

"Budgets for Citizens" project is funded by the European Union



"Budgets for Citizens" Project

Call for Sub-grant Applications for CSOs (Media) to Involve Young Budget Specialists on an Employment Basis

1. About the "Budgets for Citizens" Project

The Armenian Lawyers' Association NGO, as the lead organization, together with its partners - the Economic Development and Research Center NGO and Agora Central Europe Czech NGO - is implementing the "Budgets for Citizens" project (hereinafter referred to as the Project).

The Project was launched on December 8, 2022, and is funded by the European Union. The Project duration is 48 months. **The main objective** of the Project is to promote an inclusive and transparent budgetary process in Armenia with the participation of civil society. **The specific objective** of the Project is to contribute to strengthening civil society participation in the state budgetary processes.

2. About the Project's Sub-grant Component

The results of the baseline research¹ conducted within the Project framework indicate that only 20% of surveyed CSOs have monitored budget performance, while 80% have never conducted budget monitoring. At the same time, the monitoring activities were mainly carried out at the local government level. The low level of monitoring by Armenian CSOs in the budgetary process was also emphasized by representatives of line ministries. The low level of participation was also recorded within the Open Budget Survey. In particular, according to the comparison of Armenia's and other countries' participation scores, Armenia received 6 points in 2021², and 11 points in 2023³. Although the score doubled in 2023, the level of participation in the budgetary process continues to remain low in Armenia, unlike other countries (for example, Georgia received 44 points in both 2021 and 2023).

¹ <https://budgets.am/en/1167.html>

² <https://internationalbudget.org/open-budget-survey/country-results/2021/armenia>

³ <https://internationalbudget.org/sites/default/files/country-surveys-pdfs/2023/open-budget-survey-armenia-2023-en.pdf>

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The results of the baseline research conducted within the Project framework also revealed that the main skills in the budget field that CSOs aim to improve are budget analysis (83.8%) and access to and use of budget information (82.5%), followed by monitoring (73.8%) and advocacy (71.3%). The suggestions made by participants during focus group discussions conducted within the research framework referred to the need to develop analytical skills, as well as monitoring and advocacy skills. Regarding simplified budgets, the vast majority of CSOs participating in the survey (more than 90%) have never developed a simplified budget.

Based on the needs identified through the above-mentioned research, two streams of a budget training program (hereinafter referred to as the Course) have been organized for CSOs and media in the preceding months, with the main purpose of addressing the needs identified by the research. To address these needs, the training topics were prepared by the Project experts, developing them to be as accessible, substantive, and easy to understand as possible. Participants also had the opportunity to have separate meetings with experts to receive advice and additional information on the training materials and topics.

Among other things, CSOs and media were trained on theoretical and practical topics related to budget analysis and monitoring implementation in the budgetary process, and learned about the specifics of developing simplified budgets and the concept of citizen's budget. In parallel, young professionals were also trained in two streams⁴ using the same training program and methods. The young professionals from the first stream have been employed since November 2024 in CSOs and media that won sub-grants in the first phase on a competitive basis⁵ and are helping them to conduct budget analysis and monitoring, have developed simplified budgets for target areas, and will also implement advocacy campaigns in target areas (sectors)⁶. Within the framework of this sub-grant, the one-year salary of a young professional will be provided through providing an appropriate sub-grant to the CSO/media.

For the purpose of employment in CSOs/media, the Project, based on the results of the training programs aimed at transferring budgetary knowledge to young professionals within the framework of the "Budgets for Citizens" project, compiles a list of 8 young professionals and at its discretion determines the young professional who will be employed in the selected CSO/media.

It is important to know that a CSO/media applying for a sub-grant for the purpose of involving young professionals in the budget field on a working basis can simultaneously apply for the sub-grant competition announced for the purpose of developing budget monitoring and analysis⁷

⁴ <https://budgets.am/en/1653.html> , <https://budgets.am/en/3308.html>

⁵ The meaning of the concepts "CSOs" and "media" as mentioned within the framework of this announcement is presented in Section 5, which refers to Applicants

⁶ A separate competition has been announced within the Project framework to implement advocacy campaigns in target areas

⁷ (the link to the new announcement will be placed here)

3. Purpose of the Sub-grant Program and Preferred (Allowed) Activities

At this stage of the Project, the launch of the second sub-grants is announced for CSOs and media that have successfully completed **the first and second Courses** and have applied for sub-grant programs announced for the purpose of budget monitoring and analysis within the Project framework, with the purpose of involving young budget specialists on an employment basis in CSOs/media.

