**Social Innovation in Central Asia**

**Notice of Funding Opportunity**

**Youth Leadership Grants**

**Background**

The International Organization for Migration in Turkmenistan (IOM), in partnership with Eurasia Foundation (EF), announces a notice of funding opportunity for public organizations and associations of Turkmenistan to apply for Youth Leadership Grants. Youth Leadership Grants (YLG) are intended for joint implementation with young leaders (18 – 30 years old) from Turkmenistan.

YLGs in Turkmenistan are part of IOM’s “Building Youth Resilience through Community Engagement” project and Social Innovation in Central Asia (SICA), a five-year program funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID).

**Overview**

To strengthen the capacity of young people through development of leadership skills and encourage their participation in local community projects, public organizations and associations, jointly with young leaders, are invited to apply for Youth Leadership Grants to fund pilot projects and initiatives that will contribute to social, economic and/or environmental development in their communities. YLG projects should applicant organizations’ current work and align with their missions.

Priority will be given to proposed activities that build or improve infrastructure and services that impact lives in local communities, that empower youth and that promote volunteerism, diversity, and inclusivity.

**Project activities may include, but are not limited to, the following themes:**

* Youth activism through volunteer events
* Mentorship programs and sharing best practices in career growth, environmental protection, and volunteering as well as practical soft skills
* Raising awareness of social issues impacting young people
* Social innovation in the spheres of education, healthy lifestyles, and social entrepreneurship
* Innovative and non-standard approaches
* Media projects
* Development of business skills among youth
* Creating equitable workplaces for young people with special needs
* Trainings or events for vulnerable groups
* Civil society sector development, including capacity building for public organizations
* Other activities that create new socially oriented opportunities for youth in Turkmenistan

**Illustrative projects include:**

* Developing a mobile application that will help young people or vulnerable groups like people with disabilities or low-income families
* Launching a socially oriented start-up for young entrepreneurs that helps communities recycle plastic and paper waste
* Introducing digital technologies in businesses to reach underserved client groups and support gender equality and integration in the workplace

**Eligibility**

Youth Leadership Grants will be awarded based on a merit-based, fair, and open competition.

**Eligible applicants must meet the following criteria:**

* Be a public organization or public association legally registered in Turkmenistan
* Proposed project is youth-led and/or youth-oriented
* Availability of a team to implement the proposed project
* Have identified a priority problem or challenge that the local community must address
* Have proposed an innovative approach for addressing this problem or challenge that demonstrates and promotes positive change in the community

**Use of funds**

The maximum amount of award funding is **$5,000** per project. Projects must last between **three and six months** in duration. Applicants must specify the duration of their activities and funding amount requested in their applications. Activities that receive funding may vary in duration but must be completed within the established period for which funds were initially awarded.

Funds **may be used** to cover the cost of justified expenses, goods or services as specified in the application. Funding **may not be used** for expenses such as the purchase of real estate, vehicles, construction, the purchase of alcoholic beverages, entertainment costs, business or first-class travel, the payment for services of governmental employees or the repayment of debts.

Recipients are responsible for payment of all relevant taxes, fees, and other legally mandated costs in accordance with national legislation. Payment will be made by IOM in multiple tranches: the first payment will be made immediately following signature of the contract, and further payments will be done upon submission and approval of programmatic and financial reports from recipients.

**Application process**

Applications must include the following documentation and information:

1. Completed Application Form
2. Logical Framework
3. Workplan
4. Budget
5. Brief information on project implementors

IOM and EF reserve the right to verify all information included in the application. If there is a discrepancy or the submitted information is found to be inaccurate, the application may be declared invalid and the applicant ineligible. Incomplete applications will not be considered.

**Evaluation criteria**

The selection process is open and competitive. The priority in the selection will be given to the participants of the Youth Initiative Fair. Applications must meet the deadline and eligibility requirements outlined above. If any of the requested information is missing, outdated or incorrect, the application may be rejected solely on that basis and the application will not be evaluated further.

**Applications will be evaluated based upon the following criteria:**

* Key role and project managerial responsibilities of the young leader are clearly described
* Relevance to the priorities of the competition and social significance of the proposed project
* Logical coherence, feasibility and alignment with its goals, objectives and expected results of the proposed project
* Validity of planned expenses with market prices
* Sustainability of expected project results

**Apply**

All interested applicants must submit their applications **in Russian** via email to gannadurdiye@iom.int no later than **23:59 on 12 June 2022 Ashgabat time (GMT+5)**.

All applicants will be informed of the selection decision in writing.

For additional information and/or questions, please contact: IOM - Archabil Avenue, 21, UN Building, Ashgabat, Turkmenistan, by phone 48-84-07/06 (414/415) or by email: gannadurdiye@iom.int