

# **Civil Society Facility Fund**

## **World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS)**

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### **GENERAL PROPOSAL FOR POTENTIAL DONORS**

This Proposal has been drafted for potential contributors interested in supporting civil society entities who wish to actively participate in the WSIS process. In accordance with the funding policies of each donor, a contract formalizing the terms and conditions of financial support will be provided (see Annex I).

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#### **1. WHY A FACILITY FUND FOR CIVIL SOCIETY?**

The Civil Society Facility Fund is a financial mechanism created to support the inclusion and active participation of national, regional and international civil society entities in the WSIS preparatory process and at the Summit itself.

In the spirit of Resolution 56/183, which invites governments, the private sector and the civil society to work together towards a common vision of the Information Society and to adopt a joint declaration and plan of action at the Geneva 2003 Summit, the Civil Society Facility Fund seeks to enable civil society entities worldwide to play a substantive role in the WSIS process.

In the context of a true tripartite Summit, civil society needs to progress from a volunteer-based and under-resourced position, to reach new forms of participative involvement in the elaboration of policies. The Civil Society Facility Fund is aimed at supporting these efforts and ensuring that the viewpoint of the most vulnerable sectors of society is taken into consideration when decisions that affect them directly are made.

The Civil Society Facility Fund is committed to providing financial assistance to countries, groups and populations particularly affected by the multiple divides that fragment today's societies. Least developed countries, developing countries and countries in transition, disabled persons, youth, women, older people, indigenous people, displaced persons and refugees, etc., are the priority target groups of the Facility Fund (see section 3 hereafter).

The Facility Fund has come into existence following the massive number of requests for support from national, regional and global civil society entities wishing to bring their contribution to the WSIS process. It constitutes a recognized and operational pool of resources both managed and accountable to its beneficiaries through the Civil Society Bureau, with assistance from the Civil Society Division of the WSIS Executive Secretariat.

## **2. WHO ARE THE BENEFICIARIES?**

The functions, range and levels of autonomy of the organisations that make up civil society vary enormously. The most common definition attached to the sector refers to entities that are not the State, intergovernmental organisations, or the private sector.

For the sake of clarity, civil society participation in the WSIS could be classified in the following ‘family entities’: Academia and education<sup>1</sup>, Science and technology, Media<sup>2</sup>, Creators and active promoters of culture<sup>3</sup>, Cities and local authorities, Trade Unions, Parliamentarians, NGOs<sup>4</sup>, Youth, Gender, Volunteers, Indigenous, Disabled, Networks and Coalitions<sup>5</sup>, Multi-stakeholders partnerships, Philanthropic Institutions, Think Tanks.

In addition to the above family groups, support is needed to further involve regional civil society groups that contributed actively in the WSIS regional conferences. These groups represent the African Region, Latin America and Caribbean Region, Asian and Pacific Region, West Asia Region including Middle East, and Europe, CIS and North America.

The aim of the Civil Society Facility Fund is to provide support to civil society entities from developing countries. The above civil society typology can equally serve to provide donors with a clear picture of funds recipients. It is also understood that donors can select one or several groups they wish to support in particular.

## **3. PRIORITY TARGET GROUPS**

The Civil Society Facility Fund will give priority to civil society entities and organizations with a non-profit mandate coming from developing countries, and more particularly to those from Least Developed Countries (LDCs).

Subject to the availability of financial resources, organizations from countries with economies in transition are equally eligible for sponsorships under the Facility Fund. Among these, support will be provided in accordance with funding policies of each donor.

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<sup>1</sup> Includes students, teachers, professional schools, researchers, education movements, etc.

<sup>2</sup> Includes broadcasters, regulators, press, journalist associations, NGO media, freedom of expression associations, etc.

<sup>3</sup> Music, literature, etc.

<sup>4</sup> Entities with legal status

<sup>5</sup> Coalitions, campaigns, networks and other formal or informal groups aimed at promoting social change

Financing of participants from industrialized countries can only be considered in agreement with the Facility Fund donors. This category may comprise representatives of groups and populations with special needs (least developed countries, developing countries and countries in transition, disabled persons, youth, women, older people, indigenous people, displaced persons and refugees, etc.)

