

Call for proposals

TOGETHER IN ACTION

Empowering Local Communities for Sustainable and Inclusive Futures



Co-funded by
the European Union



ALDA - European Association for Local Democracy

Together in Action: Empowering Local Communities for Sustainable and Inclusive Futures

Sub-granting Scheme

Call for proposals

18/02/2025 - 18/04/2025

1. Introduction and background

In order to promote good governance and citizen participation at the local level in Europe and beyond, ALDA supports citizens and groups of citizens in their initiatives aimed at improving their local context, building bridges with local authorities in order to make the change real. In this framework, ALDA works through a participatory approach and the method of multilateral decentralised cooperation, always focusing on strong partnerships between local authorities and civil society organisations.

ALDA aims at **strengthening a worldwide global alliance of local and regional authorities and civil society actors working together in local communities**, in order to make them more resilient, socially and economically successful, more inclusive, sustainable and fair. This call for proposals seeks to **support initiatives that are aimed at fostering European Citizenship** and at supporting an inclusive and people-oriented economic local development all over Europe. Additionally, the aim is to cultivate a profound **sense of "local ownership" and engagement within communities**.

1.1 The CERV Programme

The project falls under the umbrella of the **CERV programme**, which seeks to support and develop **open, rights-based, democratic, equal and inclusive societies** based on the rule of law. That includes a vibrant and empowered civil society, encouraging people's democratic, civic

and social participation and cultivating the rich diversity of European society, based on our common values, history and memory.

2. The Call for proposals

The call for proposals will fund different organisations developing their own projects at the local level, widening public knowledge, awareness and interest about the EU key policies and strategies. In particular the thematic focus of the regranted actions should have a clear link to [ALDA's thematic hubs](#).

ALDA aims at strengthening a worldwide global alliance of local and regional authorities and civil society actors working together in local communities, in order to make them more resilient, socially and economically successful, more inclusive, sustainable and fair. This call seeks to support **16 impactful initiatives** that promote a sense of belonging to the European Union and aim at fostering **European Citizenship** by improving conditions for civic and democratic participation in Europe, supporting an inclusive and people-oriented economic local development all over Europe. Additionally, the aim is to cultivate a profound sense of "local ownership" and engagement within communities. ALDA's work program aligns with various EU policy initiatives, contributing to the development of a more democratic Union, fostering dialogue, promoting good governance, and enhancing citizen engagement across all levels.

3. Size of the grants

The overall budget amount for this activity sums up to **160.000 Eur**.

The grants awarded will be: **10.000 Eur each, 16 projects** in total.

4. Eligible entities

In order to be eligible for granting the organisation must have all the characteristics below:

- Be a **legal entity**;
- Be a **non-profit organization**;
- Be **established in a Member State** of the EU;
- Respect EU values as laid down in Art. 2 of the Treaty on European Union and the EU Charter of fundamental rights;
- Commit to ALDA's "Gender Equality and anti discrimination policy" and to sign the statements for members, if they have yet to do so.
- Be **directly responsible for the preparation and management of the action**, not acting as an intermediary.
- Be a **member of ALDA before the signature of the grant contract**.

5. Thematic focus

The call for proposals will fund different organisations developing their own projects at the local level, widening public knowledge, awareness and interest about the EU key policies, values and strategies.

ALDA works with and for local resilient communities, **to address the future challenges from a democratic, environmental, social and economic point of view**. This call for proposals seeks to support initiatives that are aimed at fostering **European Citizenship** by improving conditions for civic and democratic participation in Europe, at promoting environmentally sustainable communities - in line with the Green Deal - and at supporting an inclusive and people-oriented economic local development all over Europe.

Specifically applicants should focus their action on two aspects:

1. Strengthening Civic Participation in the EU

In alignment with the CERV Programme, projects should strengthen citizens' engagement and participation in democratic life while empowering individuals and organizations to understand, advocate for, and actively contribute to the respect of EU rights and values at the local level.

Values of non-discrimination and equality (including gender equality), and the promotion of inclusivity must be integrated in all foreseen actions, regardless of their specific objectives. In fact, proposals should clearly articulate how these values will be integrated into the project design, implementation, and outcomes.

