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தேசிய மொழிகள் சமத்துவ மேம்பாட்டுச் செயற்றிட்டம்
National Languages Equality Advancement Project

NATIONAL LANGUAGES FUND (NLF)

Request for Proposals (RfP)

for

Language Rights Promotion and Language Learning

Guidelines for Applications



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இலங்கை அரசாங்கம்
Government of Sri Lanka

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கனடிய அரசாங்கத்தினால் அனுசரணை வழங்கப்பெறும் இருதரப்பு செயற்றிட்டம்
A bilateral project supported by the Government of Canada

Canada

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கனடிய அரசாங்கம்
Government of Canada
Gouvernement du Canada



IMPORTANT NOTICE

This Request for Proposals (RfP) is a restricted call. The applicants are requested to submit a Proposal on the template provided (*Annex IA – Proposal Template*). The Proposals will be evaluated as per the Evaluation Grid (*Annex IB – Proposal Evaluation Grid*).

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NATIONAL LANGUAGES FUND (NLF)

Request for Proposals (RfP) for Language Rights Promotion and Language Learning *Guidelines for Applications*

1. Background

The Government of Canada has a long-standing history of supporting Sri Lanka through the provision of development assistance for various aspects. The support for language rights related issues is one of the key forms of technical assistance and support provided over decades to ensure the successful implementation of the Official Languages Policy (OLP) and to support various initiatives for effective civil society partnerships for its programs and activities.

The National Languages Equality Advancement Project (NLEAP) is a bilateral project between the Governments of Canada and Sri Lanka, and implemented by Alinea International. The project is designed to respond to Sri Lanka's need for strengthening implementation of the Sri Lankan Official Languages Policy (OLP). The Project is implemented with the Government of Sri Lanka (GOSL), specifically the Ministry of Public Services, Provincial Councils and Local Government (The Ministry) and its affiliated institutions:

- Department of Official Languages (DOL)
- Official Languages Commission (OLC)
- National Institute of Language Education and Training (NILET)

The Official Languages Policy (OLP) of Sri Lanka is enshrined in the 1978 Constitution paving the way for one of the most significant changes related to the status of the Tamil language in the country. The 13th Amendment (1987) to the Constitution made the Tamil an official language and recognized English as a link language. The 16th Amendment (1988) to the Constitution made additional provisions supporting the use of the Official Languages, Sinhala and Tamil.

The context of conflict in Sri Lanka, from a language perspective, points to these gaps in putting the OLP into practice, both at the policy and at implementation levels.¹ At the policy level, the gap in practice arises from inadequate definition of the language issue in the OLP itself, whereby it is seen as a vehicle for service delivery, rather than as a means for citizens to participate in the economic, social and political life of the community. In its implementation, synergies are lacking between organizations of State and civil society groups to build and support a deeper understanding of citizen needs, address complaints and respond to citizen demand for continuous refinement of OLP application.

¹ The above constitutional and legal framework thus sets out a language policy, defining language as a right, entailing a set of duties and obligations on the part of the State and of the citizen that would enable the fulfillment of such rights. Further, it has been extended by several policy recommendations, particularly the National Human Rights Action Plan (2011), Lessons Learnt and Reconciliation Commission (LLRC) (2011), National Social Integration Policy Framework (2013), NHRAP (2017) etc. to reflect gaps in the performance of the OLP. These recommendations take OLP beyond being a set of administrative arrangements to one contributing to human capability in defining wellbeing and accessing development opportunities. The subject of language has thus developed into a cross-cutting thematic sector in the Sri Lankan public policy arena, including Gender Equality and Human Rights.

2. Purpose and Objectives of the National Languages Fund (NLF)

The primary purpose of the fund is to foster acceptance by Sri Lankan men, women and youth of the culturally diverse and bilingual nature of their country and to promote language rights towards reconciliation.

