

Grassroots and Parent Activism in Education

**EDUCATION SUPPORT PROGRAM
EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAM
OPEN SOCIETY INITIATIVE FOR EUROPE**

2020

Program description

Open Society Foundations' Education Support Program, Early Childhood Program, and the Open Society Initiative for Europe are pleased to invite applications for its **Grassroots and Parent Activism in Education** 2020 call for proposals.

This year's call recognizes the serious impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on children's learning, particularly on vulnerable school and pre-school age children from disadvantaged socio-economic backgrounds or with unique educational needs. The closure of schools risks widening the knowledge and social gap for many children as they face challenges accessing online learning, as well as other support mechanisms. This call seeks to support grassroots-level civil society initiatives which address these education challenges and their impacts, during and after the pandemic, with particular attention on strengthening community level participation creating a community base and engaging parents. This year's call includes flexible funding for organizational strengthening and collaborative work.

Organizations/ informal groups can apply for a period of 12 months for up to 20,000 USD, with eligible expenses starting from September 2020. The funding includes support for programmatic work and flexible funding for organizational strengthening, with the latter amounting to a maximum of 30% of the grant. Applications are limited to one per organisation/informal group.

Programmatic module

The call aims to support the programmatic work of grassroots-level civil society groups to address the education challenges of vulnerable children aged 0-18 from disadvantaged socio-economic backgrounds or with unique educational needs. They can pursue this goal through a variety of means; examples may include, but are not restricted to the following:

Practices/Models

- Introducing and strengthening classroom and school/preschool-level practices that foster equity in education
- Developing innovative models of improving or expanding education opportunities for vulnerable school and pre-school age children which can be in-person, online, or a combination
- Documenting and sharing good practices used for the education of vulnerable children or children with special needs during the homeschooling period, including online, low technology and no-technology solutions
- Developing and advocating for solutions that support children's learning gaps as a result of the pandemic



© Open Society Foundations
Some Rights Reserved

224 West 57th Street
New York, NY 10019
P. +1 212-548-0600
opensocietyfoundations.org

- Securing and expanding joint learning opportunities of vulnerable children and children from more secure backgrounds
- Documenting good practices, guides and strategies around issues of child protection, as the pandemic increases the risk of violence, exploitation, and abuse against vulnerable children
- Collecting lessons learned from the challenges of the COVID-19 affected home learning environment

Agency, with special focus on parent activism:

- Strengthening the agency of students and educators in fighting discrimination and improving both access and equitable education provision
- Supporting self-organizing efforts of parents in fighting discrimination and improving equitable access to quality education/preschool education
- Supporting parents' joint actions in advocating and addressing issues of COVID-19 related homeschooling, and how does it affect the educational success of marginalized children
- Improving access of parents from disadvantaged backgrounds to school governance bodies and policy-making
- Facilitating improved teacher-parent relations and collaborations, especially where parents from disadvantaged backgrounds are concerned

Attitudes:

- Challenging negative stereotyping, prejudice and racism among educators, school/preschool administrators, students, children and parents;

Claiming public space in education:

- Articulating and communicating key messages regarding issues of inequality and injustice in education exacerbated even more by the situation with COVID-19 to the broader public as well as local, county and national policymakers
- Monitoring the response of educational institutions towards the COVID-19 impact on education and advocate for targeted support to children from disadvantaged backgrounds or with unique educational needs.

Optional module on organizational strengthening and collaborative work

Initiatives that wish to dedicate efforts to increase the sustainability of their operations, as well as strengthen their collaboration with other grassroots education initiatives may include

up to **30%** of the requested grant amount for this purpose. Please complete the relevant section of the proposal form and the budget line in the budget form.

