



# **The Colombo Plan Gender Affairs Programme**

**Call for Proposals**  
September 2022 – August 2023

**Guidelines for Applicants**

Date of publication: 01 April 2022. Updated on 18 April 2022  
Deadline for submission of concept notes using the prescribed Application Form: 15 May 2022  
Deadline for submission of detailed proposals: 31 July 2022

## **NOTICE**

In the first instance, only Application Forms in the prescribed format must be submitted for evaluation. Thereafter, applicants whose Application Forms have been pre-selected will be invited to submit a detailed proposal. Further to the evaluation of the detailed proposal, an eligibility check will be performed for those which are provisionally selected.

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# 1. CALL FOR PROPOSALS – THE COLOMBO PLAN GENDER AFFAIRS PROGRAMME

## 1.1 Background

**The Colombo Plan:** The Colombo Plan, more formally known as the Colombo Plan for Co-operative Economic and Social Development in Asia and the Pacific, is an inter-governmental organisation based in Colombo, Sri Lanka.

The Colombo Plan was conceived at the Commonwealth Conference on Foreign Affairs held in Colombo, Sri Lanka, in January 1950 and was launched on 1 July 1951 as a cooperative venture for the economic and social advancement of the peoples of South and Southeast Asia. Originally, it was called the Colombo Plan for Co-operative Economic Development in South and Southeast Asia. It has grown from a group of seven Commonwealth nations – Australia, Britain, Canada, India, New Zealand, Pakistan and Sri Lanka – into an inter-governmental organisation of 28 members, including non-Commonwealth countries. When it adopted a new constitution in 1977, its name was changed to “The Colombo Plan for Co-operative Economic and Social Development in Asia and the Pacific” to reflect the expanded composition of its enhanced membership and the scope of its activities.

It is based on the partnership concept for self-help and mutual help in the development process with the focal areas being human resource development and south-south cooperation. Over the years, while adhering to the concept of human resource development and south-south cooperation in addressing issues of economic and social development, the programme contents of the Colombo Plan have been changing to take account of the needs of the member states in a fast-changing world economic environment. The current programmes of the Colombo Plan are in the areas of gender empowerment, child protection, and substance abuse prevention, treatment and recovery, public policy formulation in an environment of globalisation and market economy and private sector development.

**The Colombo Plan Gender Affairs Programme:** Colombo Plan commenced its gender programming in 2007 by supporting shelters for women and children in Afghanistan through the Drug Advisory Programme and later its Programme for Public Administration. To further expand this initiative, particularly to other countries in Asia and the Pacific region, the Colombo Plan Council approved the establishment of the Gender Affairs Programme (CPGAP) during the 282<sup>nd</sup> Council meeting in May 2014. The CPGAP focuses on women and children’s rights, issues, and development in Colombo Plan member states.

CPGAP’s 2020-2024 Strategy identifies the following four objectives which contribute to the overall goal of working together with women, men, girls and boys to promote a just and equitable society:

1. Strengthen the technical gender expertise of government institutions,
2. Develop an advocacy platform,
3. Develop a knowledge management system and knowledge hub, and
4. Expand and sustain resource mobilisation.

This strategy aims to support the promotion of an inclusive and empowered society through the implementation of in-country actions.

## 1.2 Objectives and priorities

The overall objective of this Call for Proposal is to support operations combatting gender-based violence; abuse, exploitation, and neglect of children; climate change and promoting wellbeing of women and children in order to:

- a. benefit vulnerable populations out of reach of mainstream services and resources, and
- b. strengthen the capacity of civil society organisations and government authorities, with a view

to facilitating their participation in defining and implementing sustainable development strategies.

The specific objectives of this Call for Proposals are:

- a. to strengthen the capacity of state actors in defining and implementing sustainable development strategies,
- b. to promote changes in policy and practice in priority sectors, and
- c. to foster quality partnerships.

Each proposal should be limited to any two (2) priority areas listed below:

1. Preventing and protecting women against violence.
2. Guaranteeing equal access of women to justice.
3. Achieving balanced participation of women and men in political and public decision-making.
4. Gender mainstreaming.
5. Migrant and refugee women and girls.
6. Gender, climate change and security.
7. Advocacy of gender related issues for women, children, and communities.
8. Access to healthcare services for women and girls.
9. Livelihoods and support to vulnerable women and children (victims of gender-based violence, human trafficking, and indigenous people).
10. Knowledge sharing and research in above areas.

### **1.3 Financial allocation provided by the Colombo Plan**

- Any grant requested under this Call for Proposals must be limited to 70% of the estimated total accepted costs. Estimated total accepted costs = estimated total eligible costs + taxes (if applicable).
- The expected contribution of the applicant should be at least 30% of the total cost of the project.