The NLF has two core objectives:

- i. *To increase capacity of local civil society organizations to **promote language rights towards national integration and reconciliation**.* In this respect, NLEAP will fund Sri Lankan CSOs and organizations to:²
 - Promote language rights, in the interest of strengthening national integration and reconciliation;
 - Increase awareness of language rights, while fostering engagement in and support of implementation of the OLP;
 - Establish forums/conferences/workshops to facilitate collaboration amongst CSOs and respective public institutions through consultations while fostering diversity and inclusion in discussions on issues related to language rights;
 - Better inform organizations of complaints procedures relative to OLP compliance of public institutions.

- ii. *increase capacity of local civil society organizations to **assist citizens (women and men) to communicate in official languages**.* This objective will be realized through grants provided to CSOs demonstrating a strong methodology for working with Co-existence³ Societies to achieve the following results:
 - Operate more efficiently, effectively and inclusively through improved networking and governance towards greater awareness and promotion of the official languages policy;
 - Develop tools and resources to improve internal capacity for offering second language training;
 - Increase internal capacity to train and support the general public including women and youth in second language learning;
 - Refine approach for delivery of second language training to the general public including women and youth.

² Emphasis on involvement/engagement with youth and women's organizations will serve to strengthen proposals, as will strategic partnerships amongst organizations.

³ Formerly referred to as 'Language Societies'

In this Request for Proposals, applications are sought for projects that can be categorized under the two core objectives stated above and specifically under the following thematic areas:

- 1. Promoting national dialogue on language rights:** Projects that allow civil society to come together to share best practices, challenges, and the way forward for the promotion of language rights in Sri Lanka in a gender sensitive manner. For example, conferences or forums that can be transformed into an on-going networking framework. Proposals that include an on-line or virtual infrastructure are encouraged.
- 2. Legal mobile clinics:** Projects in Divisional Secretariat Areas declared as Bilingual Divisional Secretariat areas that promote ways in which the public can enforce their language rights with legal assistance to complete forms and file complaints with the Official Languages Commission and promote to use 1956 Call Centre.
- 3. Public awareness materials to promote language rights:** Projects developing communication products that tell stories to educate the public on language rights and celebrate the bilingual diversity of Sri Lanka in a gender sensitive manner (i.e. short films or videos; social media products; podcasts; publications; other audio-visual material).
- 4. Coexistence Society Clusters:** The NLF is currently funding several projects in different regions that will provide a governance structure for several coexistence societies to organize themselves in clusters. The idea is that a cluster of language societies allows these groups to pool resources to deliver language-related programming and strengthen their organizational capacity. NLEAP is seeking projects to fill geographic gaps and, therefore, calling for projects that will build similar governance structures for language societies. *(please see Annex II for existing Project Locations under Call 01)*
- 5. Research on Coexistence Societies:** Projects that will produce a research paper on the current framework of coexistence societies and policy options for the future of coexistence societies to promote language rights and language learning and celebrate the bilingual diversity in Sri Lanka in a gender sensitive manner.
- 6. Second Language Learning:** Geographically targeted Second Language Learning projects *(please see Annex II for existing Project Locations under Call 01)*.
- 7. Research/Studies on OLP related issues:** Projects that will produce research/studies findings on OLP related issues.

3. Funding to be provided by NLEAP

NLEAP will provide financial support to eligible civil societies and other organizations who demonstrate the capacity to manage a grant, and whose initiatives meet the objectives as articulated in 2 and aligning with one or more of the specific thematic areas listed therein. These organizations will need to demonstrate readiness to rigorously manage funding in a way which promotes objectives and provides value for money. NLEAP is prepared to fund initiatives up to Sri Lankan Rupees Ten Million (LKR 10 million) and an implementation timeframe of 12 to 15 months.

3.1 Rules and Procedures for the Request for Proposals

Eligibility for receiving funding will be established based on three criteria: (1) eligibility of the organization; (2) relevance of the proposed project and partnering arrangements; (3) description of eligible costs

