



Irish Aid

An Roinn Gnóthaí Eachtracha agus Trádála
Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade

Civil Society Fund (CSF)

Guidelines for Applicant Organisations

February 2012¹

¹ Please note that these guidelines are relevant to organisations applying to the Civil Society Fund in 2012 **only**. Organisations which have received funding from the CSF in previous years should continue to refer to the relevant prior version of the CSF guidelines [available on the Irish Aid website].

Contents

1. Irish Aid support for Civil Society
2. Objectives of the Civil Society Fund (CSF)
3. Eligibility
 - Organisational Status
 - Governance
 - Record of Compliance
 - Financial Management
 - Funding Base
 - Funding Status
 - Focus of Work
 - Exclusions from Funding
4. Approaches and Strategies
 - Partnership
 - Capacity Building
 - Participation
5. Mainstreaming/Crosscutting Issues
 - Gender equality
 - HIV&AIDS
 - Environment and Sustainable Development
 - Promotion of Good Governance
6. Application and Approval Process
 - Applications
 - Size and Duration of Grant
 - Appraisal and Approval Timeline
 - Appraisal and Approval Criteria
 - Acknowledgement of Irish Aid
7. Accountability: Monitoring, Reporting and Evaluation
 - Annual Narrative and Financial Report
 - Monitoring, Evaluation and Audit
8. Freedom of Information
 - ❖ <http://www.dfa.ie/home/index.aspx?id=377>

Annex 1

- ❖ Mainstreaming Strategy

<http://www.irishaid.gov.ie/Uploads/Mainstreaming%20Strategy%20final%202007.doc>

Annex 2

- ❖ The Gender Equality Policy

<http://www.irishaid.gov.ie/Uploads/Gender%20Equality%20Draft%204.pdf>

Gender Policy Review

<http://www.irishaid.gov.ie/Uploads/Gender%20Equality%20Policy%20Review.pdf>

Annex 3

- ❖ The HIV & AIDS Strategy

Irish Aid – Responding to HIV and AIDS

<http://www.irishaid.gov.ie/hivandaids/default.htm>

Annex 4

- ❖ Environmental Policy for Sustainable Development

http://www.irishaid.gov.ie/Uploads/Environmental_Policy.pdf

- ❖ Environmental Policy Keysheets

[Irish Aid - Our Work - Environment](#)

Annex 5

- ❖ Building Good Governance through Development Cooperation; Policy Orientations for Irish Aid

<http://www.irishaid.gov.ie/Uploads/Building%20Good%20Governance%20through%20Development%20Cooperation%20Policy.pdf>

Annex 6

- ❖ List of DAC codes – see excel spreadsheet document on the Irish Aid website.

http://www.irishaid.ie/grants_civil.asp

Annex 7

- ❖ Comhlámh's Code of Good Practice for Sending Organisations

<http://www.volunteeringoptions.org/WhatWeDo/CodeofGoodPractice/tabid/75/Default.aspx>



Irish Aid

An Roinn Gnóthai Eachtracha agus Trádála
Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade

IRISH AID

CIVIL SOCIETY FUND

1. Irish Aid support for Civil Society

1.1 Irish Aid has a long history of supporting Irish civil society organisations working to fight poverty, achieve sustainable development, promote human rights and contribute to good governance. Irish Aid also acknowledges the role that Irish civil society organisations can play in building public support for Ireland's aid programme, informing the Irish public through development education programmes, as well as raising awareness of the issues around development assistance. Irish Aid is committed to continuing to support civil society organisations as partners in the attainment of the Millennium Declaration and associated goals for poverty reduction, and in the protection and promotion of human rights. The White Paper on the Government's aid programme sets out how Irish Aid proposes to engage with Civil Society. The Civil Society Policy <http://www.irishaid.gov.ie/article.asp?article=1344> published in April 2008 further outlines the objectives and principles of Irish Aid's approach. The two principal objectives of the policy are as follows:

1. To support an enabling environment for civil society to organise and engage with government and its own broader constituencies; and
2. To support the role of civil society:
 - (i) in promoting participation and good governance;
 - (ii) in ensuring pro-poor service delivery and pro-poor growth; and
 - (iii) globally and nationally, to build a constituency for development, human rights and social justice.

