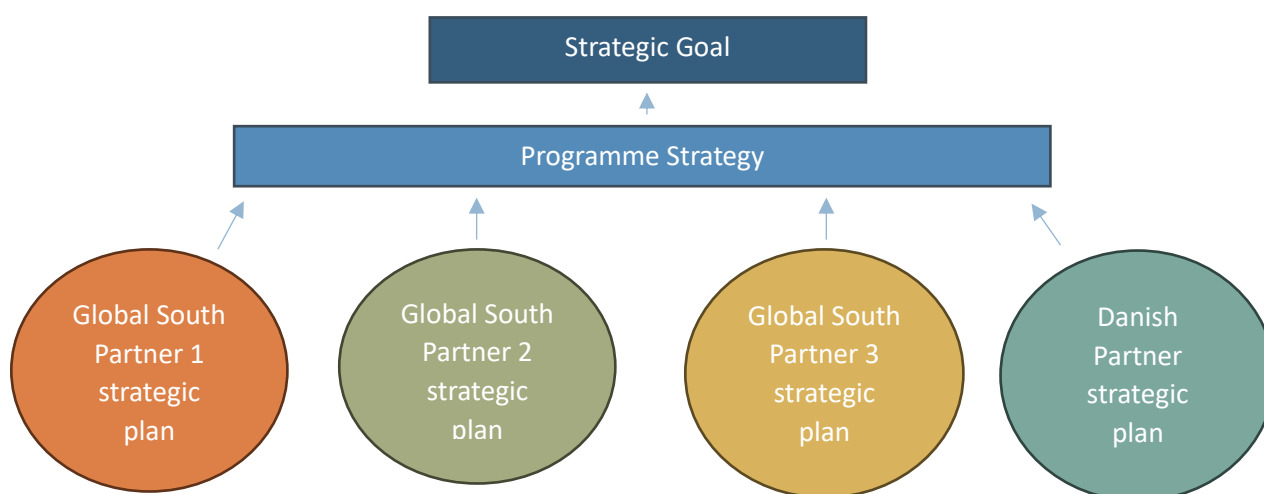
A programme is expected to have a **programme strategy** that brings together the array of expertise and strategies of all partners. The programme strategy should have a focus that can either be **thematic, geographical, or sectoral**. A programme makes it possible to work with a wider range of partners and enables dynamic learning across such a diversity of partners.

Working with locally led development and acknowledging the need for supporting processes of change beyond shorter project cycles, the strategic programme support provides the foundation to work in long-term partnerships. Partnerships can receive support for multiple programme periods<sup>7</sup>.

Engaging in partnerships over multiple years the partners can engage in the work to create sustainable change – both in the local context and in Denmark, and to strengthen and diversify funding to further reinforce the predictability and stability of funding.

Long-term partnerships also provide strong environments for learning and development for the Danish partners and a solid foundation for them to build popular support and engagement in Denmark.

Strategic programme support is divided into three modalities defined by the size of the grant (small, medium, large). Each modality has a set of requirements and assessment criteria.



<sup>6</sup> The strategic plan can take different forms, e.g. vision/mission statement, strategy, organisational plans among other things. Essentially it states the goals of the organization/movement and the work to achieve these.

<sup>7</sup> Strategic Programme Support grants are given to the partnership, meaning that if a partnership is awarded a small-size programme and then later a medium-size programme, this second grant is considered phase two in the partnership.

## 3.2.2. Requirements

Strategic Programme Support			
	Small-size programme	Medium-size programme	Large-size programme
<b>Eligibility<sup>8</sup></b>	Minimum DKK 500,000 on average in grants in the last 3 years.  Previous experience from the context and cooperation with at least one of the partner(s).	Minimum DKK 3 million on average in grants in the last 4 years.  Previous experience from the context and cooperation with at least two of the partners.	Having been granted two Medium-size programmes in the partnership within the past 10 years.  Previous experience from the context and cooperation with at least two of the partners.
<b>No of Global South partners</b>	Minimum one	Minimum 2	
<b>Max grant size (including own contribution requirement)</b>	DKK 4 million in total / max DKK 0.8 – 1.3 million per year	DKK 18 million in total / max DKK 3 – 4.5 million per year  <i>(divided in annual grants)</i>	DKK 34 million in total / max DKK 5.67 – 8.5 million per year  <i>(divided in annual grants)</i>
<b>Duration</b>	3 – 5 years	4 or 6 years	
<b>Possibility for the Danish organisation to apply for additional programme support</b>	Yes, small-size or medium-size programme support, up to grant ceiling	Yes, but only small-size programme support, up to grant ceiling.	No.
<b>Possibility for the Danish organisation to apply for project support</b>	Yes, up to grant ceiling	No	No