## 2. RULES FOR THIS CALL FOR PROPOSALS

### **2.1 Eligibility criteria**

This grant is not meant for international, regional or entities with a multi-country presence who will be utilizing local partners for implementation.

In order to be eligible for a grant, applicants **must**:

- be legal persons,
- be non-profit making,
- be directly responsible for the preparation and management of the action with their partners, not acting as an intermediary,
- must have been created/ registered at least 24 months before the date of this call by the relevant authorities of the member state, and
- must have already carried out concrete activities in the sector(s) for which this grant is requested.

### **2.2 Eligible actions**

*(Actions for which an application may be made)*

Definition: An action (or project) is composed of a set of activities.

Duration: The planned duration of an action may not be less than 12 months.

Sectors: Actions must be in line with the objectives and priorities indicated.

Location: Actions must take place where the applicant resides.

Types of action: Financial support under this call must be aimed at supporting actions, i.e., coherent and self-contained sets of activities designed to achieve a specific objective within a specific timeframe.

Sub-granting: In order to support the achievement of the objectives of the action, the applicant may propose awarding sub-grants. However, sub-granting may not be the main purpose of the action and it must be duly justified.

Visibility: Note that the applicant must comply with the objectives and priorities and guarantee the visibility of the Colombo Plan.

#### Ineligible actions:

- Actions concerned only or mainly with individual scholarships for studies or training courses, or sponsorships for participation in workshops, seminars, conferences, congresses.
- Actions in the formal education sector.
- Actions concerned only with one-off conferences.
- Annual or regular events/celebrations.
- Actions which consist exclusively or primarily in capital expenditure, e.g., land, buildings, equipment and vehicles.
- Actions which discriminate against individuals or groups of people on grounds of their gender, sexualorientation, religious beliefs or lack of them, or their ethnic origin.
- Actions supporting political parties.

Number of applications and grants per applicant: An applicant may not submit more than one (1) application under this Call for Proposals. An applicant may not be awarded more than one (1) grant under this Call for Proposals. An applicant may at the same time be partner in another application. Partners may take part in more than one application.

### **2.3 Eligible costs**

Eligible costs must be based on real costs based on supporting documents. Recommendations to award a grant are subject to the condition that the checking process which precedes the signing of the contract does not reveal problems requiring changes to the budget. The checks may give rise to requests for clarification and may lead the Colombo Plan to impose modifications or reductions to address such mistakes or inaccuracies.

Contingency reserve: A contingency reserve not exceeding 1% of the estimated direct eligible costs may be included in the budget, which can only be used with the prior written authorisation of the Colombo Plan.

Eligible indirect costs (overheads): Indirect costs need to be directly linked to the project. The indirect costs incurred in carrying out the action may be eligible for flat-rate funding fixed at not more than 7% of the estimated total eligible direct costs. Indirect costs are eligible provided that they do not include costs assigned to another heading of the budget. The applicant may be asked to justify the requested percentage before contracting.

Contributions in kind: Contributions in kind are not considered actual expenditure and are not eligible costs. The contributions in kind may not be treated as co-financing.

#### **Ineligible costs**

The following costs are not eligible:

- Debts and debt service charges.
- Provisions for losses or potential future liabilities.
- Interest owed.
- Rent associated with the head office and or field offices of the applicant.
- Vehicles and communication equipment.
- Costs declared by the applicant and covered by another action or work programme.
- Purchases of land or buildings, except where necessary for the direct implementation of the action, in which case ownership must be transferred to the final beneficiaries and/or local partners, at the latest by the end of the action.
- Currency exchange losses.
- Taxes, including VAT. Nevertheless, these may be considered as part of the estimated total accepted costs of the action for the purpose of co-financing where the applicant can prove it cannot reclaim them. In such cases, the cost should be included in the budget under the heading "taxes". Please note however that for the purpose of co-financing, taxes are the only ineligible costs that will be considered within the total accepted costs of the action.
- Credit to third parties including microfinance activities.

### 3. HOW TO APPLY

Applicant's eligibility will be assessed in two phases:

Phase I, the concept note: due by 15 May 2022.

Phase II, the detailed proposal: due by 31 July 2022.

Concept Notes must be submitted in accordance with the instructions included in the Application Form.

Applications must be in English.

In the Application Form, applicants must only provide an estimate of the amount of contribution requested from the Colombo Plan. Only the applicants invited to submit a detailed proposal in the second phase will be required to present a detailed budget. The elements assessed based on the Application Form may not be modified by the applicant in the detailed proposal. The Colombo Plan contribution may not vary from the initial estimate by more than 10%. The applicant is free to adapt the percentage of co-financing required within the limits.

