

Swiss Agency for Development and Co-operation (SDC)

2. Project Contributions

Background

The Swiss government channels most of its funds for NGO interventions through large Swiss NGOs operating under multi-annual Programme Contributions. Smaller Swiss civil society organisations can apply for project co-financing under the Project Contributions scheme outlined below. Interested organisations from developing countries should aim to establish partnerships with Swiss NGOs in order to act as a local co-operation partner (see “Tips”).

Types of Grant

Co-financing of development projects implemented by Swiss NGOs.

Grant Size

The minimum grant size is CHF 25,000, while the maximum amount is CHF 150,000 per year.

Own Contribution

Organisations will have to contribute at least 50% of the project costs, raised from public donations in Switzerland.

Funding Priorities

Swiss development co-operation aims to support the efforts of underprivileged and poor countries in the South to secure sustainable developments for themselves. All projects should therefore address a priority need of the target population and avoid negative impacts on gender issues or the environment. Projects should aim to build the capacities of the local population to take control of their own development and should not create further dependencies on foreign assistance.

Project proposals do not necessarily have to correspond to one of the Swiss Agency for Development and Co-operation (SDC) priorities for the particular country. However, projects should fit into regional or national development frameworks

or Poverty Reduction Strategies and should not have a negative impact on actions already promoted by the SDC in this country. The geographical focus of this scheme is not limited to countries upon which Switzerland currently concentrates its development co-operation.

Grantmaking Criteria

The applicant must be a non-for-profit Swiss NGO formed under Swiss law which has its operational and administrative center in Switzerland and has been in existence for several years. Organisations based in Geneva or the Vaud Canton do not qualify for direct access to Swiss federal funds and should apply to their respective Cantonal Co-operation Federation.

In addition, the eligible NGOs must:

- Have a public presence and popular rooting and be engaged in public dialogue about North-South co-operation, with development co-operation being one of its main activities.
- Demonstrate its organisational and personal capacity for programme management. Moreover, NGOs should identify projects in close co-operation with a Southern partner organisation and in co-ordination with other Swiss NGOs to avoid a duplication of activities.
- Demonstrate sound financial management and administration, with transparent and audited accounts. Audit departments should be separate from the secretariat and board of the organisation.
- Minimize its administration and public relations expenditures in Switzerland and devote most of its resources received from public donations to actions in developing countries.

All applications must comply with the general principles laid down by the federal law on international development co-operation and humanitarian aid (dated March 19th, 1976). Project proposals will be appraised regarding the following criteria:

- Projects must address one or more basic needs of the target population, which has to take ownership of the project and actively contribute to the project's successful implementation. Ideally, the local population should have initiated the project idea themselves. Project activities should not discriminate against anybody on the basis of race, gender, creed or political views.
- The local partner organisation must have the capacity to contribute to the implementation of the project's activities, while the Swiss NGO should aim to strengthen these capacities in the course of the project. The local population should be included in the conception, management and assessment of all activities.

- The content and structure of the project should be clearly defined and set within an appropriate timeframe. Estimated costs for implementing the project should be reasonable in relation to the targeted outcomes. All project activities must be sensitive to the social and cultural context and integrate local structures and development capabilities.
- Projects must make a positive contribution to the respect for human rights and rights of children and should not have adverse effects on the status of women in the local population or on the dependent children of the adults concerned. Activities should take environmental concerns into consideration and contribute to sustainable development.
- All project activities must be sustainable and cover recurring operational costs to avoid new dependencies on external aid.

Guidelines

Guidelines for this scheme called (“Funding from SDC to Swiss NGOs for development co-operation projects in countries in the South”) can be downloaded from the SDC web site under “Development Co-operation” – “Co-operation with the NGOs”: www.sdc.admin.ch.

Project Duration

Not specified.

Deadline

The closing dates for applications are February 15th and September 15th of each year.

Application Forms

No template application forms exist. The guidelines provide information as to the format and content of the application.

Application and Procedures

Applications must be submitted in two copies and have to include a cover page, a description of the project and a budget detailing income and expenditure. NGOs which have not yet received funding from the SDC have to include a dossier providing background information on the applicant organisation, including copies of its certificate of incorporation and details of membership of the

Central Office of Charities (if applicable), list of board members, sources of funding, organisational chart, annual financial reports, etc. For more information, please refer to the guidelines published by the SDC.

For applications received by February 15th, organisations will be informed of the SDC decision by the end of April, with funding starting in July the same year. Organisations applying by September 15th will be informed by the end of November and will receive funds as of January the following year.

Language

German, French, Italian or English.

Tips

Organisations from developing countries interested in acting as a local partner for a Swiss NGO operating under this scheme should contact the regional departments or country offices of SDC. Please consult the “Countries” section on the SDC web site under www.sdc.admin.ch. SDC has launched a thematic web site, which presents SDC’s priorities and projects in the field of health (including SRHR and HIV / AIDS). Please visit www.sdc-health.ch.

NAME OF GRANT PROGRAMME Project Contributions
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NAME IN ENGLISH Swiss Agency for Development and Co-operation
ACRONYM DEZA (German) DDC (French) DSC (Italian) SDC (English)
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