1.2 In 2012, applications are being invited for new projects under the Civil Society Fund (CSF). The CSF is open for applications from organisations which contribute toward the objectives of the Civil Society Policy, and specifically those of the Civil Society Fund (as outlined in Section 2) and which fulfil the eligibility criteria as outlined in section 3 of these guidelines.

In 2012, priority consideration will be given to interventions which contribute to specific policy objectives of the Irish Government in the following areas:

- Interventions in the area of **Human Rights** with a focus on the protection of human rights defenders and interventions which strengthen the participation and representation of poor and marginalised people in the international human rights system.
- Interventions in the area of **Gender Equality** with an emphasis on responses to, and prevention of gender based violence (including projects which will contribute to the implementation of Ireland's National Action Plan on UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace & Security), and rural women's economic empowerment (in the context of Irish Aid's focus on hunger and implementation of the Irish Aid Gender Equality policy).
- Interventions which directly **contribute towards** the implementation of the recommendations from the Hunger Task Force Report and the report of the Special Envoy on Hunger². Irish Aid would welcome projects which support **climate change adaptation and mitigation, the adoption of agricultural research innovations by smallholder farmers**, and greater linkages between **agricultural programmes and improvements in health and nutrition**. In line with this, projects which help **develop and strengthen smallholder farmer organisations** and which **improve smallholder farmers' access to inputs/credit** are of particular interest.

The focus of Irish Aid's work is in **sub-Saharan Africa** and priority will be given to organisations working in that region.

2. Objectives of the Civil Society Fund (CSF).

2.1 The overall objective of the Civil Society Fund is to strengthen the capacity and voice of civil society organisations to promote sustainable development and human rights.

2.2 **There are seven key objectives that the Civil Society Fund** seeks to promote, which coincide with the role of civil society in development cooperation and human rights promotion, and reflect the commitments of the Millennium Development Goals. The Civil Society Fund will support interventions that contribute to:

1. The strengthening of the voice of communities and civil society organisations to influence policy and its implementation, at local national and international levels
2. The prevention of hunger, and the improvement of livelihood security
3. Improved access to essential services, such as education, health care and programmes of HIV prevention, care and support
4. Improved access and control of resources for marginalised communities
5. The promotion and realisation of human rights

² The recommendations of the HTF Report focused on three broad themes; smallholder agricultural production, particularly women farmers in Africa, maternal and child under-nutrition and political leadership to give hunger the priority it deserves.

6. The promotion of women's empowerment and gender equality, including initiatives to tackle gender based violence
7. The promotion of environmental sustainability and in particular, initiatives that combat climate change.

2.3 In applying for support under the Civil Society Fund, organisations should be able to demonstrate a clear logic of intervention by demonstrating a logical link between the problem(s) they have identified, how they are intending to address it and what they hope to achieve. Each applicant should explain how its intervention will make a particular contribution to **at least one** of the above objectives based on the applicant's relative strengths, experience and expertise. It is not necessary that an intervention contribute to all seven objectives.

2.4. Each applicant will need to identify how it will build on its specific strengths, and identify specific areas of expertise where it will add value using funds accessed from Irish Aid. It is very important to show how the project will be monitored during its implementation and how the capacity of the partners in the developing country will be strengthened.

2.5. Organisations previously funded by Irish Aid must show evidence of outcomes from that funding. Organisations that have not previously received funding from Irish Aid must also provide evidence of outcomes of previous work.

2.6 Irish organisations should outline how they engage with the Irish public and identify their coherence with Irish Government policy priorities.

3. Eligibility

The criteria for eligibility for civil society organisations to apply for the Civil Society Fund in 2012 are set out below. **Applications cannot be considered from organisations which do not meet these eligibility criteria.** The CSF scheme is open to Irish-based organisations and invited non-Irish based organisations **only**. Irish Aid cannot respond to unsolicited requests from non-Irish based organisations under this funding mechanism.

3.1 Country of origin: The applicant organisation must be either Irish-based, or a non-Irish organisation which has received an invitation to apply for funding.

3.2 Organisational Status: The applicant must be a non-governmental, non-profit, civil society organisation with legal status. It must have received charitable status exemption from the Irish Office of the Revenue Commissioners i.e. be the holder of a charity reference (CHY) number for a minimum of two years prior to the date of application. An equivalent exemption will be required for non- Irish

organisations.