<sup>8</sup> There will be a transition period moving from the current Civil Society Fund to the new Civil Society Fund, including a structure for current partnerships and programmes so they do not have to start building their qualifying portfolio from scratch.

### 3.2.3. Own contribution<sup>9</sup>

The Civil Society Fund does not fully finance strategic programmes and, therefore, own contributions are required. For strategic programmes above 5 million DKK, only funds raised in Denmark and co-financing can count as own contribution. Co-financing can be included if the Danish organisation has had a role in securing the funds or plays a role in the grant implementation (*see information box*).

The own contribution requirement increases with each new grant for the same programme, as it is expected that the partnership can secure funding to an increasing extent, thus reducing dependence on the Civil Society Fund.

#### Own contribution can be in the form of:

- ✓ In-kind contributions, e.g. manhours, venue hosting.
- ✓ Funds raised in the Global South or Denmark, e.g. donations, membership fees, grants.
- ✓ Co-financing, e.g. grants from foundations or institutional donors supporting one or more partners in the partnership.

As illustrated below, the required level of own contribution remains static for small-size programmes, but for medium- and large-size programmes the level increases by each programme period.

The own contribution requirement must be completed by the end of a given grant period. If the requirement is not achieved, the maximum grant amount for the next grant given under Strategic Programme Support will be reduced by a value of double the amount 'missing' in own contribution.

Own contribution, small-size programme

Own contribution, medium-size programme

Own contribution, large-size programme

<b>Phase 1</b>	CSF Funding, max 95%			5%
<b>Phase 2</b>	CSF Funding, max 93-95%		10%	5%
<b>Phase 3</b>	CSF Funding, max 88-95%	15%	12%	5%
<b>Phase 4 onwards</b>	CSF Funding, max 85-95%	20%		5%

*Large-size programmes will start at phase 3 or later, as it is a requirement to have completed minimum two medium-size programmes in the partnership. There is no limit to the number of programme periods of a partnership.*

### 3.2.4. What can be supported and Grant Ceiling

#### Grant Ceiling

Each organisation can obtain grants across the Project Support and Strategic Programme Support modalities for a **maximum total amount of up to DKK 5 million per year**. Organisations awarded a large-size programme can exceed the grant ceiling. Grants for Funding Diversification and Capacity Analysis are not included in the grant ceiling.

<sup>9</sup> This means that e.g., a Medium-size programme with a grant total of 18 million in phase 2 is required to provide 7% of the total amount in own contribution, which means that they are required to provide 1.26 million in own contribution and will receive 16.74 million from CISU IF applying for the maximum grant size.

For other funds administered by CISU, it is determined in the guideline for this specific fund, whether grants from the fund is included in the grant ceiling of the Civil Society Fund.

### What can be supported

CAN	CANNOT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Activities</b>, including costs for mobilization, coordination, studies, materials, training, travel, security measures, salaries.</li> <li>• <b>Monitoring</b>, including costs for travel, meetings, salaries.</li> <li>• <b>Investments</b>, meaning the purchase of equipment that last beyond the project.</li> <li>• <b>Administration</b>, including costs for financial management, reporting, digital solutions, auditing.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Major constructions or the purchase of buildings.</li> <li>• Activities (e.g. training) only benefitting an individual/a few individuals.</li> <li>• Interventions with the partial or full objective of distributing a party-political or religious message.</li> <li>• Emergency aid or humanitarian interventions.</li> </ul>

#### 1.1.1. Assessment criteria

Each applicant is assessed using the below set of criteria. The assessment is also guided by three overall principles: 1) There is no rigid formula<sup>10</sup>, 2) adaptability of requirements, and 3) flexibility when working in fragile contexts.

*There is no rigid formula* means that there is always room for the assessment committee to look at the overall picture in terms of an integrated assessment of applications in view of the purpose of the fund.