Examples of eligible activities for the organizational strengthening and collaborative work may include, but are not restricted to the following:

- Board and staff retreats, including coaching and training
- Facilitated support for the development of an organizational strategy
- Membership and volunteer outreach, recruitment and development
- Learning opportunities for staff to strengthen and expand their expertise on education;
- Capacity building costs related to fundraising, communication, and advocacy, including the hiring of new staff to perform these tasks
- Strengthening of financial management, including (but not restricted) to hiring a finance manager, new software, consultancy costs
- Administrative costs and overhead
- Translation costs – e.g. for applications or reports
- Digital equipment, such as laptops and phones, as well as subscriptions to online communication platform (e.g. Zoom)
- Contributing to collaborative work towards setting up innovative models of sharing resources or jointly owned ventures (sharing office space, accounting services, fundraising or publishing capabilities etc.)
- Contributing to organizing a workshop, group consultation, mentoring sessions, etc. related to areas such as fundraising, financial management, volunteer management, parents organizing etc.
- Contributing towards setting up and coordinating peer-learning groups, as well as working groups to design new interventions, joint projects and advocacy efforts

Grant period and amount

Organizations/ informal groups can apply for a period of 12 months for up to 20,000 USD, with eligible expenses starting from September 2020. Please note that the start date should be in 2020. Co-funding from other sources is not required. The grant amount will be received in pre-financing as one installment. Applications are limited to one per organisation/informal group, with programmatic activities as a requirement, and the organizational strengthening and collaborative work module as optional component. An applicant cannot apply just for the optional module, as detailed below.

Eligibility Criteria

To be considered for support, organizations/informal groups applying for this call for proposals must meet all of the following criteria.

Programmatic criteria:

- address educational equity challenges of vulnerable school and pre-school age children from disadvantaged socio-economic backgrounds or with unique educational needs

Engagement criteria:

- envision activities that build on the grassroots activism of local stakeholders;
- work at the community level and make use of the engagement of community members and volunteer support

Technical criteria:

- implement project activities in Hungary
- be of a not-for-profit character if established as a legal entity, and have a non-profit public benefit purpose if applying as an informal group
- be an informal group with not-for-profit aims, consisting of at least three active individuals older than 18 years old, if applying as an informal group
- work at the community level and make use of volunteer support

When applying for the programmatic activities funding and the optional module, they all must meet the same eligibility criteria. Please note that preference will be given to applicants implementing programmatic activities by local staff/local human resources able to present verifiable results on previous programs and projects.

Evaluation criteria

The programmatic module and the organizational strengthening and collaborative work module will be evaluated separately, based on different criteria. Quality of programmatic activities is a precondition for consideration of the proposal's organizational strengthening and collaborative work module. However, applications cannot be awarded support only for the organizational strengthening and collaborative work module. Please note that proposals will not be judged based on their English-language proficiency, but based on the quality of the proposals against the evaluation criteria. We also understand that there is a high level of uncertainty due to the COVID-19 pandemic, which makes it challenging to plan. With that in mind, we would like to encourage the applicants to do their best in foreseeing any risks and suggest any potential adjustments in the proposal.

Programmatic activities (x10)

The selection committee will consider the extent to which:

- activities in the proposal effectively address well-defined educational equity challenges of vulnerable children aged 0-18 from disadvantaged socio-economic backgrounds or with unique educational needs, especially reflecting on the impact posed by the COVID-19 pandemic on these children (score weight x2)
- the proposal clearly defines the target group(s) and counts on outreach indicators in terms of profile, geography and numbers (score weight x1.25)
- the proposal identifies stakeholders that are relevant for achieving the project's goals (local government, local/regional education institutions, other local organizations, teachers, principals, students, parents, policymakers etc.) and includes a vision for cooperation with them (score weight x1.5)
- the project has engaged in preliminary dialogue with education stakeholders identified as key for achieving the goals of the initiative and amplifying its impact (score weight x1)
- the project presents a realistic action plan for strengthening the agency of parents of vulnerable children or children with unique educational needs, offering space and time for parents' self-organizing efforts and supporting their activities to advocate for equity in education (score weight x1.25)
- the planned activities and their implementation is realistic and described clearly and comprehensively, taking into account the risks and uncertainties posed by the situation with the COVID-19 (score weight x1.5)
- the proposal outlines a clear plan for communicating the results of their work (score weight x0.5)
- the budget is justified, balanced, and reflects the activities planned (score weight x1)