2. Aligning with ALDA Thematic Hubs

Applicants must align their actions with the priorities set by ALDA's thematic hubs. Proposals should clearly identify the thematic hub under which their action falls and how it contributes to the overarching goals within that theme.

- **Environment & Climate HUB**
 - Promote inclusive **just transition that leaves no one behind**, empowering marginalised communities and supporting them in the green transition.
 - Promote initiatives that bring to the territory the **Green Deal** and its ambitions, especially related to **sustainable food, clean energy, circular economy and efficient renovations**.
 - Promoting **Environmental Education** and empowering communities by creating **learning opportunities** for all about the main issues, policies and good practices related to climate and sustainability, especially in connection to water and oceans, food sustainability and energy.
- **Digital and Innovation HUB**
 - Supporting **Digital Transformation** in Local Governance.
 - Enhancing **Digital Skills for Youth** and Future Workforce.

- Promoting **Inclusive Digital Participation**.
- **Gender Inclusion & Human Rights HUB**
 - Advancing **gender-responsive** civic participation and governance. Support initiatives that enhance women's, young girls' and marginalised group's representation in politics and leadership roles.
 - Promote and foster **human rights and social justice initiatives** that protect and advocate for fundamental rights, combat discrimination and support marginalised communities.
 - Countering **hate speech and gender-based violence**: campaigns, training and advocacy efforts that challenge harmful narratives and promote safe, respectful environments.
- **Migration HUB**
 - Support **active participation** and local inclusion of people with migrant backgrounds in decision-making processes starting from the local level.
 - promote **creative community-building initiatives** at the local level that foster inclusion and bring benefits to both migrant and host communities.
 - Capacity-building, knowledge-sharing, combat mis/disinformation, advocacy activities that promote **positive narratives** for key actors working in the migration sector.
- **Youth Empowerment & Education HUB**
 - Promote young people's active participation in society and in decision-making processes at all levels.
 - Support social inclusion and youth with fewer opportunities.
 - Help young people benefit from the digital and green transition.
- **Territorial and Local Development HUB**
 - Promote concrete initiatives about SDGs localisation, in particular focused on SDG11
 - make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe and sustainable.
 - Increase knowledge or experimenting citizens participation on urban regeneration and common uses of public spaces.
 - Contribute to territorial promotion and cultural heritage, especially enhancing local productive, economic, and cultural chains (for instance, sustainable tourism, historical/cultural routes).

6. Eligible activities

The activities foreseen by the applicants must actively engage local communities and the target groups. **Participatory methods will be promoted in order to involve citizens, LAs and CSOs in the process, encouraging synergies among different actors on the territory.** Alda will share its knowledge and expertise on participatory processes in order to support the beneficiaries in the implementation of their actions.

The activities funded must take place in the **European Union**.

The type of activities eligible for this call are listed below (the activities can be local, cross-border and transnational):

- **Awareness raising activities:** e.g. street actions, shows or workshops, focus groups.
- **Creative and cultural actions:** e.g. exhibitions, film festivals, theater performances, art contests, artistic installations, street art initiatives, artistic residencies.
- **Exchange of good practices:** e.g. study visits, field visits, exchange events, networking/partnership building activities.
- **Promotion and dissemination activities:** e.g. activism, information campaigns, publications of manuals, audio-visual productions.
- **Training and Capacity-building activities:** e.g. thematic seminars, workshops, conferences, working camps, voluntary activities, training courses, thematic visits, webinars and digital workshops.
- **Initiatives with Universities and Research and Specialisation centres:** e.g. debates, collaborative projects exploring the future of communities.
- Activities that increase the **involvement of citizens and Civil Society Organizations** with local, regional, and national governments, with a focus on shaping policies that foster sustainable, inclusive, and resilient communities.

With the aim of ensuring maximum visibility to the proposed activities, the creation of **synergies with international events or international communication initiatives**, as well as with **international networks**, is strongly encouraged.

Implementing the proposed activity within an initiative, that is **already established on the territory**, is encouraged as well.

The regranted projects will be invited to make strategic connections with ALDA's Thematic Hubs by proposing to **host/co-host/support the organisation of events in synergy with the HUBs**.