3.1. General Purpose:

Providing professional⁸support to CSOs/media for implementing the above-mentioned sub-grant programs by employing young professionals in CSOs and media that have applied for sub-grant programs announced for the purpose of developing budget monitoring and analysis within the Project framework for at least one year.

The general purposes also include analysis, monitoring, and improvement of budgets in target areas, including the development of simplified budgets for target areas, as well as ensuring public participation and increasing public impact in these processes.

3.2. Target Areas and Sectoral Directions

(1) Justice, (2) education, (3) social support, and (4) agriculture.

Directions of target areas:

(1) Justice

a. Judicial and legal, including bankruptcy, advocacy, mediation, notary activities, state registration of civil status acts, state registration and accounting of legal entities, personal data protection, legal expertise, international legal assistance systems,

b. Human rights,

c. Anti-corruption,

d. Police and law enforcement agencies,

e. Penitentiary and probation system,

f. Enforcement service.

(2) Education

a. General education, including pre-school, elementary, basic, secondary,

⁸ In the context of this announcement, the concept of "professional support" implies the performance of work towards budget monitoring and analysis, and the implementation of advocacy campaigns in target areas (sectors)

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- b. Vocational, including preliminary vocational (craft), middle vocational, higher vocational, postgraduate vocational.

(3) Social Support

- a. Integrated social services,
- b. State pension security,
- c. Social assistance,
- d. Demography,
- e. Social protection of family, women, and children,
- f. Social protection of persons with disabilities and the elderly,
- g. Integration or reintegration of refugees, displaced persons, long-term migrants, and forcibly returned citizens of the Republic of Armenia.

(4) Agriculture

- a. Plant cultivation,
- b. Plant sanitation,
- c. Animal husbandry,
- d. Veterinary medicine,
- e. Processing of agricultural products,
- f. Food security,
- g. Food safety.

3.3. The following activities can be implemented within the Project framework:

1. Sign at least a one-year employment contract with the young professional provided by the winning CSO/media and the Project, providing for a monthly salary of 213,750 (including taxes and other payments stipulated by RA legislation) AMD, with a working week of up to 40 hours.
2. Within the framework of the employment contract, provide for the implementation of those actions as work functions that are envisaged by the program proposal submitted for the purpose of implementing budget analysis and monitoring, including the development of simplified budgets for target areas. For the other months, the work

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functions for the implementation of advocacy campaigns can be revised as necessary and in the manner prescribed by RA legislation.

4. Applicants

CSOs and media can apply for the sub-grant program under the conditions specified below. CSOs and media established in accordance with the RA legislation can apply for the sub-grant program competition if they meet the following conditions:

4.1. In the case of CSOs: They have been registered in accordance with the RA legislation by the Agency of State Register of Legal Entities of the Staff of the RA Ministry of Justice (hereinafter referred to as state registration) as a non-commercial and non-state/local (community) organization.

Note 1: Separate subdivisions of CSOs cannot apply separately for the sub-grant program.

4.2. In the case of media: They have received state registration as a non-commercial or non-profit organization, or they do not have state registration but have been created and are operated by a non-commercial or non-state/local (community) organization that has state registration.

Note 2: CSOs and media that have been established by state, local (community), or commercial organizations (bodies) cannot claim to receive funding from sub-grant programs.

4.3. They have completed the training programs⁹ aimed at developing the skills of CSOs and media within the framework of the "Budgets for Citizens" project in accordance with all the conditions specified in the announcement and have received a certificate of completion of the training program from the "Budgets for Citizens" project.

4.4. They have applied for the sub-grant application competition announced for the purpose of conducting budget monitoring and analysis in target areas within the framework of the "Budgets for Citizens" project.

4.5. They agree to apply for sub-grant programs announced within the Project framework for the purpose of implementing advocacy campaigns in target areas. In the absence of agreement, in each case, the Project (Grant Committee) will separately discuss the term and budget of this sub-grant with the applicant, or in case of applying as a consortium, with the Consortium.

4.6. If declared winners, CSOs and media agree to participate in a one-day mandatory training with representatives of the "Budgets for Citizens" project to receive expert,

⁹ <https://budgets.am/en/1648.html> , <https://budgets.am/en/3303.html>

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including financial, advice on the implementation of sub-grants. In case of applying as a consortium, each member CSO/media of the consortium must participate in the mandatory training.

Note 3: A sub-grant agreement will not be signed with CSOs and CSO consortia that refuse to participate in this training and discussion.