Any error or major discrepancy related to the points listed in the instructions on the Application Form may lead to the rejection of the Application Form.

Clarifications will only be requested from applicants when information provided is unclear, preventing the Colombo Plan from conducting an objective assessment.

Please note that only the Application Form will be evaluated. It is therefore of utmost importance that this document contains all relevant information concerning the action.

Application Forms must be submitted in PDF format together with summary budget in Excel sheet to [cpgproposal@colombo-plan.org](mailto:cpgproposal@colombo-plan.org).

The deadline for the submission of Application Form is 15 May 2022. Any Application Form submitted after the deadline will be rejected.

Questions may be sent by e-mail no later than seven (7) days before the deadline for the submission of Application Form to the email address [cpgproposal@colombo-plan.org](mailto:cpgproposal@colombo-plan.org) indicating "Call for Proposals 2022-2023" on the subject. The Colombo Plan has no obligation to provide clarifications after this date. Replies will be given no later than five (5) days before the deadline for the submission of Application Form.

Applicants invited to submit a detailed proposal following the pre-selection based on the Application Form must do so by using template to be provided by the Colombo Plan. Applicants should keep strictly to the format of the detailed proposal and fill in the paragraphs and the pages in order.

Any error related to the points listed in the checklist or any major inconsistency in the detailed proposal (e.g. the amounts mentioned in the budget worksheets are inconsistent) may lead to the rejection of the application.



## 4. EVALUATION AND SELECTION OF APPLICATIONS

Applications will be examined and evaluated by the Colombo Plan with the possible assistance of external assessors. All actions submitted by applicants will be assessed according to the following steps and criteria.

### Phase I: Application Form evaluation

The following will be assessed:

- The submission deadline has been respected. If the deadline has not been respected the application will automatically be rejected.
- The Application Form satisfies all the criteria specified. If any of the requested information is missing or is incorrect, the application may be rejected on that sole basis and the application will not be evaluated further.

The evaluation of the Application Forms that have passed the first administrative check will cover the relevance and design of the action.

The Application Form will be given an overall score out of 50 points in accordance with the breakdown provided in the evaluation grid below. The evaluation shall also verify the compliance with instructions provided in the Application Form.

Scoring: The evaluation criteria are divided into headings and subheadings. Each subheading will be given a score between 1 and 5 in accordance with the following assessment categories: 1 = very poor; 2 = poor; 3 = adequate; 4 = good; 5 = very good.

Section	Scores	
<b>1. Relevance of the action</b>	<b>Sub-score</b>	<b>20</b>
1.1 Relevance of the action to needs and constraints of the target groups and final beneficiaries. 5x2*		
1.2 Relevance to the objectives and priorities of this Call for Proposals 5x2		
<b>2. Effectiveness and feasibility of the action</b>	<b>Sub-score</b>	<b>20</b>
2.1 Assessment of the problem identification and analysis 5x2		
2.2 Assessment of the proposed activities (in relations to the objectives, purpose and expected results).		
2.3 Assessment of the role and involvement of all stakeholders and proposed partners		
<b>3. Sustainability of the action</b>	<b>Sub-score</b>	<b>10</b>
3.1 Assessment of the identification of the main assumptions and risks, before the start up and throughout the implementation period.		
3.2 Assessment of the identification of long-term sustainable impact on the target groups and final beneficiaries.		
	<b>Total score</b>	<b>50</b>

*\*The scores are multiplied by 2 because of their importance.*

Once all Application Forms have been assessed, a list will be established with the proposed actions ranked according to their total score.

First, only the Application Forms which have been given a score of a minimum of 30 points will be considered for pre-selection. Secondly, the list of Application Forms will be reduced according to the ranking, and the top five (5) applications will be selected for Phase II.

Following the Application Form evaluation, the Colombo Plan will send an e-mail to all applicants, indicating the results of the evaluation. The pre-selected applicants will subsequently be invited to submit detailed proposals.

## Phase II: Detailed proposal evaluation

First, the following will be assessed:

- The submission deadline has been respected. If the deadline has not been respected the application will automatically be rejected.
- The detailed proposal satisfies all the criteria specified. If any of the requested information is missing or is incorrect, the application may be rejected on that sole basis and the application will not be evaluated further.

An evaluation of the quality of the applications, including the proposed budget, and of the capacity of the applicant and its partners, will be subsequently carried out in accordance with the evaluation criteria set out in the evaluation grid included below. There are two types of evaluation criteria: selection and award criteria.