*Adaptability of requirements* means that the larger the budget, the stricter the requirements regarding the capacity of the organisations involved and the desired changes of the intervention. There are also higher requirements for organisations that have longer experience and more grants from CISU and/or the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark compared to organisations that have less experience and have received fewer grants.

*Flexibility when working in fragile contexts* means that the assessment of the interventions considers the context and risk analyses and the strategy and allow for greater flexibility in terms of cost types (e.g., for security measures or flexible funds) and balancing of the development triangle (e.g., a higher level of strategic services or less advocacy).

Overall weight	Criteria	Small	Medium	Large	Weighting of sub-criteria
1 + 2 Capacity (= Capacity + Partnerships)  20%	1. Capacity	1.1 The Global South partner(s) have the relevant experience, capacities, systems, and resources to implement the programme and manage the financial and reporting requirements.			25%
					25%

<sup>10</sup> In Danish: *Skøn under regel*.

		1.2 The Danish partner have the relevant experience, capacities, systems, and resources to support programme implementation and manage the financial and reporting requirements.	
	<b>2. Locally led and equitable partnerships</b>	2.1 The Global South partner(s) frames the challenges to be addressed based on their knowledge of and anchoring in local communities.	15%
		2.2 The Global South partner(s) is the primary decision maker in the partnership.	15%
		2.3 Each partner takes on the role they are best suited for in the programme.	10%
		2.4 Each partner contributes to and gain from participating in the programme.	10%
<b>3 Relevance</b> 20%	<b>3. Relevance</b>	3.1 The programme addresses locally identified needs, concerns, and expertise.	50%
		3.2 The programme contributes to the purpose and principles of the Civil Society Fund.	50%
<b>4 Approach and learning</b> (= Strategy + Target group + MEL + Risks) 35%	<b>4. Strategy</b>	4.1 The programme strategy, including methods and approaches, builds on the strengths of each partner, and ensures a collective direction towards shared goals.	10%
		4.2 The programme justifies their use of the elements of the development triangle and the strategy is based on learning from previous cooperation and the work of the individual partners.	10%
		4.3 The programme strategy is based on the Global South partner(s) strategic plans.	15%
		4.4 The programme strategy contributes to structural changes at the relevant societal level.	10%
	<b>5. Target group</b>	5.1 The target group(s) are well defined and relevant.	10%
		5.2 The target group(s) have been included in the process of designing the programme	10%
	<b>6. Monitoring, evaluation, and learning</b>	6.1 The learning goals are relevant in relation to the programme strategy.	15%
6.2 The framework for monitoring, evaluation, and learning (MEL) is suitable for documenting the expected changes of the programme.		10%	
<b>7. Managing risks</b>	7.1 The programme considers likely risks in the contexts.	5%	
		5%	



		7.2 The framework for managing risks provide the Global South partners with the mandate to respond to changes in the context.		
8 + 9 Financial inputs and sustainability  (= Financial and programme sustainability + Cost level)  20%	8. Financial and programme sustainability	8.1 Funding diversification is pursued through planned applications to several relevant donors and plans for or experience with raising funds from other sources.	8.1 The funding diversification plan is relevant, realistic, and based on previous experience.	20%
		8.2 The exit strategy(ies) provide a realistic plan for partners to sustain their work beyond funding from the Civil Society Fund.		20%
20%	9. Cost level	9.1 The cost level in relation to the programme strategy and size of the target group is reasonable.		30%
		9.2 The budget is clear and transparent and reflects a fair and relevant budget allocation for each partner based on their respective roles and responsibilities.		30%
10. Engagement in Denmark  5%	10. Popular engagement in Denmark	10.1 The approaches and activities to foster information and popular engagement in Denmark reaches diverse audiences and strengthen the understanding of and interest in global development challenges.		100%

### 1.1.2. Application process

The application process differs depending on the size of Strategic Programme support applied for, as described in the following section.

#### Small-size programmes

There are two deadlines for applying for small-size programmes each year - one in March and one in September. It is a one-step process, where applicants apply before the deadline (read more on how to apply under section 4). Applicants must use fixed formats for the narrative application, budget, and relevant appendices, which can be downloaded on [www.cisu.dk](http://www.cisu.dk).

