

PROGRAMMES

# Proposal Guidelines



2019

# How to submit a proposal

## Ten questions to consider

### Introduction

This document is intended as a guide to make the process of applying for funds and technical assistance from OSISA easier. If you work for a civil society organization in Southern Africa, especially if you work for one that is locally constituted, then we are keen to hear from you. We typically do not fund individuals for scholarships and fellowships. When we do, we will advertise this on our website so keep your eyes open for calls for proposals.

NB: Please make sure that you read through the Clusters' and individual programs' descriptions available in the OSISA Strategy on our website to understand our funding priorities and our areas of support.

Please note however, that we are only able to support a small percentage of those who apply to us, but we are keen to hear from you if you have an interesting, innovative or successful model for advancing open society values in your community, country or in the southern Africa region.

We work in ten countries, and we will not accept proposals that fall outside this region. However, our sister foundations cover a large number of other African countries, so you can find out more about them on their websites:

[www.osiea.org](http://www.osiea.org) for East Africa

[www.osiwa.org](http://www.osiwa.org) for West Africa

[www.osf.org.za](http://www.osf.org.za) for South Africa

## STEP 1: CAN YOU SUMMARISE YOUR PROJECT IN TWO PARAGRAPHS?

We suggest that you organize the executive summary in the following ways:

- a) Provide a brief problem statement
- b) Briefly describe the solution, including the key activities and who will benefit from the project
- c) Tell us how long the project will be in months or years. (Please note that grants awards are for between one year and three years. Multiyear funding will be contingent upon availability of funding and submission of satisfactory progress reports).
- d) Outline the partners you will work with and identify the person who prepared the proposal so that we have a contact should we have any questions.
- e) Provide an explanation of the amount of money required for the project (in US dollars) and tell us your plans for funding it in the future. Three years is a good benchmark, but you can be looking at a slightly shorter or longer timeframe. It is important to make it clear what percentage of the total contribution to the project you are requesting from OSISA.

## STEP 2: WHAT IS YOUR GOAL?

Remember that goals are conceptual and abstract, while objectives are more specific and tell us what you hope to achieve in the short to medium term.

## STEP 3: WHAT DO YOU HOPE TO ACHIEVE IN THE TIMEFRAME OF THE PROJECT?

**This section outlines your objectives. They should be SMART:**

**Specific** - clearly defined. Directly relating to the issue being addressed

**Measurable** - are outcomes expressed in measurable form?

**Attainable** - Can be achieved within the set time

period

**Relevant** - Must be relevant and be connected to priorities and activities

**Time bound** - Set specific time period

## STEP 4: WHAT ACTIVITIES WILL YOU UNDERTAKE?

You will need to list the key activities that you will undertake to achieve your objectives. We are interested in specifics but please do not list too many activities. The more succinct and clear your activities, and the more closely each activity is to a particular objective, the easier it is for us to understand what you want us to fund. Please state estimated timeline for implementation of your project, including start and end date and completion of major milestones in the project.

## STEP 5: WHO ARE YOU?

Tell us more about your organization.

For this section you will need to include:

- Your legal status
- Where and when the organization was founded
- Examples of other work you have done (even if you are new, we want to see what you have done so far)
- Collaboration with other groups
- Composition of governance structure, including where there are any conflicts of interest with OSISA board or staff members
- Your mission and objective as an organization
- In a sentence or two, how do you assess the organization's financial health and integrity? Are there any reasons to be concerned about these? Some causes of concern might be excessive debt or indebtedness to officers or board members shown in the notes to financial statements, unusual compensation arrangements, recent allegations of theft or fraud, inability to produce financial statements, or persistent or projected operating deficits.
- What, in a sentence or two, is the organization's reputation for programmatic effectiveness among peers, donors, and experts in the field?
- How effective, in a sentence or two, has the

organization been in recent years in advancing open society initiatives, such as; building vibrant and tolerant societies, advocating for human rights, addressing inequalities, justice, education, public health, and the independent media.

- What, in a sentence or two, is the political context for the grant? Factors to consider might include the political dynamics, legislative or regulatory enactments, and institutional shifts that bear on the risk involved in the proposed grant.
- Your constituency or where you gain your organizational credibility
- Your primary sources of funding
- Briefly state the organization's ability to manage a project of the proposed scope
- Describe the qualifications and the expertise of the individual/s responsible for implementing the project.

## STEP 6: HOW WILL YOUR PROJECT ADDRESS GENDER INEQUALITIES IN THE CONTEXT OF THE PROJECT YOU ARE SEEKING FUNDING FOR?

In this section please tell us if and how; a) the project seeks to work with women and men either differently or similarly, b) whether your impacts will be gender disaggregated, and c) whether your organization embodies gender equality in its decision-making structures.

## STEP 7: HOW WILL YOU WORK WITH YOUNG PEOPLE IN THE CONTEXT OF THE PROJECT YOU ARE SEEKING FUNDING FOR?

Here we want to understand your model for youth participation and youth inclusion in decision-making.

## STEP 8: AFTER OSISA STOPS FUNDING YOUR PROJECT, HOW

## WILL YOU KEEP GOING?

Please tell us if the project is sustainable. If it isn't, tell us why not and what value there is in still funding it.

## STEP 9: WHO ELSE WILL YOU BE WORKING WITH IN THE PROJECT?

We want to know who your implementing and local partners will be. This is especially important for regional organizations or national groups hoping to work in a particular community in which they may not have an established presence.

## STEP 10: HOW MUCH MONEY OR TECHNICAL SUPPORT ARE YOU ASKING FOR?

Please be clear on exactly how much money you require over the entire period, as well as on an annual basis. OSISA requires that all organizations applying for funds submit:

- A detailed budget outlining the financial needs of the proposed project
- An overall organizational budget for each year
- Recent Audit Report if available



# Ten Questions To Help You Write A Proposal:

1. Can you summarise your project in two paragraphs?

2. What is your goal?

3. What do you hope to achieve in the timeframe of the project?

4. What activities will you undertake?

5. Who are you? Tell us more about your organization.

6. How will your project address gender inequalities in the context of the project you are seeking funding for?

7. How will you work with young people in the context of the project you are seeking funding for?

8. After OSISA stops funding your project, how will you keep going?

9. Who else will you be working with in the project?

10. How much money or technical support are you asking for?

# The Grant Management Process



Submit a Concept Note, Project Proposal, Project Budget and all other supporting documents.

Applications are registered on the grants management system.

Where applicable, applicants who have submitted a Concept Note only are engaged and requested to submit a fully developed Project Proposal and Project Budget.

Applications are reviewed and evaluated by the relevant OSISA Cluster.

Recommendation for funding is prepared and presented to decision-making authority.

Decision outcome is communicated to applicant.

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