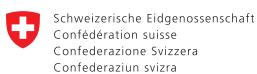


ENGAGEMENT FOR JOINT ACTION - EJA KOSOVO

GUIDELINES FOR NOMINATIONS FOR THE DEMOCRACY AWARD

Co-financed by:



Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
Confédération suisse
Confederazione Svizzera
Confederaziun svizra

Swiss Agency for Development
and Cooperation SDC



Introduction

Engagement for Joint Action (EJA Kosovo) is a KCSF program that supports civil society initiatives through grants and capacity building with the overall aim to contribute meaningfully to the democratic and socio-economic development of Kosovo. Designed as a pooled funding mechanism, EJA Kosovo is currently co-financed by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) and Sweden.

Centring citizen engagement and participation in the work of civil society, EJA Kosovo aims to contribute towards two main objectives (a) Increasing civic engagement in public life through participatory advocacy of civil society and (b) Enabling CSOs to strengthen their constituency relations and improve their organizational capacities.

EJA Kosovo is based on the premise that through tailor-made systems of inclusiveness, transparency and accountability on the one hand, and better access and communication with the community, on the other hand, CSOs by involving citizens in their work, can build a stronger and more engaged base of support. This strengthens their constituency and allows them to better represent the needs and concerns of the community. Together with improved internal governance, transparency, and citizen engagement, it will contribute to increased public trust in CSOs, and citizens come to see civil society as a legitimate and effective platform for raising concerns and advocating for change.

EJA Kosovo instruments of support

Recognizing the diversity of civil society and its various approaches, EJA Kosovo places a special focus on initiatives and individuals that integrate participatory practices into their work. This focus is rooted in the belief that civil society can truly address the needs of citizens only by systematically and intentionally involving them in its activities. Such inclusion not only enhances impact, transparency, and accountability but also improves internal governance practices beyond mere documentation.

Building on the existing capacities and experience within civil society, EJA Kosovo aims to bridge the gap between civil society and citizens, thereby increasing its legitimacy and influence.

To support these objectives, EJA Kosovo offers several support mechanisms: Institutional Grants, Organizational Development Grants, Project Grants, Urgent Grants, and the Annual Democracy Award. Each mechanism is designed to address specific needs within civil society, ensuring that a wide range of initiatives can access the support they require.

Democracy Award

The Democracy Award aims to recognize the contributions of individuals, unregistered initiatives, and non-governmental organizations across various fields. These contributions are the result of community mobilization, citizen engagement, intellectual courage, or remarkable achievements that have advanced the democratization of Kosovar society through their dedication and work.

Additionally, the award highlights exemplary acts of civic engagement that bring to public and institutional decision-makers' attention important themes, issues, underrepresented groups, or marginalized subjects in public life and institutional decision-making.

Nomination Criteria

Who can be nominated?

- ✓ All non-governmental organizations, unregistered initiatives, and individuals who, through their work and dedication, have contributed to the democratization of Kosovar society are eligible for nomination.
- ✓ Nominees must not be, or be led by, Politically Exposed Persons (PEP)¹.
- ✓ Nominees must not have engaged in activities that clearly conflict with the Core Values of KCSF for grantees under the EJA Kosovo program².

The following cannot be beneficiaries of the Democracy Award:

- a) Organizations/unregistered initiatives/individuals who have been financially supported by KCSF for the same causes in the past three years (2022, 2023, 2024);
- b) Initiatives that are the same or very similar to those that have been awarded the Democracy Award in the past three years (2022, 2023, 2024);
- c) Organizations/unregistered initiatives/individuals whose activities for which they are nominated are clearly part of their paid job responsibilities or fundamental obligations and duties of the official mandate of the position they hold.

Who can nominate?

Nominations can be submitted by any organization, entity or person that has accurate and detailed information on the initiative of the nominated organization or individual. Interested parties may nominate themselves as well.

Selection criteria

All nominations will be reviewed individually and evaluated by the Grant Evaluation Team (GET) based on the following criteria:

- ✓ The design and implementation of a successful initiative (approach, activity, project, etc.) promoting and advancing democracy in Kosovo during 2025;
- ✓ The level of underrepresentation of the theme, issue, group of citizens, or the entity carrying out the nominated initiative;
- ✓ The current or anticipated impact of the initiative, including its potential for scalability/replication and innovation;
- ✓ The courage demonstrated by the organization, unregistered initiative, or individual through the respective initiative;
- ✓ The direct involvement of citizens in the initiative or the significant contribution of citizen participation in public life and/or policymaking.

¹ For more information about restrictions related to Politically Exposed Persons (PEP), see the nomination form.

² For more information about the Core Values of KCSF for grantees under the EJA Kosovo program, see the nomination form.

Nomination process

To complete the nomination process, please ensure you have filled out and submitted the following documents:

- 1)** A completed nomination form;
- 2)** Supporting documents (written articles, verification tools, and references for the nominated initiative, etc.).
- 3)** For non-governmental organizations, a copy of the registration certificate;
For unregistered initiatives a proof on the operation of the initiative³. For other entities, a copy of the document of establishment or any other equivalent document. (Documents should be of the nominee, not the nominators).

Submission of documentation

Nomination Form and accompanying documents shall be submitted electronically in Word or pdf format to eja@kcsfoundation.org not later than 28.02.2026, at 23:59.

Applications submitted after the deadline will not be reviewed.

This call for nominations does not include providing individual responses or justifications for nominations that are not selected. Only successful nominees will be notified of the decision, and that will be after the completion of the entire evaluation process. During the evaluation process, applicants should not contact KCSF regarding the status of their nomination.

³ Any document that proves the existence of an initiative i.e.: members list, photos, materials from activities/meetings, etc.