

CIVICUS CRISIS RESPONSE FUND (CRF)

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What is the Crisis Response Fund (CRF)?

The CIVICUS Crisis Response Fund (CRF) supports civil society organisations and initiatives facing new or escalating restrictions on their work by providing funding for resiliency and advocacy actions.

It is designed to protect and strengthen civil society in the face of systemic threats, with a focus on safeguarding the rights to freedoms of assembly, association, and expression (FoAAE).

What types of grants does the CRF offer?

The CRF provides short-term grants of 3–6 months, with a maximum grant amount of:

- USD 10,000 for a single organisation, or
- USD 20,000 for consortia of two or more organisations.

There are two types of grants offered:

- **Advocacy grants:** These grants support responses to unexpected restrictions on civic space or seize opportunities to expand and strengthen the environment in which civil society operates, advance rights or prevent backlash.
- **Resiliency/Emergency grants:** These grants support organisations and groups facing immediate and ongoing threats, enabling them to enhance their resilience and implement security measures.

For details on the types of activities supported, please refer to the Application Guide on our [website](#).

Who can apply for a grant?

The CRF accepts applicants from formal or informal civil society organisations, groups or social movements working to expand civic and democratic freedoms.

Smaller organisations, grassroots movements, and collectives that are often excluded from existing funding sources or represent traditionally marginalised groups—such as women, LGBTIQ+ individuals, youth, people with disabilities, Indigenous communities, and rural populations—will be prioritised.

Informal or unregistered groups applying for a grant must ensure they are **sponsored by a registered organisation or have access to a bank account or another appropriate method for receiving funds**.

Applicants do not need to be CIVICUS members or partners to apply for the grants, but members and partners are welcome to apply.

What types of activities are not supported?

We fully recognise the serious challenges faced by human rights defenders and deeply appreciate your commitment to this important work under difficult circumstances. However, the CRF is not designed or equipped to respond to the following:

- Individual assistance, medical treatment and/or emergency stipends
- Individual relocation support
- Direct service delivery and/or direct financial assistance to individuals

How do I apply for the Crisis Response Fund?

Submit an application [online](#).

Only in circumstances where partners feel unsafe or have limited access to the internet, they can download the [application pack](#) and email them to crisis.response@civicus.org.

What documents are required to submit the application online?

For online applications, the [budget template](#) provided must be uploaded when submitting an application.

Is it possible to submit an application in a language other than English?

Applicants can submit an application in Arabic, French and Spanish. We request that budgets are submitted in English. Please be advised that the grant agreement will be drafted in English.

What is the timeline from applying to receiving feedback on my application?

Applications are received at any time throughout the year and reviewed on a rolling basis. Following the submission of the application online or via email, partners can expect to hear back from the CRF team within 2-4 weeks. If the application meets the required criteria and the partner verification process is successful, the overall process – including verification, assessment, contracting, and initial disbursement – typically takes 8-10 weeks.

Please note that the CRF team may contact applicants for clarifications or additional budget information during the review process. The overall processing time will also depend on the availability and responsiveness of the partner during the review and contracting process.

Can the application cover personnel costs?

Applicants are eligible to apply for personnel costs from the CRF, but these must be in proportion to the activities undertaken and should not be more than 30% of the overall budget.

As the CRF prioritises urgent response and advocacy actions, the majority of the budget proposed must be allocated to direct project activities.

How do I allocate personnel costs to the project budget?

Personnel costs should be allocated based on the Level of Effort (LoE) that each staff member will dedicate to the project, expressed as a percentage of their time.

Can the application cover core costs?

Similar to personnel costs, core costs such as rent, ordinary internet access and other overheads can be charged to the project budget at a level commensurate with project activities. Budgets with high overhead and core costs will undergo review in conversation with the CRF team.

Can costs be incurred before grant agreement is signed?

No. Costs can only be incurred once the grant agreement is signed by all parties and follows the start date specified in the grant agreement. Any costs incurred before this will not be eligible for support under the CRF.

What are the reporting obligations under the CRF?

Partners are required to submit regular updates, narrative and financial report(s) and an impact report as part of their undertaking in the implementation of the grant.

- Narrative report(s): The narrative report completed in the provided template, attached with all reports created during the project, multimedia and news articles related to the project activities.
- Financial report(s): The financial report completed in the provided template, attached with all receipts, invoices and payments in English (or translated into English), and proof of the exchange rate used for payments.

What is the structure for grant disbursement?

Grant amounts are disbursed in tranches. An initial tranche (e.g. 60% or 80% of the grant) is paid upon the signing of the grant agreement, while the **final tranche has to be pre-financed by the partner**.

How long after submitting my reports can I expect the final tranche to be paid out?

Partners can expect for the final tranche to be paid out 14-20 working days following the submission and **approval** of the final reports. **Please note that this does not include time taken for the review of the final reports.**

Can I apply for additional funding following the completion of my grant?

The CRF is designed to support as many organisations at risk as possible. Therefore, partners are not encouraged to consider the CRF as an annual fund for long-term resourcing.

However, in mitigating circumstances, partners can apply for additional funds if a continuous threat to civic space is demonstrated.

For information on additional resources, partners can refer to our [Donor Finder](#), which lists potential funding opportunities.

Where can I get more information about the CRF?

For more information about the CRF, including the application process and assessment guidelines, please refer to our Application Guide on our [website](#).

We understand that applicants may be operating under urgent and high-risk conditions, and the CRF team is committed to supporting partners throughout the application and implementation processes.

If you have any further questions, please reach out to the CRF team at crisis.response@civicus.org.

Thank you.