3.3 Funding Status: In 2012, applications will not be accepted from an organisation which is currently in receipt of a Civil Society Fund grant, i.e. if the organisation has received a payment in 2012, or if it is due to receive a payment in 2012 or 2013 under an existing contract, it is **ineligible** to apply.

3.4 Governance: Applicants must have a formal decision-making structure (e.g. a board of trustees) which can take legal responsibility for the administration and use of Irish Aid funds. (All Irish applicants must have such a structure legally recognised in Ireland).

3.5 Accounts: Applicants must submit annual accounts comprising at a minimum the Balance Sheet, the Income and Expenditure Statement, and Cash Flow statement for the two financial years prior to application³. If the applicant organisation has an annual income of above €100,000, these accounts must be externally and independently audited. This must be accompanied by the most recent management letter received from the auditors. Annual accounts (audited if applicable) must be available on the organisation's website at the date of application to the Civil Society Fund.

3.6 Dependency on Irish Aid: Income received from Irish Aid, either directly or indirectly, must not exceed 65%⁴ of the overall organisational income of the applicant. This should be calculated based on an average of the last two years accounts.

3.7 Focus of Work: The areas of intervention by the agency must meet the OECD DAC definition of Official Development Assistance and take place in a country classified as eligible for assistance. See www.oecd.org/dac/stats/methodology for details.

3.8 Record of Compliance: Applicants, previously in receipt of Irish Aid funds, must have a record of compliance in terms of the administration and use of such funds. Applicants which have a previous record of non-compliance with the terms of an Irish Aid contract(s) may not be considered for funding.

³ The organisation's own financial year can be used here.

⁴ Over the next years it is intended that this percentage will be adjusted to reduce organisation's dependency on Irish Aid to a maximum of 50%

3.8 Exclusions from funding

The following activities will **not** be eligible for funding support under this scheme:

- Interventions that are primarily welfare support(s);
- Individual or family sponsorship;
- Study or research fellowships (excluding short-duration training of staff, partners and beneficiaries within the region) ;
- Major infrastructural schemes;
- Evangelisation or proselytization;
- Emergencies;
- Exclusively Development Education programmes within Ireland; or
- Retrospective Expenditure (i.e. costs incurred prior to the proposed start date of the project).

Points to note:

- ❖ Irish Aid has separate funding mechanisms to cover Emergency Humanitarian Assistance, as well as Emergency Preparedness and Post-Emergency Recovery.
- ❖ Separate funding grants are also available for Development Education within Ireland (understood as initiatives which have, as their principal purpose, a structured process of teaching and learning in Ireland about international development). See www.irishaid.gov.ie
- ❖ Religious orders which are members of Mísean Cara are ineligible to apply for CSF funding and should instead direct their applications for funding directly to Mísean Cara www.miseancara.ie

4. Approaches and Strategies

4.1 The approaches and strategies set out below follow good practice and provide a standard which applicant organisations should seek to achieve. These approaches and strategies are also drawn from Irish Aid core values which include partnership, capacity building, and participation. Interventions should be informed by clear and comprehensive analysis of the political, social and economic context of the country/area. Sound interventions call for careful planning and coordination based on well-informed local knowledge. Civil society should avoid building parallel systems that may undermine government systems or distort democratic institutions. Civil society organisations also have obligations to apply the highest standards of good governance in their own institutions.

4.2 Partnership

4.2.1 Partnership is a core value for Irish Aid. In this context, it refers to the relationship between the applicant and civil society organisations or government bodies in developing countries, where both parties are involved in designing and managing a particular intervention or set of interventions funded under the CSF. Partnership and local ownership are central to development cooperation. Where possible, close working relationships with government are encouraged. Irish Aid places value on strong and sustained partnership with local civil society organisations. This emphasis on partnership and local

ownership presents opportunities and challenges for civil society organisations.

4.2.2 Partnerships should be based on shared values and perspectives, with strong mutual respect and accountability and clearly defined roles. In this context, there must be a written Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the organisation directly funded by Irish Aid and its implementing partners, including Government/Local Authorities if applicable. This should provide a clear management framework to ensure that all partners are aware of their respective roles and responsibilities and clarity on the funding arrangements.