4.7. They bear direct responsibility for the preparation and complete implementation of their sub-grant program.

4.8. In the case of a sub-grant program application submitted through a consortium, it must be stipulated that the employment contract with the young professional will be signed by the main organization that applied for the sub-grant for the purpose of budget monitoring and analysis.

4.9. In the case of a sub-grant program submitted by media, the main applicant of the program must be a media organization or at least one of the consortium members must be a media organization. For the purposes of this announcement, the requirements for media are presented in Section 5.2.

5. Budget and Eligible Expenses

Within the Project framework, up to 8 sub-grants will be provided to CSOs in the amount of up to 2,565,000 (two million five hundred and sixty-five thousand)¹⁰ The provided sub-grant must be entirely directed to the salary of the young professional, with whom an employment contract of at least one year is signed, providing for a monthly salary of 213,750 (including taxes and other payments stipulated by RA legislation) AMD, with a working week of up to 40 hours. In any case, the amount of the budget to be provided will be considered taking into account the existence of the conditions set out in Section 5.5 of this announcement.

Expenses to be incurred before the official deadline for granting the sub-grant, as well as expenses not related to the sub-grant, will not be accepted. Only activities specified in paragraph 4.3 of this announcement will be funded.

6. Application Evaluation and Selection Criteria

The application evaluation and selection criteria are presented in Annex 2 of the ALA procurement policy, which relates to the sub-grant procedure under the "Budgets for Citizens" project.

7. Sub-grant Application Submission Procedure

All interested CSOs and media that meet the requirements presented in this announcement are invited to participate in this competition by completing the form attached to this application.

¹⁰ The amount of the sub-grant budget may change depending on the currency exchange rate

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The following documents must be attached to the sub-grant application:

1. Submission of confirmation regarding application to the sub-grant competition announced for the purpose of conducting budget analysis and monitoring, including the development of simplified budgets for target areas within the Project framework.
2. In case of a consortium, written agreement from all members that the employment contract with the young professional will be signed by the main applicant, but the professional's work functions will be directed towards the implementation of program activities regardless of which organization is responsible for a specific component.
3. Written agreement (if available) that the applicant, or in case of applying as a consortium, the Consortium, will apply for the sub-grant program announced for the purpose of implementing advocacy campaigns in target areas within the Project framework, and the young professional will also be involved in that program.

All documents must be submitted in Armenian. If necessary, the sub-grant committee may request additional documents from applicants, as well as the originals of the submitted documents.

8. Duration

The duration of sub-grant programs is 12 (twelve) months. In any case, the issue of the term will be considered taking into account the existence of the conditions set out in Sections 3 and 4.5 of this announcement.

9. Other Requirements

The sub-grant application form, appendices, and attached documents must be signed by the head of the organization leading the Program and sealed with the seal of that CSO/media.

The complete application and attached documents must be sent electronically to the email address info@armla.am, with the subject line "Young Budget Specialists Sub-grant Application".

Attention: Applications submitted in person will not be considered.

The deadline for submitting applications for this phase is **June 10, 2025, at 18:00**. The submitted application and attached documents will not be returned to the applicant, regardless of whether the application has been accepted or not. Only one package of documents is required to be sent. All issues related to sub-grants are resolved in accordance with the ALA grant policy. Decisions on granting sub-grants will be made by July 2, 2025. Information about the winners will be published on the Project website: <https://budgets.am/>.

The start of sub-grant implementation is **July 15, 2025**.

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If you have questions or clarifications regarding the program proposal, you can submit them in writing to info@armla.am, which will be summarized and the answers will be presented during the information meeting.

For technical questions, you can contact the Project's Grant Coordinator Artak Saribekyan by calling +37410 540199, or by email at info@armla.am.

10. Information Meetings

Online information meetings will be organized by the Project to inform CSOs/media about the sub-grants provided by this announcement. The announcement regarding participation and registration for these meetings will be posted on the Project website¹¹ and on the Facebook platform¹².

Note 4:

The deadlines and conditions mentioned in the announcement may be changed if necessary. In case of changes, the information will be published on the Project website.

Attention:

Applications that are submitted after the specified deadline and/or do not include all the required information or do not meet the Project conditions will not be considered.

Documents attached to this announcement:

1. ALA grant policy,
2. Sub-grant proposal application form,
3. Appendix 1. Logical framework of the Program.

¹¹ <https://budgets.am/>

¹² <https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100090358352230>