#### **4. WHAT WILL THE FACILITY FUND COVER?**

The Civil Society Facility Fund is open to all donors who wish to provide support or join other financial partners committed to civil society involvement in the Summit. In joining the Civil Society Facility Fund, and according to their respective funding policies, donors may choose to support one or several of the following activities:

##### ***I. Fellowships for participation in the Summit process***

A number of fellowships will be made available to civil society entities, to ensure travel and accommodation. As mentioned in Section 3 above, priority will be given to participants coming from LDCs or representing other groups (least developed countries, developing countries and countries in transition, disabled persons, youth, women, older people, indigenous people, displaced persons and refugees, etc.)

##### **Selection criteria :**

- *accreditation*
- *diversity of stakeholder (families) representation*
- *diversity of views on the themes/issues of the Summit*
- *individuals, who have personally and actively been involved in a WSIS consultation process related to WSIS activities*
- *balancing the needs of displaced persons and refugee groups*
- *gender equity and equality*
- *balanced gender, geographical/country representation*
- *balanced rural-urban representation, with an emphasis for rural and urban poor groups*
- *bottom-up relevance/grassroots links*

##### ***II. Distance participation***

Making use of the available technological tools for conference participation worldwide is an essential element of the WSIS. Webcasting, videoconferencing, etc., will ensure wide broadcasting of Summit proceedings, improving communications efficiency and promoting valuable exchanges among countries, regions and continents. Concretely, the Facility Fund will cover communication and organisational costs incurred by the use of distance participation technologies.

Selection criteria:

- *rural-urban balance, with an emphasis on groups that have rural constituencies or urban poor as their constituency*
- *balance in cultural and linguistic diversity, especially ensuring the participation of disadvantaged and minority groups (least developed countries, developing countries and countries in transition, disabled persons, youth, women, older people, indigenous people, displaced persons and refugees, etc.)*
- *gender equity and equality*
- *geographical/regional balance*
- *priority to displaced persons, minority groups (indigenous people), refugees, migrant workers.*

**III. Showcasing of projects**

The success of the WSIS will be judged upon its capacity to showcase concrete examples of programmes and projects that illustrate inter-sectoral collaboration and participatory decision-making. The value-added of multi-stakeholders partnerships must be well staged and communicated in an exemplary manner. Showcasing of projects covers bringing together a whole range of actors, from content developers to practitioners, passing through local policy makers and the private sector, to demonstrate the potential force of these processes. Showcasing of projects will take place throughout the Summit process. Priority will be given to the regional focus and South-South cooperation.

Selection criteria:

- *diversity of stakeholder representation*
- *diversity of views on the themes/issues of the Summit*
- *gender equity*
- *balanced geographical/country representation*
- *bottom-up relevance/grassroots links*
- *affordability of such projects for implementation on a wider scale or for replication*
- *financial sustainability of projects (balancing realities and needs of society with any commercial approach)*

**IV. Networking, awareness raising and advocacy at national, regional and global levels**

The great majority of national civil society entities lack the necessary resources to participate in the Summit debates. Consequently, emphasis must be put on activities that raise awareness at the national level and enable a bottom-up approach to decision-making. The Fund will support the setting up of a mechanism for national coordination to be implemented by national grassroots entities. A number of national meetings and other activities will be organized to develop substantive national contributions on the issues and themes of the Summit.

Civil society entities across regions and continents need appropriate support to prepare themselves for negotiations during the preparatory process and at the Summit itself. At global and regional levels, these activities will include network-building, fora and dialogue activities that enable civil society entities to position themselves and define their roles and responsibilities in the new Information Society.