**Be aware** that the Danish applicant can only submit two applications per calendar year – either two in one round or one in each of the two rounds. A re-submission also counts as an application.

#### Medium-size and large-size programmes

There is an application round every second year for medium- and large-size programmes. The application process is divided in to three steps.

**Be aware** that the Danish applicant can only submit one application per round for medium-size and large-size programmes. **Further, Danish organisations with a large-size programme grant can only have one active programme grant at a time. Danish organisations with an open medium-size programme grant can only apply for small-size programme grants.**

Steps	Deadlines
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Expression of Interest (Eoi)	Before 1 January
Relevance and Capacity Assessment	February – April
Invitation to apply	May
Application submittal	Start October
Decision of the assessment committee	End November
Final decision by Ministry of Foreign Affairs	Start-mid December

### 1. Step: Expression of Interest and Eligibility Check

If an applicant is interested in applying for a medium-or large size programme, the applicant must submit a short Expression of Interest (Eoi) that describes the partnership and the budget size of the desired grant. CISU will check whether the applicant and the partnership fulfil the eligibility requirements. The check determines whether the applicant will proceed to the second step of the application process.

### 2. Step: Relevance and Capacity Assessment

The assessment of relevance and capacity will be based on the following elements:

- 1) Track Record Documents on all partners.
- 2) External capacity analysis of the Global South Partners based on Terms of Reference developed by CISU in dialogue with the partners.
- 3) Capacity analysis/mapping of the Danish Partner, conducted by CISU staff.
- 4) Short Concept Note describing the programme strategy.

The assessment committee will assess the relevance of a programme and whether the partners have the capacities to implement the programme with the use of criteria 1-4 (see sub criteria above):

1. Capacity
2. Locally led and equitable partnerships
3. Relevance
4. Strategy

The assessment will result in a conclusion being either that the program is *relevant or not relevant*. Only relevant programs will be invited to submit an application.

### 3. Step: Application submittal

Applicants will receive an invitation to apply by 1 May and will hand in their application by October 1. The application formats are available at [www.cisu.dk](http://www.cisu.dk).

All applications for medium-or large-size programmes need to be finally approved by the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

**Be aware:** Organisations that have been awarded a programme and have unfinished projects under the Civil Society Fund must terminate the project grants and incorporate the corresponding activities into the programme as per the programme commencement date.

### 1.1.3. Internal competition

The applicants will be scored individually but will compete for a certain amount allocated for each round of applications. If there are applied for more money than available, the applicants with the highest score will receive a grant. In case, more than one applicant shares the same score, the applicant with the smallest budget amount will be granted and so forth. This is to allow for more grants being given.

See section 4.4 for more details on the scoring system used.

### 1.1.4. Addressing funding gaps

For long-term partnerships, a rejected application can result in significant insecurity for all partners involved and challenges to the continuation of the long-term strategic work of the partnership.

Whereas partnerships with a small-size programme can re-apply within a timeframe of 6 months, medium- and large-size programmes can only re-apply every second year.

To address this potential funding gap, partnerships with medium- and large-size programmes **will apply for a continuation of their programme two years prior** to the end date of the programme. In the case of rejection due to competition (e.i., the program is assessed to be relevant, and the application could have been funded if more money was available), the partnership is given two options:

1) the existing programme can be extended with one year (no additional funds), thus stretching the grant until the end of the next application process, *or*

2) the partnership is allowed to apply for small-size programmes in the last year of the programme in combination with project support. If awarded one or more small-size programmes, the partnership is also allowed to apply for a medium- or large-size programme at the time of the next application process. If a medium- or large-size programme is awarded, the small-size programme(s) will be absorbed into the larger programme.

Year	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Phase 1	Programme start									
Phase 2			Application process for phase 2	Approved	Start phase 2					
				Not approved	New application process		Start phase 2 (if approved in year 5)			

*This above scenario is for programmes lasting 4 years. If 6 years programmes, each application process will lie two years later.*

## 1.2. Funding diversification

### 1.2.1. Purpose

The purpose is to support users of the Civil Society Fund to diversify their fund base with two types of support:

1. **Co-funding** can help partnerships obtain funding from other donors that require and/or favour applications with a co-financing element.

