

Her Excellency, Lilianne Ploumen, Minister for Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation for the Netherlands launched the Voice Programme and its first call for proposals for grant applications on September 1, 2016

*No person – regardless of ethnicity, gender, geography, disability race or other status - should be denied universal human rights and basic economic opportunities. Voice will give the people being left behind the opportunity to have a say in the policies that should make this ambition a reality.*

Voice is a programme within the policy framework “Dialogue and Dissent” of the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation. Voice is managed by Oxfam Novib and Hivos in consortium. Voice aims at strengthening the influencing capacity of civil society organisations and representatives of the most marginalised and discriminated people in order to empower these groups and to have their voices heard and respected. As these groups are hard to reach, innovative ideas and approaches are encouraged in the area of capacity strengthening and lobby and advocacy.

Voice addresses three areas of change:

1. **Empower and voice** (for marginalised people to participate fully in society they need to feel empowered and accepted; groups need capacity to build safe spaces, create confidence and skills);
2. **Amplify** (groups need allies for their voices to reach critical mass, changing norms and attitudes; they need capacity to build alliances and networks with various stakeholders); and
3. **Influence** (groups and their representatives need capacity to use a range of lobby and advocacy tools to influence decision makers’ policy, practice and behaviour).

Ultimately the combined interventions will lead to 1) marginalised people being accepted by power holders as equal citizens and political, economic and social participants, and 2) responsive, inclusive policies and practices of companies and governments.

The first call for proposals is designed to help Voice and its potential grantees learn from innovation. There exist many new, interesting and effective methods and approaches for supporting the Voice target group(s) in participating in their own governance and improving access to resources and services. People who belong to more than one of the five target groups described above are more vulnerable to discrimination and an emphasis on learning from programming to address this phenomenon is encouraged. Voice hopes to capture and stimulate learning of these methods so as to develop an evidence-base for future programming at national and global level.

Has your organisation, or an organisation you are partnered with implemented such programming? If so, then Voice could fund an Innovate and Learn Grant to document, review, analyse, research and test your programming, approach and/or methodology. An essential element of the project should be recommendations for scaling up the approach and methodology and an effective dissemination plan of the findings.

## **Key Support Areas**

Voice focuses on five marginalised and discriminated groups, selected based on a review of research and country analysis; these are:

1. People living with disabilities
2. Lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans-gender, intersex (LGBTI) people
3. Women facing exploitation, abuse and/or violence
4. Age discriminated vulnerable groups notably the young and elderly
5. Indigenous groups and ethnic minorities

These groups are:

- most affected by poverty or making least progress towards development outcomes;
- most affected by social, economic, spatial and political exclusion;
- currently ignored or not reached by development actors;
- at risk of repression or violence for speaking out for their rights.

Projects funded by Voice will need to address one or more of the impact themes:

1. improving access to (productive) resources (finance, land and water) and employment
2. improving access to social services, health and education in particular
3. fostering space for political participation:

Voice works in the following focus countries and all funded projects must focus on at least one of these:

<b>West Africa</b>	<b>East-Africa</b>	<b>South-East Asia</b>
Nigeria Niger Mali	Kenya Tanzania Uganda	Indonesia Philippines Cambodia Laos

## **Funding Information**

Funding for the Innovation and Learn Grant is for a maximum of 12-months and for a grant of €25,000 to €200,000.

It is anticipated that approved grants will commence on January 1, 2017. Costs for developing the proposal and other activities undertaken prior to the date of the grant cannot be funded.

## **Eligibility Criteria**

- Consortium Partners of the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation "Dialogue and Dissent" Strategic Partnership are ineligible for funding from Voice.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> For a full listing of Consortium Partners of the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation "Dialogue and Dissent" Strategic Partnership, please refer to <https://www.government.nl/latest/news/2015/01/30/ploumen-supports-innovative-partnerships-with-development-organisations>

- The applicant or the lead party (if the application is made by a consortium) is a legally registered not-for-profit civil society or community-based organisation with an operational bank account in the applicant's name.
- The applicant (or a consortium member if the application is made by a consortium) must be based in Africa or Asia.
- The applicant (or a consortium member if the application is made by consortium) must operate in one or more of the Voice focus countries.
- This Call for Proposals is only open to organisations with a maximum annual turnover of €2 million. The applicant must show that grants awarded from Voice derive no more than 30% for of the total annual income of the applicant organisation.
- The Innovate and Learn Grant proposal must focus on at least one of the target groups and or groups facing multi-factor discrimination, in at least one of the impact themes and in at least one of the Voice focus countries.
- The applicant or the lead party substantially works with the most marginalised and discriminated groups in society (particularly those of the Voice target groups) to empower and strengthen their capacity to influence for their interests or to have their voices heard. For organisations with broader objectives it is also possible to demonstrate this on the grounds of the organisation's track record.
- The proposed grant does not relate to the funding of commercial services, investment or other commercial activities.

### **How to Apply**

Applications for grants from Voice must be submitted using the model application formats as stipulated and made available by the Fund Manager.<sup>2</sup> Applications should be in English-language, complete and without reservations and submitted to [application@voice.global](mailto:application@voice.global) by 15 October 2016 at 5:00PM, CET. Please note that the maximum file size of mails that can be received is 5.0 MB.

### **What if you have questions about the process?**

Questions about this policy framework or other matters may be submitted by email or during consultative sessions. The questions will be anonymised and published with answers on the internet where appropriate. Questions can be submitted by email to: [question@voice.global](mailto:question@voice.global). Answers will be updated on the website on a regular basis. A Question & Answer meeting will be held in the Hague with teleconference participation available. Arrangements can be made for teleconference facilities to be available in one of the Voice focus countries if needed. Details of the time and venue will be posted on the website [www.voice.global](http://www.voice.global).

### **When will funding decision be made?**

All applications will be reviewed and decisions will be communicated to all applicants by December 1, 2016.

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<sup>2</sup> The model application format can be downloaded from <http://www.voice.global/>