4.2.3 In broad terms, successful partnerships have the following characteristics:

- Sustained relationship based on common values and approaches;
- Clear sense of equality based on respective contributions and responsibilities;
- Mutual accountability – downward between communities as well as upwards to donors/funders;
- Clear division of roles and responsibilities and realistic expectations of both parties; and
- Collaborative decision-making and ways of working

4.3 Capacity Building

4.3.1 Capacity building is often an important aspect of partnership. In cases where international NGOs have sufficient capacity internally, capacity building through partnerships can help to provide local civil society with the following:

- access to knowledge and skills;
- resources for organisational development;
- viable technologies;
- opportunities for networking and exchange for lesson learning, and;
- strategies to advocate and engage with government at local and national level.

4.4 Participation

4.4.1 Participation refers to the right of women and men, boys and girls, to participate in their own development and in the decisions that affect their lives. Applicants should ensure that full consultation has taken place with partner communities on the design and the implementation of the intervention, and that opportunities are built in to enable participation and facilitate feedback during the project cycle.

4.4.2 There should be structures in place at the local level to facilitate decision making and to ensure that the intervention is shaped in a way that meets the needs of the community on an ongoing basis. Special consideration and representation should be given to groups which might otherwise be marginalised. These include women, youth, older people and people with disabilities or those from minority groups.

5. Mainstreaming/Crosscutting Issues

5.1 Irish Aid attaches priority to a number of cross-cutting themes, which are an integral part of the aid

programme. These issues are vital to sustainable poverty reduction and development and, in the view of Irish Aid, need to be mainstreamed - gender equality, environmental sustainability, HIV & AIDS and governance. See Irish Aid's Mainstreaming Strategy [Irish Aid - Our Work - Mainstreaming Priority Issues](#) These cannot be tackled only as discrete issues but should inform the shape and content of any development work.

5.1.1 There is no blueprint or single technique for mainstreaming. Mainstreaming involves sound context analysis (including comprehensive baseline data collection), clarity on what is to be achieved (including setting indicators), appropriate strategies and documenting and learning from experience.

5.1.2 It reflects a desire for the cross-cutting issues to be at the centre-stage, influencing

- the objectives and strategies of an intervention;
- the approaches and methodologies that are used;
- the type of structures established to support implementation; and
- the way budget resources are allocated.

5.1.3 Mainstreaming is not an intervention per se; it tries to ensure that thinking or analytical processes, development directions and activities reflect cross-cutting concerns and vision at the policy, planning and intervention levels. While it might not be possible to address all four cross cutting issues as actions within every project or programme, during the project design process due consideration should be given to how the project might be impacted by the cross-cutting issues as well as the project's potential impact or contribution to advancing the four cross cutting issues. The application document should outline how the cross cutting issues were considered during the initial project design process and the outcome of these considerations.

5.2 Gender Equality

Gender Equality refers to equality between women and men in all spheres, both public and private. Gender equality means equal access to and control of resources and benefits, equal participation in political decision-making and equality under the law for women and men.

5.2.1 Applicants should identify and understand the differing situations of women and men when planning interventions and develop strategies to address inequality. One of these strategies may include mainstreaming gender through the intervention.

5.2.2 The CSF will prioritise interventions aimed at the empowerment of women and at tackling gender inequality. The fund will also specifically support interventions aimed at tackling gender-based violence at an institutional and programme level. For further details see the Irish Aid Gender Equality Policy as well as other documentation on the Irish Aid website.

5.2.3 The following provides some guidance on issues to be considered when mainstreaming gender

through proposed interventions:

- Have women and men participated in the consultation process? How have you ensured that women's voices are heard?
- What are women's roles and responsibilities within the household and community in contrast to men's?
- What are the differences between men and women in terms of: (i) access and control of resources such as land, credit, employment as well as decision-making and representation; (ii) access to services, especially health, education and agricultural extension?
- What are the implications of the above analysis and how will interventions be designed to ensure that women benefit from them?
- How will the intervention contribute to greater gender equality within the community?
- Are there specific strategies for ensuring empowerment of women within the intervention?
- Are indicators disaggregated by sex and/or are there gender specific indicators included in the log frame/results framework?

