

Call for Applications to the EPDF Grant Scheme

Creating Change from the Inside Out

Cities for Inclusion

Do you believe in broad coalition-building for solving common problems? Are you looking to connect faith leaders and policy makers? Do you have a vision for a more cohesive Europe where everyone feels belonging?

This Call for Applications can help you to access funding and capacity building from the [International Dialogue Centre \(KAICIID\)](#) to make your vision a reality.

I. Background and Objectives

Thanks to its distinct constituency and dual governance structure – gathering states and religious leaders – the King Abdullah bin Abdulaziz Centre for Interreligious and Intercultural Dialogue (KAICIID) is an intergovernmental organization uniquely placed to provide an inclusive platform to convene religious leaders, policymakers, civil society and experts. The organization aims to end the abuse of religion to justify oppression, violence and conflict, while fostering interreligious and intercultural dialogue as an effective tool to promote justice, peace and reconciliation.

Since 2019, the European Policy Dialogue Forum (EPDF), the International Dialogue Centre's flagship event in Europe, has provided an interactive and safe space to explore the transformative power of interreligious and intercultural dialogue. The EPDF brings together religious leaders and actors alongside secular stakeholders to address complex societal challenges related to identity, harmful stereotypes, discrimination, social exclusion and environmental degradation in increasingly diverse European societies. By fostering open exchange and joint reflection on religious and secular values, the EPDF seeks to build alliances across faith traditions and with public and civic institutions. These alliances aim to strengthen environmental sustainability, social cohesion and nurture a sense of belonging within diverse communities.

The EPDF Call to Action

Emerging from the 6th EPDF, held in Geneva in November 2025, the [EPDF Call to Action](#) articulates a shared vision for building equitable, cohesive, and sustainable communities in Europe. It responds to

rising social inequalities and accelerating environmental degradation that disproportionately affect marginalized and minority groups.

Conceived as a living framework, the Call to Action guides collective reflection and concrete action by religious and secular actors, policymakers, civil society, and the private sector. It is grounded in interreligious and intercultural dialogue as a key tool to connect diverse perspectives and collectively reimagine our present and future as harmonious and sustainable communities. It is structured around three interconnected pillars:

- *People*: Affirming human dignity and inclusion by encouraging people from all walks of life to stand for the dignity of fragile and vulnerable groups, helping bridge perspectives across power and vulnerability, and nurturing active participation of fragile and vulnerable groups.
- *Planet*: Promoting care for the Earth and climate justice by renewing the sense of the sacred for the Earth, inspiring sustainable practices in towns and cities, and promoting collective initiatives of reuse, repair, and recycling.
- *Prosperity*: Advancing inclusive, ethical, and sustainable economic models by inspiring commitment to the development of human capital, such as fair wages, workers' rights, and climate-resilient jobs; and by fostering innovative and ethical investment.

Purpose of the Grant Scheme

The Cities for Inclusion grant scheme will support initiatives that bring together local religious and secular stakeholders to strengthen trust, participation, and mutual understanding within diverse urban communities – creating change from within communities. Aligned with the overarching focus on People – Planet – Prosperity and interreligious/-cultural dialogue, the grant scheme supports initiatives that translate the EPDF Call to Action into concrete, local-level initiatives.

With an overall budget of EUR 30,000, the Cities for Inclusion grant scheme will support at least three selected local initiatives through the following measures:

- Financial support of up to EUR 10,000 per initiative;
- Capacity-building activities, delivered by KAICIID through a combination of in-person and online training sessions on topics such as dialogue skills, project management and policy change;
- Tailored mentoring and continuous technical assistance by KAICIID throughout the process to help selected applicants strengthen their ability to plan, implement, and follow up on their projects in a clear and results-oriented way.

Applicants are encouraged to identify actions and formats most suitable to their local contexts prioritizing meaningful interaction between marginalised groups and those in positions of influence, for example, minority-majority, intergenerational, migrants and residents, or policymakers and religious leaders and communities. These may include (but are not limited to): community engagement and

collaborative initiatives, capacity-strengthening activities and peer-learning opportunities to equip communities with knowledge and skills to address key challenges, traditional and social media initiatives, live or streamed events, radio or TV programmes, documentaries, cultural events, digital tools or mobile applications, and knowledge-exchange activities.

II. Eligibility Criteria for Cities for Inclusion

Applications can be made by engaged individuals and dialogue practitioners, religious leaders, and civil-society organisations (including faith-based, refugee- and migrant-led groups) in any of the 46 Council of Europe member states, who want to use interreligious/-cultural dialogue as an approach and tool for change. The scheme particularly encourages proposals from first-time applicants, emerging actors, and grassroots initiatives with limited prior experience in structured project funding, with the aim of broadening participation and supporting new voices in the field of interreligious/-cultural dialogue and social cohesion.

Initiatives must be implemented through a religious-secular partnership. Preference will be given to proposals demonstrating broad multi-stakeholder engagement, as well as co-funding, including through in-kind contributions such as the provision of venues, staff time, expertise, communication support, or logistical resources. In addition to the compulsory involvement of diverse religious leaders and actors, relevant stakeholders may include for example: policymakers, local councils and public authorities, academia, civil society organisations, youth and community movements, and the private sector.