2. **Support for applications processes** aid partnership with developing applications to new donors such as private companies, foundations, or institutional donors.

For both types of support, it is not possible to use the grants to apply for funding financed by the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

#### 1.2.2. What can and cannot be supported

Co-funding	Support for application process
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Co-financing can cover up to 35% of the total budget applied for to the main donor.</li> <li>Up to DKK 2 million per grant.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Relevant expenses of the application process of each partner, e.g., salaries, consultant fees, workshops, and studies.</li> <li>Up to DKK 50,000 per grant.</li> </ul>

#### 1.2.3. Requirements

	Co-funding	Support for application process
<b>Eligibility</b>	<p>The partners applying must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Live up to general requirements as described in section 2.</li> <li>Have previously managed at least one grant of more than DKK 200.000 from one of CISU's funds or a donor with similar reporting requirements.</li> <li>Justify that there is chance of receiving the grant from the main donor by supplementing with Co-Funding from the Civil Society Fund.</li> <li>Either be lead applicant or co-applicant of the application to the main donor.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The partners must live up to the general requirements as described in section 2.</li> <li>The total budget of the application to the non-CISU donor must be at least DKK 200,000.</li> </ul>
<b># of applications</b>	1 application per year	2 applications per year

#### 1.2.4. Assessment criteria

Criteria	Co-funding	Support for the application process
<b>Relevance</b>	The application to the main donor generally contributes to the Civil Society Fund's purpose and principles.	The application developed will generally contribute to the Civil Society Fund's purpose and principles.
<b>Need</b>		It is clear how the application process will be strengthened from the support.
<b>Chances of success</b>	The probability of the application to the main donor being approved for support is sufficiently justified.	The probability of the application to be developed being approved for support is sufficiently justified.

<b>Partnership</b>	All partners will be included in the application process.
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### 1.2.5. Application process

#### **Co-funding**

Applications can be submitted at any time of the year, but not after the application has been submitted to the primary donor. If the primary donor's application process contains a first stage of submitting a concept note, an application based on this concept note and a budget summary may be submitted.

Applications are processed as fast as possible and normally within four weeks. In case of a comprehensive application to the primary donor, the processing time can be extended for up to six weeks.

Applications for co-funding assessed worthy of support are awarded a grant commitment in advance, whereas the contract with CISU cannot be issued and the grant cannot be disbursed before the primary donor has given its final approval.

#### **Support for application process**

Applications for can be submitted at any time of the year. Applications are processed as fast as possible and normally within four weeks.

For both types of support, fixed application formats must be used, which can be downloaded at [www.cisu.dk](http://www.cisu.dk). The applications must be submitted via CISUs online grant management system *Vores CISU*, as described in section 4.2.

## 1.3. Capacity analysis

### 1.3.1. Purpose

A capacity analysis targets Danish organisations that wants to get an external review of the organisation's professional, organisational, and administrative capacity and its partnerships. A capacity analysis will contribute to valuable learning in terms of strategy, management, and capacity development.

The focus of a capacity analysis is one or several specific areas on which the organisation wishes to shed light to strengthen and further develop the organisation, such as:

- The Danish organisation's partnerships, including the number and nature of existing and planned partners or approaches to entering into new cooperation.
- The Danish organisation's strategic and thematic work with Global South partners.
- The Danish organisation's popular roots, internal decision-making processes, and work with information on global issues in Denmark.
- Other needs that can support the further development of the organisation.

### 1.3.2. Application process

A capacity analysis can be initiated by three different actors, but it is always the Danish organisation who submit the application. The different actors are:

- 1) *The Danish organisation* can apply for a capacity assessment as part of a long-term strategy development or process of change.
- 2) *CISU's Assessment Committee* can recommend or make it a precondition that an organisation carry out a capacity analysis. That could be if the committee finds it necessary to obtain an assessment of the organisation's capacity across the organisation's interventions.
- 3) *CISU's secretariat* may, in connection with its advisory services, in response to a report, or because of a monitoring visit recommend a capacity analysis, which will then form part of the organisation's track record and future applications from the organisation concerned. If CISU recommends or requires a capacity analysis, the specific recommendations/requirements must be listed in the application.

CISU receives applications on an ongoing basis and processes them as fast as possible, normally within four weeks.