5.3 HIV & AIDS

5.3.1 HIV & AIDS has devastating effects on individuals, families and communities. It also has a profound effect on the social and economic development of countries most affected by the epidemic. In high burden countries, this epidemic will be the single biggest obstacle to poverty reduction and attainment of the Millennium Development Goals.

5.3.2 Irish Aid views civil society organisations as important partners in responding to the challenges presented by the epidemic. Irish Aid endorses the importance of mainstreaming HIV & AIDS through development interventions and developing specific strategies in community-based care, prevention programmes, capacity building, networking and advocacy. See Irish Aid's HIV and AIDS strategy (2000).

See Irish Aid – Responding to HIV and AIDS <http://www.irishaid.gov.ie/hivandaids/default.htm>

5.3.3 In this context, organisations may apply for thematic programme support for HIV & AIDS which will encompass institutional, broad-based and specific responses (see HIV & AIDS Strategy).

5.3.4 The following provides some guidance of issues to be considered when mainstreaming HIV & AIDS through proposed interventions. There should be explicit effort to ensure that HIV and AIDS is addressed adequately in the situation analysis, the programme design, and in the Monitoring and Evaluation of the proposal:

- Is the design of this intervention influenced by the epidemic and, if so, how?
- What is the extent of HIV & AIDS infection in the community?
- What is its impact on the community or relevant institutions (i.e. education, health service)?

- What services are available, Voluntary Counselling and Testing/HIV & AIDS treatment/Home-based care etc?
- How many orphans and vulnerable children are in the community?
- Are people living with HIV & AIDS able to participate in the intervention?
- How did you ensure that they were consulted and how do you support their participation and leadership?
- How does this intervention meet the needs of people living with HIV & AIDS?
- How will the success of the intervention be measured for its impact on HIV & AIDS?

5.4 Environment, Climate Change and Sustainable Development

5.4.1 Irish Aid emphasises sustainable development as its goal in environment mainstreaming. The objective is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. (Brundtland Commission, World Commission on Sustainable Development, 1987). In this regard, environment refers to the natural resources on which livelihoods depend and the goods and services provided by a healthy and well functioning environment such as water and clear air. In recent years the issue of climate change has contributed significantly to ensuring that environmental considerations are given much greater attention and focus in international development dialogue.

5.4.2 The past 20 years have seen a growing realisation that the current model of development is unsustainable. The increasing stress being put on resources and environmental systems such as water, land and air cannot continue at this unprecedented level. Sustainable development aims to ensure balance between economic, social and environmental outcomes in order to ensure long-term poverty reduction and well being.

5.4.3 It is important to take the environment and climate change into account in project planning and design so that its contribution in providing food (crops, livestock), goods (e.g. construction materials, medicines), the basis of livelihoods (e.g. fishing, farming, forestry) and maintaining good health (clean air and water) is enhanced rather than undermined. The environment and climate matters greatly to people living in poverty as they rely directly on the natural resource base for their survival – if it is degraded their livelihoods and health suffer and they become more vulnerable to natural disasters such as drought, floods, famine, cyclones and landslides.

See Irish Aid's Environmental Policy for Sustainable Development.

http://www.irishaid.gov.ie/Uploads/Environmental_Policy.pdf

UNEP are in the process of finalising a green economy report and in it they include key messages for relevant sectors to ensure sustainable development. It is expected that this report will help inform the planned Conference on Sustainable Development (CSD), Rio +20 in June 2012. The report captures well some key messages to ensure that future development achieves a better balance between

environmental, economic and social imperatives.

<http://www.unep.org/greeneconomy/GreenEconomyReport/tabid/29846/Default.aspx>

5.4.4 The following provides some guidance when considering mainstreaming environmental issues through any proposed intervention:

- How will this project benefit the environment?
- Have opportunities to enhance positive environmental outcomes been discussed and are any actions foreseen?
- Have environmental risks associated with the intervention been identified and managed? If so, what are these and what measures are being taken to reduce risk?
- Have national and local environmental policies and legislation been consulted? Do these apply to the project you are proposing? Is the project consistent with national and local plans / policies?
- Will the project alter current rights and access natural resources? If so what are these changes and who will be affected?
- Have environmental links with other sectors and cross-cutting issues been explored?
- Have all users of the environment / natural resources involved in the proposal been consulted (including local authorities, local elders, women and young people)?
- Have environmental concerns been integrated into approaches to address conflict and post-conflict situations?