CRITERIA FOR ELIGIBILITY OF THE ORGANIZATION

No	Types	Eligibility Criteria to apply for NLF
01	Non-Governmental Organizations ⁴ (NGOs)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be a duly registered organization and a legal person before the laws of Sri Lanka, be a non-profit or charitable organization or other organization • Has been in operation for a minimum of 3 years • Has demonstrated capacity in project/program management. • Has sound credentials in financial management and shall demonstrate good present audited financial statements for the organization • Has a recognized track record of effective programming including projects, programs, studies and research related to language rights, language learning, language services, conflict mediation, national integration and reconciliation • Has experience in implementing programming that is gender sensitive and promotes gender equality and women's empowerment, particularly rights of women and girls • Can provide an in-kind and/or financial contribution to the proposed initiative
02	Professional Associations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be a duly registered or recognized organization and a legal person before the laws of Sri Lanka, be a non-profit or charitable organization or other organization • Has been in operation for a minimum of 3 years • Has demonstrated capacity in project/program management • Has sound credentials in financial management and shall demonstrate good present audited financial statements for the organization • Has a recognized track record of effective programming including projects, programs, studies and research related to language rights, language learning, language services, conflict mediation, national integration and reconciliation • Has experience in implementing programming that is gender sensitive and promotes gender equality and women's empowerment, particularly rights of women and girls • Can provide an in-kind and/or financial contribution to the proposed initiative
03	Community Based Organizations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be a duly registered organization and be a non-profit or charitable organization or other organization • Has been in operation for a minimum of 2 years • Has demonstrated capacity in implementing project/program. • Has fulfilled minimum credentials in financial management and demonstrates strong audited financial statements • Has experience in effective programming including projects, programs, studies and research related to language rights, language learning, language services, conflict mediation, national integration and reconciliation

⁴ Registered under the Voluntary Social Service Organizations (Registration and Supervision) Act, No. 31 of 1980 (as amended) or registered as Guarantee Limited under the Companies Act, No. 07 of 2007 or by an Act of Parliament.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Favourable if organization can demonstrate experience in implementing programming that is gender sensitive and promotes gender equality and women’s empowerment, particularly rights of women and girls. If not, demonstrates willingness to incorporate such expertise into a project proposal • Has available resources to provide an in-kind and/or financial contribution to the proposed initiative
04	Academic/Research Institutions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be a duly registered or recognized by Universities or Campuses and registered as a Research Institution and be a non-profit or charitable organization or other organization • Has been in operation for a minimum of 2 years • Has demonstrated capacity in project/program management • Has sound credentials in financial management and shall demonstrate strong audited financial statements • Has a recognized track record of effective programming including projects, programs, studies and research related to language rights, language learning, language services, conflict mediation, national integration and reconciliation • Favourable if organization can demonstrate experience in implementing programming that is gender sensitive and promotes gender equality and women’s empowerment, particularly rights of women and girls. If not, demonstrates willingness to incorporate such expertise into a project proposal • Has available resources to provide an in-kind and/or financial contribution to the proposed initiative

Important Notice:

- *The CSOs that were supported through Call 01 are not eligible to apply under this call.*
- *An Organization could submit Project Proposal on one or more of the abovementioned thematic areas (Section 2 – Page 4).*

3.2 Application Procedures

Eligible organizations that are interested in receiving funding for an OLP initiative are invited to submit a Proposal to NLEAP. The Proposal must be prepared in line with the objective(s) outlined in 2 and shall be in accordance with the Project Proposal Template (Annex IA) in this RFP. Project Proposal templates can be downloaded from our project website at www.nleap.lk and submitted on or before **January 18, 2021** to the attention of the Project Deputy Director at nlf@nleap.lk in Sinhala, Tamil or English languages.

All Proposals are evaluated by the National Languages Fund Evaluation Committee based on the Proposal Evaluation Grid provided (Annex IB), and *selected* applicants will be contacted to be informed of the next steps.

4. Evaluation Process

The applications that are received are first checked on the basic eligibility criteria stated above in 2 in this RfP and administrative checks on the accuracy of the Proposal. Qualified applications will be selected for Proposal Evaluation by the Evaluation Committee (EC). The EC conducts the evaluation based on an Evaluation Grid (Annex IB) and submits the evaluation results to the Project Approval Committee (PAC). Organizations having submitted selected Proposals will be contacted to inform the next steps.

4.1 The Process for NLF



National Languages Fund (NLF)
National Languages Equality Advancement Project
December 18, 2020