The following types of actions are **ineligible**:

- Actions concerned only or mainly with individual sponsorships for participation in workshops, seminars, conferences, congresses.
- Actions concerned only or mainly with individual scholarships for studies or training courses.
- Actions supporting political parties.
- Actions intended to raise funds or promote the visibility of the applicant or its partner(s).
- Actions consisting mainly of research or of study.
- Actions which consist exclusively or primarily in capital expenditure, e.g. land, buildings, equipment and vehicles, except in special circumstances.
- Actions which discriminate - either directly or indirectly, against individuals or groups of people based on any ground such as sexual orientation, genetic information, gender

identity, gender expression, disability, race, color, religion, political beliefs, national origin, age, language, membership of a national minority and ethnic or social origin.

- Actions including proselytism.
- Core funding of the applicant or (where relevant) its partners.

7. Eligible costs

Eligible costs are **actual costs** incurred by the beneficiary which meet all of the following criteria.

The form of the grant will be a **mixed-budget based**, and the reimbursement is foreseen on the basis of actual eligible costs plus a percentage for the personnel costs.

The costs that will be considered as “eligible costs” are actual costs incurred by the beneficiary which meet all of the following criteria:

- They are incurred during the lifetime of the submitted proposal and partnership agreement.
- They are indicated in the estimated overall budget of the submitted proposal.
- They are necessary for the implementation of the project which is the subject of the grant.
- They are identifiable and verifiable, in particular being recorded in the accounting records of the beneficiary and determined according to the applicable accounting standards of the country where the beneficiary is established and according to the usual cost accounting practices of the beneficiary.
- They comply with the requirements of applicable tax and social legislation.
- They are real costs, reasonable, justified, and comply with the principle of sound financial management, in particular regarding economy and efficiency.
- They are not covered through EU grants in the form of contribution to unit costs, lump sums or flat-rate financing.

The costs for flat-rate contribution that will be considered as “eligible costs” are all costs incurred by the beneficiary which meet all of the following criteria:

- They must be declared under the budget line *Personnel costs* set out in the application phase
- They must not cover other kind of costs apart than *Personnel costs*
- They must fulfil the general eligibility conditions for the type of cost concerned
- The cost accounting practices must be applied in a consistent manner, based on objective criteria, regardless of the source of funding.

The work of the staff for the action can be declared as personnel costs, as declared eligible in the call conditions, if they fulfil the general eligibility conditions and are calculated as the percentage in accordance with the method set out: out of the total grant, the staff costs budget line can be considered up to a maximum of 30% of the grant. Applicants can also decide to

lower the percentage from 30% to 20% or 10%, or - in case they consider to have no need for the staff costs - to 0% and use the whole grant as a budget based on actual costs incurred.

Please note that the Value Added Tax (VAT) will be considered as an eligible cost only if it is **not recoverable** under the applicable national VAT legislation, a declaration to prove it needs to be attached in the reporting phase.

8. Duration

The beneficiaries of the sub-grants will sign a partnership agreement with ALDA. The implementation period of the Partnership Agreement, and thus of the re-granted actions, will be **from 9th of May 2025 to the 20th of October 2025**. The beneficiaries can implement their activities within the scope of the Partnership Agreement. The implementation of the granted activities will start after the signature of the **partnership agreement and the correct reception of the needed documents**.

9. Location

Activities must take place in an **EU Member state**.

10. Target

The **target groups** of the Re-granted projects can be one or more of the following:

- Citizens and the local communities;
- Young people between 15 and 29 years old;
- Marginalised Groups (people with a migrant background, Roma, Sinti and Travellers communities, girls and women, LGBTIQA+ people, gender minorities, people with physical/mental/sensorial barriers);
- Local Authorities.

Each action should have 2 types of target:

- **Direct beneficiaries:** individuals who are involved and/or reached directly by the action including both who played an active role and who was exposed in person to the action (eg: consumers who see an installation, students who see a street painting, workshop attendees etc). The direct beneficiaries have to be directly involved in the project activities and their involvement has **to be possible to count and demonstrate**.
- **Indirect beneficiaries:** individuals who do not have a direct connection with the project activities but they could potentially benefit from them through knowledge transfer from the direct beneficiaries (friends, family members, colleagues) or through articles, social media posts, videos, pictures etc.

11. Coverage of costs

The sub granting scheme will cover **100 % of the total project budget**.