**The selection criteria** are intended to help evaluate the applicants' financial and operational capacity to ensure that they:

- have stable and sufficient sources of finance to maintain their activity throughout the period during which the action is being carried out and, where appropriate, to participate in its funding;
- have the management capacity, professional competencies and qualifications required to successfully complete the proposed action. This also applies to any partners of the applicant.

**The award criteria** allow the quality of the applications submitted to be evaluated in relation to the set objectives and priorities, and grants to be awarded to actions which maximise the overall effectiveness of the Call for Proposals. They enable the selection of applications which the Colombo Plan can be confident will comply with its objectives and priorities. They cover such aspects as the relevance of the action, its consistency with the objectives of the Call for Proposals, quality, expected impact, sustainability and cost- effectiveness.

Scoring: The evaluation criteria are divided into sections and subsections. Each subsection will be given a score between 1 and 5 in accordance with the following guidelines:

1 = very poor; 2 = poor; 3 = adequate; 4 = good; 5 = very good.

Section	Score
<b>1. Financial and operational capacity</b>	<b>20</b>
1.1 Do the applicant and, if applicable, partners have sufficient experience of project management?	5
1.2 Do the applicant and, if applicable partners have sufficient technical expertise?	5
1.3 Do the applicant and, if applicable, partners have sufficient management capacity?	5
1.4 Does the applicant have stable and sufficient sources of finance?	5
<b>2. Relevance of the action</b>	<b>20</b>
<i>Score transferred from the Application Form evaluation</i>	
<b>3. Effectiveness and feasibility of the action</b>	<b>25</b>
3.1 Are the activities proposed appropriate, practical, and consistent with the objectives and expected results?	5x2*
3.2 Is the action plan clear and feasible?	5
3.3 Does the proposal contain objectively verifiable indicators for the outcome of the action? Is evaluation foreseen?	5
3.4 Is the partners' level of involvement and participation in the action satisfactory?	5
<b>4. Sustainability of the action</b>	<b>20</b>

4.1 Is the action likely to have a tangible impact on its target groups?	5
4.2 Is the proposal likely to have multiplier effects? (Including scope for replication and extension of the outcome of the action and dissemination of information.)	5
4.3 Are the expected results of the proposed action sustainable? - financially ( <i>how will the activities be financed after the funding ends?</i> ) - institutionally ( <i>will structures allowing the activities to continue be in place at the end of the action? Will there be local "ownership" of the results of the action?</i> ) - at policy level (where applicable) ( <i>what will be the structural impact of the action — e.g., will it lead to improved legislation, codes of conduct, methods, etc?</i> ) - environmentally (if applicable) ( <i>will the action have a negative/positive environmental impact?</i> )	5x2
<b>5. Budget and cost-effectiveness of the action</b>	<b>15</b>
5.1 Are the activities appropriately reflected in the budget?	5x2
5.2 Is the ratio between the estimated costs and the expected results satisfactory?	5
<b>Maximum total score</b>	<b>100</b>

*\*The scores are multiplied by 2 because of their importance.*

If the score is less than 12 points for section 1 *Financial and operational capacity*, the application will be rejected.

Provisional selection: Following the evaluation, a table listing the applications ranked according to their score and within the available financial envelope will be established as well as a reserve list following the same criteria.

### **Phase III: Verification of eligibility of the applicant and partners**

The eligibility verification, based on the supporting documents requested by the Colombo Plan will only be performed for the applications that have been provisionally selected according to their score and within the available financial envelope.

The declaration by the applicant will be cross-checked with the supporting documents provided by the applicant. Any missing supporting document or any incoherence between the Declaration by the applicant and the supporting documents may lead to the rejection of the application on that sole basis.

Following the above analysis and if necessary, any rejected application will be replaced by the next best placed application in the reserve list that falls within the available financial envelope, which will then be examined for the eligibility of its applicant and the partners.

### **Required supporting documents for applicants**

#### **For non-state actors:**

- The statutes or articles of association of the applicant organisation.
- Copy of the applicant's latest accounts (balance sheet for the previous financial year for which the accounts have been closed).
- A financial identification/ bank account details form certified by the bank to which the payments will be made. This bank must be located in the country where the applicant is registered.

#### **For local authorities/state actors:**

- Copy of an official document recognizing the organisation in accordance with the national law.
- A financial identification/ bank account details form certified by the bank to which the payments will be made. This bank must be located in the country where the applicant is registered.

Where the documents are not in English, a translation must be attached and will prevail for the purpose of analysing the application.

Based on the verification of the supporting documents by the Evaluation Committee it will make a final recommendation to the Colombo Plan which will decide on the award of grants.