### 1.3.3. Conducting a capacity analysis

If an organisation is awarded a capacity analysis grant, CISU will make a contract with the organisation as well as with the external consultant, who will conduct the analysis. One of CISU's advisers and possibly a member of the Assessment Committee (if they have recommended the Capacity Assessment or have good advice) will cooperate with the grantee to draw up the Terms of Reference (ToR) that describe the focus and scope of the task. The ToR must be approved by CISU.

CISU pays all costs for the consultant and activities. An organisation in the process of a capacity analysis can still submit applications to the Civil Society Fund.

The consultant will prepare a draft report to be discussed with the organisation and one of CISU's advisers. Hereafter, the consultant writes the final report that must subsequently be approved by the an assessment consultant, one of CISU's advisers and CISU's management.

To follow up, the organisation must write a reply to the recommendations of the capacity analysis (management response), which must be approved by CISU. It is then the responsibility and duty of the organisation's board of directors to follow up on the capacity analysis. It is recommended that the organisation use the learning and the recommendations of the capacity analysis in future applications to the Civil Society Fund.

### 1.3.4. Assessment criteria

The application for a capacity analysis is assessed based on two criteria:

1. **Civil society relevance.** The organisation's work generally contribute to the Civil Society Fund's purpose and principles.
2. **Focus:** The proposed specific areas to be analysed are based on a thorough analysis of needs, wishes, and opportunities for the organisation, its partnerships, and/or interventions.

## 2. Application and assessment

### 2.1. Deadlines

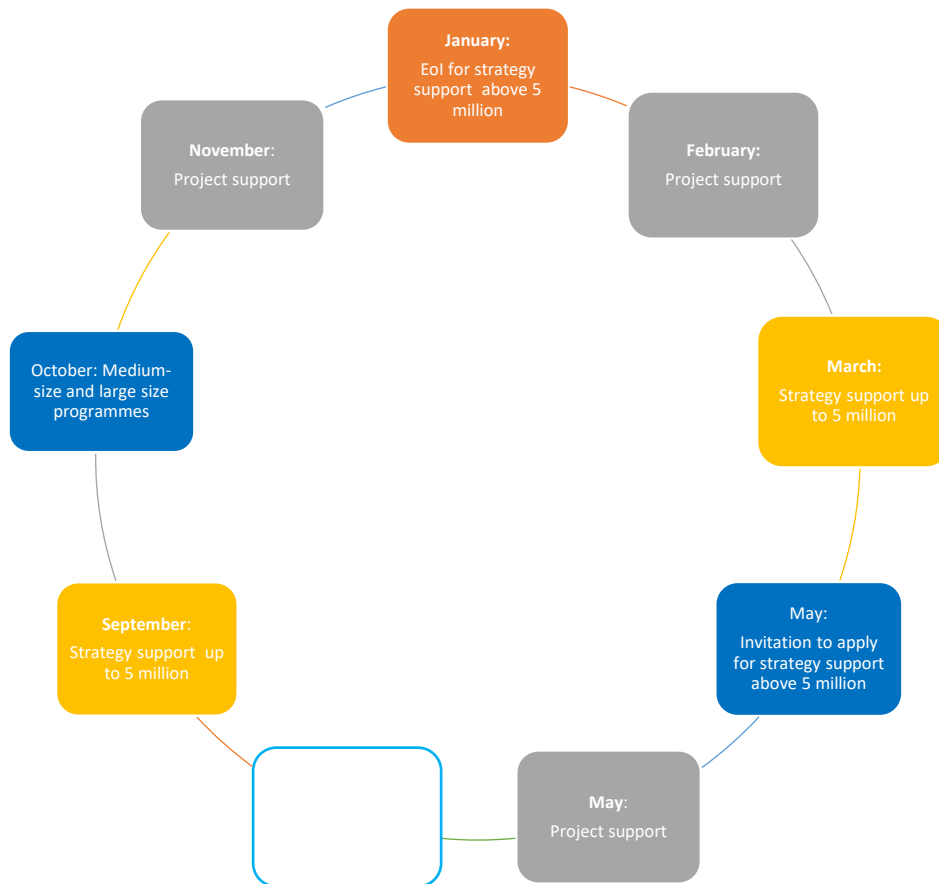
There are application deadlines for the Project and Strategic Programme support modalities. For project support, there are three deadlines a year to allow for more frequent and flexible opportunities to access funding.

