

## Call for Applications to the EPDF Grant Scheme

# Creating Change from the Inside Out

## Catalysts for Cohesion

***Are you a young person in Europe with an idea to make your community more inclusive? Are you passionate about working for change? Do you have a vision for a more cohesive, sustainable Europe where everyone feels a sense of 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 6<sup>th</sup> 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 Catalysts for Cohesion grant scheme will support initiatives that bring together local religious and secular stakeholders to strengthen trust, participation, and mutual understanding within diverse urban communities through interreligious and intercultural dialogue, and create societies where everyone feels belonging. Through bringing together diverse young people to create change, we will also strengthen capacities of successful applicants to design, implement, and monitor programmes, upskilling the next generation of changemakers. 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 Catalysts for Cohesion grant scheme will support selected local initiatives through the following measures:

- Financial support of up to EUR 7,500 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 provided 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 Catalysts for Cohesion

The Catalysts for Cohesion (C4C) grant scheme will support at least four innovative initiatives led by young people at the city or local level, with the will to lead change-making processes. Through this programme, we aims to nurture a network of interreligious and intercultural dialogue young practitioners as a way to encourage transformation and collaborative work with participants who come from various walks of life.

### Who can apply?

- Teams of 2–5 young people, aged 18–30;
- Applicants residing in any of the 46 member states of the Council of Europe;
- Each team must represent at least two different faith backgrounds;
- Teams may apply as part of an existing youth organisation or as informal groups.
- Teams with a project proposal taking place from April – November 2026

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

*Click [here to see a video](#) from our previous Catalysts for Cohesion training.*

*Are you above 30 years old? Have a look [here](#) at our other Call for Cities for Inclusion.*

## III. Selection Criteria

C4C particularly welcomes applications from diverse and underserved communities, including (but not limited to) diversity in gender, race, socioeconomic background, and refugee or migrant experience.

C4C is looking for projects that foster cross-sector, interreligious, intercultural and intergenerational cooperation, for example with municipalities, religious leaders, civil society organisations, universities, or other local actors, thereby contributing to new and sustainable coalitions.

While applicants are expected to have some prior experience in intercultural or interreligious engagement and basic project management, the programme is designed to support the development of young, emerging leaders and grassroots initiatives with limited prior experience in interreligious-/cultural dialogue, as well as structured project funding, with the aim of broadening participation

and supporting new voices in the field of dialogue and social cohesion. The selection process will prioritise potential, creativity, and the quality of ideas.

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 **10 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. Additionally, applicants may submit a video (optional - maximum 3 minutes) elaborating on these points:

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 can be downloaded [here](#) or from 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: 17 February 2026
- Deadline for submission of proposals: 10 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, including in the field of monitoring and evaluation;
- 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](mailto: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*