Irish Aid has also produced a number of key sheets to illustrate the links between key development sectors and issues, and the environment. These may also be useful in examining the potential environmental benefits that might be achieved by planned projects. To date Irish Aid has produced **environmental key sheets**, on health, education, poverty reduction, agriculture, governance, trade, climate change, bio-diversity, dry land degradation and adaptation to climate change. These can be accessed through the Irish Aid Website:

[Irish Aid - Our Work - Environment](#)

5.4.5 Irish Aid has a strong policy focus on reducing hunger. In the Hunger Envoy's Report (http://www.irishaid.gov.ie/uploads/Hunger_Envoy_Report.pdf), recommendations focus on the need to scale up measures designed to assist communities adapt and respond to climate change, such as the promotion of conservation agriculture, agro-forestry, and crop diversification, as well as the development and promotion of crop and livestock varieties better able to withstand climate shocks. Also in the climate change context the Envoy recommends supporting the development of National and local disaster risk reduction strategies and new and innovative programmes such as those which help improve national and regional weather forecasting, providing timely information to farmers and improving agro-meteorological early warning systems.

5.5 Promotion of Good Governance

5.5.1 Good governance is about helping to create the conditions where women and men are empowered to participate freely in their political, social and economic development and, in so doing, to achieve their potential. It is about helping to achieve the proper mobilisation and allocation of public funds, and the effective delivery of public services. Essentially it is about helping to build a society where women and men can exercise their rights and lead fulfilling lives.

Building good governance is central to the work of Irish Aid across the development programme. Irish Aid's approach to good governance is informed by the principles of Participation, Partnership, Transparency, Accountability, Efficiency and Effectiveness, and Equality. *Building Good Governance through Development Cooperation; Policy Orientations for Irish Aid* can be accessed at the link below <http://www.irishaid.gov.ie/Uploads/Building%20Good%20Governance%20through%20Development%20Cooperation%20Policy.pdf>

5.5.2 Irish Aid gives priority to good governance interventions that help to strengthen democracy and make governments more accountable, improve government service delivery, promote and protect human rights, strengthen the rule of law, and improve access to information.

5.5.3 There is an emphasis on building the cross-generational capacity of citizens and communities to exercise their rights and gain an understanding of and access to, processes and institutions of government. This, in turn, can contribute to improved access to services and resources such as water, land, health, education and protection of those rights for vulnerable communities.

5.5.4 The following provides guidance on some issues that might be considered when mainstreaming governance through proposed interventions:

- In what way does the project promote the principles of participation, partnership, transparency, accountability, efficiency and effectiveness, and equality?
- How well informed is the project by an analysis of the local and national context, including an analysis of possible underlying issues (imbalances of power, incentives at play, interests of the various actors involved, and so on)?
- Does the analysis take into consideration the possible causes of poor governance?
- Does the project overlap with or undermine any existing interventions in the community? How have local governance structures been involved and is coordination taking place (e.g. local authorities, traditional leaders, community groups)?
- In what way does the project help to advance locally identified governance priorities such as democratisation, accountability, improved service delivery, human rights, rule of law, and access to information?
- Are the governance arrangements in the management of the project appropriate and how will the targeted groups be involved?

6. Application and Approval Process

6.1 Expression of Interest:

Any organisation intending to submit a project funding proposal, must send (a) an expression of interest, (b) a completed checklist of eligibility criteria and (c) audited accounts for the previous 2 years with their most recent management letter from their auditor to the email address

CivilSocietyFunding2012@dfa.ie by **9th March 2012**. Organisations who do not meet this deadline will not be considered in the round.