All expenses must be reported within the implementation period and together with justificatory documents (contracts, invoices, proof of payments etc). **The contract agreement and reporting to ALDA will only concern all expenses (details on the report will be shared in the financial guidelines) till the threshold amount of 10.000,00 EUR.**

12. Payment

The payment will be realized in two instalments:

1. The first instalment of **60% of the grant contribution** will be submitted after the signature of the Partnership Agreement and upon submission of the corresponding Request for Payment and Financial Identification Form.
2. The final settlement of **40% of the grant contribution** will be paid upon submission of the second Request for Payment and the submission of the final report, within thirty days from the **approval** of the final report (narrative and financial reports, accompanied by all justificatory documents and attachments in originals), duly completed according to the clauses of the Partnership Agreement.

13. Application process and deadline for submission

The call is open from February 18th until April 18th. **The proposals must be submitted in English by the 18th of April 2025 at 23:59 CET** filling in the [Online Application Form](#) with all the required information and attachments. The attached documents shall contain ALL relevant information concerning the action and no additional annexes should be sent.

On **March 10th at 12:00 CET** ALDA will host a webinar to present the call and to answer some questions related to it. Please make sure to attend, by registering [here](#).

Any error and major inconsistency related to the application instruction and the documents required may lead to the rejection of the application. Applicants must verify that their application is complete using the checklist at the end of the application form. Incomplete applications may be rejected.

Taking into account the limited duration of the submission phase, the ALDA team reserves the right to extend the above-mentioned deadline.

14. Application Package

The applicant will be required to upload the following documents before submitting the application:

- [Annex I. Budget proposal correctly signed](#)
- [Annex II. Declaration of Honor correctly signed](#)

The Application Form shall be filled-in in all its parts in English.

15. Support sessions during the writing process

The applicants will receive support by the Alda Team during the proposal writing process. The questions have to be sent to the following email address: regranting@alda-europe.eu

16. Evaluation criteria

The projects to be awarded and the exact amount of financial support will be decided by the **Selection Committee (SeC)** following the principles of sound financial management, namely value for money and costs/effectiveness. Upon completion of the **Administrative and Eligibility Check**, the applications that meet all the eligibility criteria will be evaluated by the **Selection Committee (SeC)**, composed of at least 5 ALDA people, identified by the ALDA Coordination Board. A Secretary of the SeC will be appointed and they will oversee the evaluation process.

To safeguard fairness and transparency, the SeC will be divided into Selection Teams, coordinated by the SeC Secretary.

The evaluation process will be realised following an **Evaluation Grid**, based on a series of quantitative and qualitative award criteria.

COMPULSORY ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

The applicant is a Member of ALDA before the signature of the grant contract	✓
The applicant is a legal entity, private non-profit organisation (private body)	✓
The target of the action is one or more of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Citizens and the local communities; • Young people between 15 and 29 years old; 	✓

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marginalised Groups (people with a migrant background, Roma, Sinti and Travellers people, girls and women, LGBTIQA+ people, people with Physical/Mental/Sensorial barriers); • Local Authorities. 	
The applicant is directly responsible for the preparation and management of the action, not acting as an intermediary.	✓
The applicant is legally established in one of the EU Member States	✓
The applicant respects EU values - as laid down in Art.2 of the Treaty on European Union and the EU Charter of fundamental rights and ALDA “Gender Equality and Anti Discrimination Policy” .	✓
The action will be completed before the 20th of October 2025	✓
The applicant is not the beneficiary of any other ongoing 2025 Operating Grant funded under the CERV program (call for proposal CERV-2024-OG-SGA).	✓

RELEVANCE OF THE ACTION

The project proposal is relevant to the objectives and the key priorities of the action.	(1-7 points)
The profile, experience and activities of the applicants are relevant for the field of the application. ¹	(1-7 points)
The target group is clearly identified and the expected results meet their needs.	(1-7 points)

QUALITY OF THE PROJECT DESIGN AND IMPLEMENTATION

The project objectives are clearly defined, realistic and address the needs and goals of the applicants;	(1-5 points)
The proposed methodology is clear, adequate and feasible and the project work plan is clear, complete and effective;	(1-5 points)
The activities that applicants commit to carry out satisfy the principles of economy, efficiency and effectiveness;	(1-5 points)