Selection criteria:

- *national relevance in relation to concerns of the disadvantaged and minority groups (least developed countries, developing countries and countries in transition, disabled persons, youth, women, older people, indigenous people, displaced persons and refugees, etc.)*
- *facilitative and inclusive/participatory features of activities proposed*
- *diversity and gender balance, geographical and socio-political and economical representation from within civil society*
- *representation of different levels of society as well as ethnic/tribal groups*
- *balanced physical and negotiation power representation of the main stakeholders: government, civil society, private sector and international organizations*
- *balance of regional, cultural and linguistic diversity*
- *facilitative and inclusive/participatory features of activities proposed*

## **5. WORKING PRINCIPLES OF THE CIVIL SOCIETY FACILITY FUND**

### Equitable access

To ensure equitable access to fellowships and other forms of support, the Civil Society Division of the WSIS Executive Secretariat provides all the necessary information on available funds and on application procedures for obtaining participation grants. Interested applicants and newcomers will find this information on the [www.geneva2003.org](http://www.geneva2003.org) website. The Civil Society Division has taken a pro-active approach and disseminates this information through regular mailings to all group families and other entities worldwide.

### Transparency

All requests for support will be made public on the [www.geneva2003.org](http://www.geneva2003.org) website. The selection criteria for grant attribution is applied to all requests indiscriminately and will be publicized on the website, followed by the recommendations for the selected applicants. The website will equally contain information on funds raised (amounts) and donors' terms of allocation. Corresponding donors contributions will be posted under each of the proposed broad areas of activities.

### Accountability

Accountability of the Civil Society Facility Fund towards donors is ensured through the institutional mechanism set up for funds management. Beneficiaries of support received will be able to access all information on amounts allocated as well as related financial rules and regulations for disbursements on the [www.geneva2003.org](http://www.geneva2003.org) website.

## 6. SELECTION COMMITTEE

A Selection Committee establishes the criteria and selection of fellows and projects that will benefit from the Fund. The Selection Committee is comprised of five members of the Civil Society Bureau, selected in consultation with all CS Bureau members, and coming from the five world regions to ensure equitable regional representation and fair application of geographical criteria; the CS Bureau members will also ensure that the Selection Committee is gender-balanced. One additional observer will be drawn from the donor community. The Selection Committee will examine funds availability and apply the above selection criteria for grant allocation to make recommendations for funding. Donor policies on funds disbursement will equally be taken into consideration.

## 7. FUND RAISING OBJECTIVES

### Physical participation

Travel and per diem from 5 regions

75 participants for Prepcom 3

300 participants for the Summit

*(Euros 4,000 x 375 participants)*

**Sub-total** **1,500,000**

### Distance participation

Communication costs, technical arrangements

for distance participation in 5 regions

*(Euros 40,000 x 5 regions)*

**Sub-total** **200,000**

### Showcasing of projects

4 regional focuses (Africa, Latin America & Caribbean, Asia & Pacific, EU/E-Europe/CIS)

showcasing a total of 200 projects

*(Euros 7,500 x 50 projects x 4 regions)*

**Sub-total** **1,500,000**

### Networking, awareness raising and advocacy

National awareness and networking

activities in 20 countries in 5 regions

*(Euros 3000 x 20 countries x 5 regions)*

**Sub-total** **300,000**

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**Grand total** **3,500,000 EU**

## **8. INSTITUTIONAL MECHANISM TO CHANNEL FUNDING**

A special ITU Trust Fund for Summit activities has been established in order to facilitate participation of all the stakeholders of the Summit, including civil society. The procedures put in place to support civil society activities meet the following requirements:

*International and multilateral:* institutional capacity to collect and handle financial contributions coming from funding entities with different attribution rules (i.e. international cooperation, intergovernmental or governmental, private, etc).

*Decentralized:* present in developing countries across the five continents and have the administrative capacity to make disbursements at national and local level. This feature would contribute to rapid, efficient and decentralized financial transactions worldwide.

*Service oriented:* provide the following services: travel and visa arrangements, contacts and communications with fellows, financial reporting and contractual arrangements, follow-up on disbursements in the five regions.

*Flexible and Efficient:* allow modification of UN rates and standards for international travelers in order to fit minimum budget requirements and make important savings that can benefit a larger number of participants.

*Accountable:* provide professional and accountable financial services, including financial monitoring and reporting.

## **9. ARRANGEMENTS WITH DONORS**

Donor contributions should be earmarked for civil society activities. In accordance with the fields of activities described under Section 4, donors can choose to support one or several specific civil society initiatives. Donors are invited to contribute generously to meet the needs of civil society in the World Summit on the Information Society.

### **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT**

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