



Call for Proposals

Protecting Civic Space in Asia-Pacific during COVID-19

The International Center for Not-for-Profit Law (ICNL) is pleased to invite proposals for grants as part of its project to counter COVID-related restrictions on civic freedoms and protect civic space during the pandemic. Grants of up to \$25,000 USD are available for projects meeting the criteria discussed below. The activity funded by each grant must be completed by September 30, 2021.

Applications will be accepted on a rolling basis until June 30, 2021 or until available funds are depleted.

Background

The COVID-19 pandemic has spawned a global crisis for fundamental freedoms. In response to the virus, governments worldwide have adopted [emergency laws and other measures](#) that purport to limit contagion, but also restrict rights and constrain civic space. At the same time, CSOs often lack adequate means to advocate for their interests while working remotely and restricted in their movement due to sanitary-health control measures, including stay-at-home orders and bans on gatherings and other means of in-person participation.

In this context, the International Center for Not-for-Profit Law (ICNL) seeks to support civil society organizations (CSOs) in the Indo-Pacific to carry out short-term, high-impact activities to protect civic space and resist restrictive governmental responses to COVID-19.

Proposals may seek to support civic space during the COVID-19 pandemic by addressing topics including, but not limited to, countering authoritarian and securitized pandemic approaches; addressing COVID-related disinformation and free expression restrictions; improving procedures for online consultations and public participation during a time of lockdowns; strengthening oversight of contact tracing apps, surveillance and the collection and use of personal data through artificial intelligence or other means as part of government public health approaches; in-depth monitoring to track COVID-19 related governance measures and their impacts on civil society; advocacy campaigns to improve emergency/COVID-related laws and decisions impacting the right to free expression, association, and/or peaceful assembly; and organizing local meetings or trainings to promote local participation in legal reform processes related to emergency measures.

The applicant may select from a broad range of activities designed to achieve the grant's objective, including, but not limited to:

- Collecting information around the implementation of COVID-19 regulations and legislation affecting CSOs; developing legal analyses, white papers, and policy briefs; and proposing legal and policy recommendations to protect civic space.
- Developing new tools, strategies, activities, and alliances to advocate for greater protections of fundamental freedoms in response to COVID-19.
- Conducting roundtables, seminars, or informational campaigns to formulate civil society strategies and raise awareness on specific topics related to civic space constraints during COVID-19.

*This list is illustrative, and ICNL strongly encourages applicants with innovative ideas and approaches not described above to apply. *Please note that **service-related or direct public health interventions** (e.g. providing COVID-19 relief supplies or trainings on hygiene practices) are **not** relevant to this call and will not be considered. Due to the number of expected applications, only shortlisted candidates will be contacted.*

Application Instructions

To apply for a grant, applicants must submit the following items **in English**:

- Application coversheet (see below).
- Proposal (see below).
- Line-item budget (no more than \$25,000 USD) **using provided template**.
- Budget narrative, **using provided template**.
- Resumes/CVs of staff to be engaged in the project.
- Background information about the applicant organization (e.g., website links or informational materials).

Content of Proposal

In three pages or less, please describe your proposal. The proposal should address the following topics:

- Identify a clear challenge for CSOs or civic space resulting from government responses to COVID-19 that the proposed initiative will address.
- Provide an overview of the proposed initiative to overcome, ease, or navigate the challenge, including specific activities and anticipated outcomes.

- Describe applicant’s experience implementing similar activities proposed in this call.
- Identify other CSOs, government bodies, and other stakeholders that will be engaged in the activities outlined in the application.
- Provide a proposed activity plan with specific goals and a timeline, recognizing that grant activities must be completed no later than September 30, 2021.

Eligibility Requirements

Open to any non-governmental organization headquartered in the Indo-Pacific region.¹

Selection Criteria

Applications will be evaluated based on the following factors:

- Compliance with eligibility requirements and application procedures.
- Demonstrated commitment of the applicant to improving civic space.
- Quality of proposed project, including the project’s innovations, the proposed methodology/design, and feasibility of the project (e.g., activities are targeted to achieve stated results, and anticipated results are realistic and attainable).
- Likelihood that the proposed project will enhance civic space.
- Proposed budget and value for money.
- Inclusion of reasonable indicators to measure project success.

How to Apply

Interested applicants can apply by completing the application coversheet and submitting it, along with all required documents, by email (see instructions below).

Terms of Reference

The grant recipient will be required to submit a final report on the use of funds, activities conducted, and outcomes of their projects prior to receiving their final grant disbursement. All project activities must be completed no later than September 30, 2021.

¹ For the purposes of this call, the Indo-Pacific includes most countries in Asia (East Asia, South Asia, and Southeast Asia) and the Pacific Islands, but does not include Pakistan or Afghanistan. To verify eligibility, please email asia@icnl.org. Not-for-profit organizations are preferred applicants. For-profit organizations carrying out public benefit activities, civic space work, or with relevant expertise interested in applying should contact ICNL to verify eligibility.

Deadline

Applications will be accepted on a rolling basis until June 30, 2021 or until available funds are depleted. Due to the number of expected applications, only shortlisted candidates will be contacted.

Application Coversheet

Please complete the coversheet and submit it, along with your proposal and other application documents, to asia@icnl.org. Please ensure that the subject of your email is "COVID-19 Grant Application 2021."

Full Name:

Position:

Organization:

Mailing Address Line 1:

Mailing Address Line 2:

Mailing Address Line 3:

Country:

Email Address:

Telephone Number:

Fax Number:

Click on the boxes below to indicate that you have properly completed the application.

- I have attached a proposal that is no more than three pages in length.
- I have attached the CVs of staff to be engaged in the project.
- I have attached a line-item budget of no more than \$25,000, alongside a budget narrative, **using the provided templates.**