Optional module—flexible funding for organizational strengthening and collaborative work (x5)

- the module supports the organization/informal group to strengthen its operations and impact (score weight x1.5)
- the planned activities aim to attract and engage new members, local staff and volunteers in the work of the organization/informal group (score weight x1)
- the planned activities aim to strengthen the fundraising and financial management capacities (score weight x1)
- the module aspires to foster peer learning and collaboration between different organizations and initiatives (score weight x1.5)

Eligible expenses

Any project-related expenses for which the organization/informal group can obtain receipts/invoices as required by Hungarian accounting standards may be included, with the following exceptions:

- purchase of real estate
- purchase of securities, such as company shares or bonds
- repayment of debts or debt-servicing fees

Note for informal groups or initiatives:

Please make sure to include any taxes and social security contributions to your budget, as the grant will be considered a personal income by public authorities.

How to apply and important dates

The deadline for application is **Thursday, June 25 at 5:00 pm CET**. Incomplete or late applications will not be considered. Project proposals should be submitted in English using the application form and budget template [available for download](#).

Required documentation

Before starting the submission process, make sure to have the following documentation ready. Do not submit the proposal form or budget in PDF format (use editable Excel and Word file formats).

Registered not-for-profit organizations:

- fully completed proposal form
- fully completed budget template form
- the organization's 2019 annual financial report (in case this is not ready, please submit estimates for the 2019 annual income and expenditure)
- CVs of relevant staff members working on the project or involved in the organizational strengthening module

Informal initiatives:

- fully completed proposal form
- fully completed budget template form
- signed and scanned CVs of the 3 project implementers that include the following statement: "I have read the attached proposal and agree to fulfil the role(s) associated with my name."

Application process

Applicants need to use the Open Society Foundations online portal for proposal submissions.

- If you have registered in the past, please use your account details to log in to the portal. If you would like to change the email on an existing account, you should send a request to granteefeedback@opensocietyfoundations.org to update it.
- If you cannot remember your password, click on *Can't access your account?* to reset it.
- If you are a new user, you need to register an account. Once you register, you will have access to an account where you can upload your proposal and annexes, as well as to initiate amendment requests.
- If you are applying as an organization, you are not required to upload IRS tax returns, Tax Determination Letter.
- If you are applying as an informal group, please leave the following fields blank: executive director, fiscal year start/end date. Filling in the current organization budget field is optional. You are also not required to upload the Financial Statements, IRS tax returns, Tax Determination Letter, Annual report, or List of Board Members.
- Applicants can save their in progress application via the save button on the bottom of each tab and open an in progress application via the dashboard.
- Questions regarding the grantee portal and technical issues related to the submission process via the portal should be directed to granteefeedback@opensocietyfoundations.org
- Questions regarding the overall application process and the open call should be directed to the following email address: grassrootscall@opensocietyfoundations.org
- Applicants are advised to allow a few working days for a response from these email addresses. You are strongly encouraged to start your applications (including on the grantee portal) at least two weeks before the deadline, to allow time for answering questions you may have and for avoiding last-minute inquiries that may prevent you from submitting an application.
- Successful applicants will be notified by July 2020.
- Due to limited capacities, we will not be able to send out individualized rejection letters, but we will do our best to provide to the non-selected applicants with a general email summarizing the main reasons their applications were rejected.
- We wish you a good experience with your application process!

Application aid

Interested organizations are invited to join an informational webinar on the open call on **June 3, between 15:00 -17:00 (CET)**. We will explain the rationale for this call as well as practical and logistical issues and also allow for a Q&A with OSF staff on the open call. The

webinar will be bilingual, in Hungarian and English. To register for it, please email grassrootscall@opensocietyfoundations.org. The registration period for the webinar starts on **May 21** and ends on **May 28**. Limited places are available; please register in time to secure your place.

In addition, we offer translation support by English speaking volunteers, in case an applicant would need help in preparing the application in English. Please email: grassrootscall@opensocietyfoundations.org