Initiatives are to take place between April – November 2026.

All selected teams must designate up to 2 representatives who are available to participate in the full in-person and online trainings.

For our Call to young people, please have a look at [Catalysts for Cohesion](#).

III. Selection Criteria

Proposals will be assessed by the KAICIID secretariat on the basis of the following criteria (maximum 100 points):

1. Relevance and alignment with local community needs and the EPDF Call to Action (20 points)
2. Clarity, coherence, and feasibility of objectives, activities, and expected results (20 points)
3. Implementation and networking capacity, including outreach and sustainability potential (20 points)
4. Diversity and inclusiveness of participants and stakeholders involved, and anchoring of the initiative in interreligious/-cultural dialogue (20 points)

5. Cost-effectiveness and budget feasibility, including complementary in-kind or financial contributions (20 points)

IV. Application Requirements and Submission Link

Applications must be submitted in English no later than **8 March 2026 (00:00 GMT)**. Late or incomplete applications will not be considered.

As part of the application form, applicants will be asked to address the following elements:

1. Description and methodology (where and how the initiative will be implemented);
2. Background and rationale (why the initiative is needed in your community or local context);
3. Reference to the EPDF Call to Action (which pillar(s) and recommendations will be addressed);
4. Description of the applicants, the religious-secular partnership, and the potential partners;
5. Description of key participants and how to engage them;
6. Objectives and expected results;
7. Organisational context of initiative and sustainability (is this a new initiative or does it contribute to scaling up an already existing project; plans to continue the work after the conclusion of the grant)

In addition to the information above, applicants are required to submit the following annexes. Templates for the Workplan and Timeframe can be downloaded [here](#) and a template for the Budget form can be found [here](#) or on the application form.

8. Annex 1. Workplan and timeframe

- 9. Annex 2. Budget** (Including possible in-kind contributions and cost-sharing)

While grantees will not be reimbursed for their time, eligible costs may include fees for external facilitators and experts, travel and accommodation, venue rental, communication and outreach activities, and materials. The costs for honorarium to facilitators, experts, and other human resources cannot exceed 30% of the total project cost. Successful applicants will have to spend 95% of the overall funds by 31 December 2026, while 5% of the budget can be spent no later than February 2027.

[The application form can be accessed here.](#)

V. Timeline

- Launch of the call for proposals: 9 February 2026
- Online information session for potential applicants: 24 February 2026 at 11:30 am (UTC 00:00) via this link: <https://teams.microsoft.com/meet/32509511739640?p=jpycNNqEakkZVjyRU> Meeting ID: 325 095 117 396 40 Passcode: aS2zT3bg

- Deadline for submission of proposals: 8 March 2026 (00:00 GMT)
- Notification of selected applicants: 17 March 2026
- In-person training: 14-16 April 2026
- Online trainings and mentoring: April - November 2026 (periodic sessions)
- Implementation of initiatives: April - November 2026
- Submission of final reports: 1 December 2026

VI. Roles and Responsibilities

Responsibilities of KAICIID

KAICIID's Europe Region Programme will:

- Where needed, support the development of activity agendas in cooperation with selected applicants;
- Assist in identifying qualified dialogue facilitators as well as relevant stakeholders, where appropriate;
- Provide mentoring and capacity-building support;
- Support visibility and communication through KAICIID's channels.

Responsibilities of Selected Applicants

Selected applicants will:

- Organise and implement activities, including stakeholder engagement within the agreed timeline;
- Participate in all the trainings full time;
- Provide regular feedback regarding the projects progress or challenges and coordination with KAICIID;
- Where possible, contribute in-kind, human, or financial resources (e.g. venue, catering, logistics, documentation);
- Submit a final report according to KAICIID's reporting template and within the agreed timeline. Guidelines will be communicated with the grant agreement.

All initiatives must adhere to KAICIID's ethical standards, including principles of non-discrimination, inclusivity, and do-no-harm. Activities involving minors or vulnerable groups must demonstrate appropriate safeguarding measures.

VII. Monitoring and Evaluation

Successful initiatives will develop a monitoring and evaluation (M&E) plan during the training phase. Implementation will be closely monitored to ensure that resources are used in accordance with the approved work plan and objectives. Any adjustments required during implementation must receive prior approval from KAICIID. Monitoring will be carried out by the project manager and KAICIID's M&E team.

Three months after the transfer of funds, initiative owners are required to submit a mid-term progress report outlining achievements to date, challenges encountered, and any deviations from the original plan. This report should be based on the work plan agreed upon at the outset of the initiative.

At the end of the implementation period, applicants must submit a final technical and financial report. Depending on the nature of the initiative, applicants may also be required to provide supporting documentation generated during implementation.

VIII. Questions?

Questions and clarifications regarding the Call for Proposals may be submitted in writing to Europe@kaiciid.org no later than five working days before the submission deadline.

We are looking forward to hearing from you!

All the best,

The Europe Region Team