There are no deadlines for funding diversification and capacity analysis, and these modalities can be applied for any time of the year until the budget set aside for these support modalities has been spent.

Modality	# of deadlines per year
Project support	3
Strategic programme support, small-size	2
Strategic programme support, medium- and large-size	1 every second year

The illustration below shows how the deadlines are spread across a year. All deadlines are the first Wednesday in the given month at 12:00 (noon) Danish time.

The application processes for strategic programme support are described under section 3.2.6. Be aware that there is only an application round for medium- and large-size strategic programme support every second year. The reason for this is to get enough applications in a round to ensure a basis for competition.



## 2.2. How to apply

All applications are submitted via the online grant management system 'Vores CISU' (*Our CISU*) before the given deadline. The system will be open for applications two weeks prior to a deadline.

For each modality, there are formats for the application and the budget, as well as any required annexes. See [www.cisu.dk/en/funding/funding-materials/](http://www.cisu.dk/en/funding/funding-materials/)

## 2.3. Screening and assessment

CISU will initially screen applications to ensure that they live up to all formal requirements. The lists used for screening is available at [www.cisu.dk](http://www.cisu.dk). If an application does not meet all formal requirements, it will be administratively rejected.

When an application fulfils all formal requirements, it is forwarded to an assessment consultant and an assessment committee member. The consultant assesses each application up against the criteria set for the modality and recommend the application to approval or rejection for the assessment committee member. The assessment committee makes the final decision.

Each applicant will receive an assessment note, explaining the reasons for either approval or rejection. This note is useful to guide a potential re-application, as it provides comments on what is deemed critical and thus what can be improved.



Depending on the modality, the assessment will take a certain amount of time, which is shown in the table below.

Modality	# weeks of assessment
Project support	6
Small-size programmes	8
Medium-size programmes	See process in section 3.2.6
Large-size programmes	See process in section 3.2.6
Support for co-funding	4*
Support for application process	4*

\*Note that the assessment process for these modalities will be prolonged when colliding with holidays (three weeks over the summer, and one week for Christmas, easter, fall and winter break).

## 2.4. Scoring

[Vi vil operere med vægtning af kriterier]

All applications are scored using the LEADS scoring 1-5. The assessment committee gives a score to each criterion, which are weighted in terms of what is most important in terms of contributing to the purpose and principles of the Civil Society Fund.

The score is used to prioritise between approved applications when there is not enough money to grant all approved applications.

### LEADS SCORING METHOD

	LEADS STANDS FOR	SCORE	THE SCORE IS GIVEN WHEN THERE IS
L	Little action/evidence	1	Weak indication that supports the criteria
E	Some Evidence	2	Some indication that supports the criteria
A	Action taken	3	Indication that supports the criteria
D	Developed	4	Solid indication that supports the criteria
S	Sustainable	5	Comprehensive indication of implementation and/or indication of an established approach/system in supporting the criteria

## 2.5. Principles for administration and grant approval

Transparency and openness in the administration. This means, among other things:

- All assessment criteria and processes are explicit and available to all applicants.
- All applicants receive a written response explaining the reasons for the approval or rejection.
- All approved applications are publicly available (anonymity can be requested if reasoned).

Orderly administration applying the highest standards of administrative conduct (for instance, ensuring impartiality, making decisions on an informed basis, writing in an understandable manner, complying with

deadlines and stating the reasons for decisions as detailed in the legal principles of CISU as set out in CISU's Code of Conduct).

Clear separation between the advisory process/the advisers and the assessment process/assessment system. Accordingly, CISU's advisers and the rest of CISU's secretariat are not in any way involved in the process from the moment the application is submitted until the grant decision is made.

## 2.6. Budget commitments

Every year, CISU's Board determines, upon approval by the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, what share of the total Civil Society Fund will be allocated to the different types of support.

## 3. Complaints

CISU's procedures for feedback and complaints are set out in CISU's Code of Conduct. More information is available at [www.cisu.dk/complaint](http://www.cisu.dk/complaint)

## 4. Central concepts

On CISU's website, a list of resources is available to learn more about central concepts within development work. See [www.cisu.dk/???](http://www.cisu.dk/???)