6.2 Application

Applications must be submitted using the application form available on the Irish Aid website. Section 1 requests prospective applicants to describe their organisation, its governance structures and its capacity to operate in partnership with Irish Aid. Section 2 requires a description of the evidence of change (in development terms) from previous projects/programmes undertaken by the organisation. **If an organisation has previously been in receipt of Irish Aid funding for a project(s)/programme(s), examples from these projects/programmes must be used in this section** (max 2 pages in length). Section 3 requires a description of the project (max 10 pages in length), Section 4 relates to the financial details and Section 5 relates to the Results Framework (max 4 pages in length). All sections must be completed and submitted electronically, with the required attachments to the email address: CivilSocietyFunding2012@dfa.ie.

Irish Aid also requires 1 original hard copy, signed by the legal representative of the organisation (e.g. the chair of the board of trustees) to be sent to the address:

Civil Society Section
Irish Aid
Riverstone House
25-27 Henry Street,
Limerick,
Ireland

Please note that organisations should ensure that the content of the application form is clear and complete as Irish Aid will not seek further information during the appraisal process

6.2 Size and Duration of Grant

An organisation may submit only one application to the Civil Society Fund. These applications may be for multi-annual project support (one, two or three years). The maximum ceiling for each application is €200,000 per year. A budget for the entire project must be submitted with the application, with a breakdown of the proposed Irish Aid funding included. In each case, Irish Aid will fund only up to a maximum of 70% of total project costs in each year. In Year 1, 30% of the total project budget must already be either available or committed to the organisation and evidence of this must be provided. For

Years 2 & 3 (if applicable), organisations must guarantee that these funds will be made available. Consideration will be given to the organisation's track record in sourcing funds as demonstrated in the two financial years prior to application. The organisation must clearly justify why project expenditure on support costs such as administration, human resources and organisational development is necessary in the overall context of the project intervention⁵, and how the project as a whole demonstrates consideration of cost efficiencies, particularly in terms of a clear link between proposed outputs and outcomes.

6.3 Appraisal and Approval Timeline

1. Expression of interest, eligibility criteria and accounts submitted by the deadline of **Monday 12th March 2012**
2. Submission of application by the deadline of **Friday 30th March 2012**
3. Consideration of applications by Civil Society Approvals Committee on **26th/27th April 2012**. This Committee includes in its membership independent external expertise.
4. Notification of funding decisions to applicants with contracts prepared and issued to successful applicants by June.

Any attempt to influence the outcome of the decision-making process in relation to grant applications will result in the relevant application being disqualified. Please also note that no meetings will be held with organisations that plan to apply for funding once the call for proposals issues.

6.4 Appraisal and Approval Criteria

In line with international best practice, Irish Aid will continue to require that all interventions funded have a strong focus on results for individuals and communities in the poorest parts of the world. Irish Aid will at all times promote transparency and accountability in the use of public monies. There will be a base criterion examining the evidence that the organisation is operating from a reasonably sound strategic, policy and financial basis, relative to its size and capacity. Organisations will be required to satisfy the appraiser that this is the case before their application can be considered for funding.

Proposals will be assessed under the following headings:

- proven evidence of outcomes from previous projects (Irish Aid funded if applicable);
- logic of the intervention;
- evidence of capacity to track results;
- governance and financial oversight;

⁵ Irish Aid does not set limits for expenditure on support costs, rather assesses these on a case by case basis. Some help on how to assign specific support costs to projects can be found on pages 25-26 of the 2005 Charities SORP standards. (<http://www.oscr.org.uk/media/1971/SORP%202005.pdf>)

- strategic engagement with the Irish Public on development and/or human rights (for Irish based organisations only) or evidence of a specialised contribution to an Irish Government policy priority as defined above

6.5 Acknowledgement of Irish Aid

Successful applicants are required to acknowledge Irish Aid funding in a clear manner in annual reports, websites and in all publications or publicity material (including online material) related to the funded project or programme and, where appropriate, at project sites. Such reports and publications must clearly state that the ideas, opinions and comments therein are entirely the responsibility of its author(s) and do not necessarily represent or reflect Irish Aid policy. Audited accounts must also explicitly include reference to the contribution from ‘Irish Aid’. Prior written authorisation for the use of the Irish Aid logo should in all cases be obtained from Irish Aid.

7. Accountability: Monitoring, Reporting and Evaluation

Recipients of funding under this scheme are entrusted with public funds, to be spent strictly for the purposes presented in the funding proposal. Failure to comply with this obligation will render the recipient liable to reimburse Irish Aid the full amount of the grant.