¹ (1 point = not clearly specified; 3 points less than 5 years of experience with similar projects/activities; 5 points between 5 and 15 years of experience; 7 points more than 15 years of experience)

The activities are designed in an accessible and inclusive way, with regards to racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, (dis)ability, age, gender, sex or sexual orientation;	(1-5 points)
The project incorporates the use of digital tools and methods;	(1-5 points)
The project is designed in an eco-friendly way and incorporates green practices in different project phases;	(1-5 points)

IMPACT

The project proposal includes concrete and logical steps to integrate the project results in the regular work of participating organisation;	(1-5 points)
The project has the potential to positively impact its participants and participating organisations, as well as the wider community;	(1-5 points)
The project proposal includes an appropriate way to evaluate the project outcomes;	(1-5 points)
The project proposal includes concrete and effective steps to make the results of the project known within the participating organisations, to share the results with other organisations and the public and to publicly acknowledge the European Union funding (e.g. the communication & dissemination strategy is clear, the communication tools and channels are clearly identified)	(1-5 points)

ADDITIONAL POINTS - COOPERATION ARRANGEMENTS, POTENTIAL COLLABORATIONS

The project demonstrate exceptional strategic merit - considering elements such as innovation, coherence with ALDA's strategy, and outreach	+ 3 points
The project clearly foresees cooperation with other key local actors and Local Authorities.	+ 3 points
The applicant agrees to adopt an internal policy, by the end of the project, that foresees Gender equality and Anti discrimination guidelines to be implemented within the organisation. ²	+ 3 points

² Here is the reference of Alda's [Gender Equality and Anti-Discrimination Policy](#)

16. Evaluation process

The results will be sent by email to every applicant and will be published on the website of the project **within 9th of May 2025**.

The projects to be awarded and the exact amount of financial support will be decided by the **Selection Committee (SeC)** following the principles of sound financial management, namely value for money and costs/effectiveness. A minimum and maximum score will be foreseen. The **SeC** will have the final decision on the selection of the re-granted projects and **its verdict will be un-appealable**.

The SeC may reject an application if it has selected another that is of a similar nature but has been awarded a higher score.

If there are proposals that demonstrate exceptional strategic merit - considering elements such as innovation, coherence with ALDA's strategy, and outreach - **they may receive additional extra points during the evaluation process**. These proposals might be identified by a SeC member or by the SeC secretary and brought to the attention of ALDA's coordination board.

A minimum and maximum score will be foreseen. The SeC may decide not to allocate all the available funds if it finds that there are too few applications of the quality required to receive a grant. In other words, the mere availability of funds should not lead to the award of contracts for applications that do not reach the necessary level of quality. **The SeC may reject an application if it has selected another that is of a similar nature but has been awarded a higher score**. In addition to this, **the SeC may draw up a list by subject or geographical area according to the guidelines for applicants**. The latter will not be a cause for potential discrimination of applicants but on the contrary it will ensure that there is not an excessive disparity among funded geographical areas.

17. Reporting

The beneficiaries will provide the necessary **narrative and financial reports in English** accompanied by the justificatory documents (invoices, receipts etc.), using the templates provided, including photos/pictures and its outreach (online links, publications, lists of participants etc).

The justificatory documents must be provided for the funding expenditures.

The reporting of expenditure must be carried out by means of real-cost reporting, the related expenses must be effectively incurred and substantiated by means of appropriate expenditure and payment documents.

In order to avoid double funding, all expenditure documents must allow direct traceability to the project by reporting, in general and where relevant, the title of the Project “Together in Action: Empowering Local Communities for Sustainable and Inclusive Futures”

Additional details will be provided during the online webinar that will be recorded.

18. Communication & visibility

The selected re-granted projects must fully respect the **visibility and communication requirements**, including the **logos of ALDA and of the EU emblem** (and the reference “Funded by the European Union”, and the reference “Funded by the European Union”. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or CERV Programme. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.”) in all publications, references, documents, news and any other visibility and communication action regarding the project, in line with the [Communication Guidelines of the European Commission](#).

19. Contacts

All the questions related to the present call for proposals and the participation modalities have to be addressed exclusively to the following email address: regranting@alda-europe.eu