7.1 Annual Narrative and Financial Report

Organisations receiving grants are responsible for an effective, ongoing monitoring system throughout the course of the funding.

7.1.1 Each organisation is responsible for its own project implementation and results, and will report on progress towards expected results annually to Irish Aid. Significant deviations from original expected results must be notified to Irish Aid in advance, be explicit and explained in terms of the lessons learned, and external factors at play, as well as those factors within the control of the project.

7.1.2 Annual narrative reports should be concise, should not exceed fifteen (15) pages and should be presented in electronic format, in 12 point font. ***Reports which exceed this length or which do not use the above format will be returned to the organisation for revision and resubmission.***

The Guidelines for Reporting, Monitoring and Evaluation CSF 2012 are currently under review and will be available on the website shortly. Organisations may refer to Irish Aid’s “*Guidelines for Reporting, Monitoring and Evaluation of projects funded under The Civil Society Fund (CSF)*”, which is currently available on the Irish Aid website:

<http://www.irishaid.gov.ie/Uploads/CSF%202010%20M&E%20Guidelines.docx>

Please note that the late submission of reports is a compliance issue.

7.1.3 The Annual Narrative Report must be accompanied by the following:

- financial report (in the prescribed format) on the Irish Aid-supported project(s) / programme(s). This should, show total income (including that from other donors) and expenditure against budget for the current year and cumulatively. The financial statement and narrative report must be completed so as to clearly illustrate the relationship between activities and expenditure.
- most recent annual accounts for the organisation, in which Irish Aid funding is specifically shown as an item (externally audited accounts are required if the organisation is legally obliged to produce audited accounts or if the organisational income is above €100,000 per year).⁶

7.1.5 Irish Personnel

Please note that all organisations which have Irish residents/citizens serving as either volunteers or development workers are required to complete the annual personnel report form which forms an annex to the annual report.

7.2 Monitoring, Evaluation and Audit

7.2.1 Organisations in receipt of Irish Aid Civil Society Fund support will be subject to field monitoring visits by representatives of Irish Aid. These monitoring visits will be covered by terms of reference, with a focus on monitoring at the level of outcomes and results. **Organisations should refer to Irish Aid’s Guidelines for Reporting, Monitoring and Evaluation of projects funded under the Civil Society Fund (CSF) for reference.**

7.2.2 Each organisation is responsible for evaluating its work. The results of evaluations, with any policy implications/ conclusions, should be shared with Irish Aid.

7.2.3 Notwithstanding the obligations set out in any future contract with Irish Aid, applicants should note that if they receive a grant from Irish Aid they will be required to:

- cooperate fully with any external evaluations or audits, which may be commissioned by Irish Aid from time to time and at its complete discretion
- cooperate fully with any audit requests by the Comptroller and Auditor General. According to Department of Finance Circular No. 17/2010, organisations that receive more than 50% of their funding from the Exchequer, directly or indirectly, may be subject to an audit by the Comptroller and Auditor General.⁷
- respond in a timely manner to ad-hoc requests by Irish Aid for information updates regarding project progress, should these arise. However, it is expected that such requests will be in

⁶ Irish Aid reserves the right to request an auditor’s management letter and the management response, as well as management accounts if necessary.

⁷ <http://per.gov.ie/wp-content/uploads/circ172010.pdf>

exceptional circumstances and that most information will be sought from annual reports.

- respond to any requests for information made by organisations authorised to do so by Irish Aid. It is expected that such requests will be exceptional.
- communicate any suspicions of fraudulent activities and keep Irish Aid informed of any ongoing investigations and outcomes

8. Freedom of Information

Applicant organisations are reminded that documents submitted to the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade including application forms and annexes, or any report submitted to the Department on foot of a successful funding application, and any other written communications with the Department, automatically become records of the Department and subject to the provisions of the FoI Acts. In these circumstances, the Department may be required under the terms of the Freedom of Information Act 1997 or the Freedom of Information (Amendment) Act 2003 to divulge any or all such records to third parties. It is the established policy of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade to publish on its website all FOI requests and the records released under the Act.

See Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade website, FOI section <http://www.dfa.ie/home/index.aspx?id=377>