INFORMATION NOTE

FOR THEMATIC NGO CALL FOR PROPOSALS

Digital Democracy Initiative

Indhold

1. BACKGROUND AND PROCESS FOR APPLICATIONS

The digital space has become a central arena for efforts to protect and expand the democratic space. Digital technologies play an increasingly critical role in protecting and advancing democracy, they hold great potential for strengthening pluralist democracy, encouraging civic participation, and giving a voice to marginalised groups. At the same time, digitalisation exposes human rights and democratic processes to new risks, including restriction of free speech, shrinking digital civic space, digital surveillance, mis- and disinformation, digital attacks and persecution.

The Digital Democracy Initiative (DDI) is a global flagship programme aimed at safeguarding inclusive democracy and human rights in the digital age. The DDI focuses on support to civil society in the Global South, particularly in countries undergoing democratic regression and where civic space is under pressure. The programme supports local civil society organisations in leveraging digital technologies to promote and protect inclusive democracy, with a focus on organisations representing women, youth, and marginalised groups as well as informal actors and social movements with limited access to funding and other resources.

In 2023 at the Summit for Democracy, the DDI was launched jointly by the EU Commission and the Danish Government with a total commitment of EUR 51 million. Recently, the Norwegian Government has joined the programme with a commitment of EUR 0.9 million.

Under the programme, four pre-selected organisations [CIVICUS, Global Focus, Digital Defenders Partnership, Access Now] implement dedicated projects supporting i.a.1) sub-granting to local civil society actors; 2) rapid response mechanism to provide digital assistance to human rights defenders in acute need; 3) advocacy campaigning toward governments, private sector and tech companies; and 4) building a global digital knowledge hub that provides tools and knowledge products in localised and accessible formats. A description of the planned activities by the four existing DDI partners can be found on pages 31-43 in the DDI Programme Document (Find the Programme Document on the DDI website).

 A Programme Management Team (PMT) is set up at the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs to lead on the implementation of the programme and to function as the secretariat to the Steering Committee, which is the highest decision-making level of the programme. A Project Coordination Group chaired by the implementing partners ensures project-level synergy and programme-level dialogue between partners and the Steering Committee. An Advisory Board facilitates expert and stakeholder input to strategic decision-making at both steering and project coordination level.

The programme is designed to facilitate scalability, both in terms of attracting additional donors and increasing the number of implementing partners during the implementation period 2023 to 2026. Through a restricted Call for Proposals (CfP), the DDI will expand its support to Human Right Defenders (HRDs) and civil society activists in the Global South under three thematic lots.

Further details regarding the DDI objectives, theory of change and results framework can be found in the DDI Programme Document (Find the Programme Document on the DDI website).

2. DDI OVERALL OBJECTIVE AND PRIORITIES

Through this CfP, the DDI is open to receive submissions contributing to one or both of the overall programme outcomes as specified in the Programme Document and Results Framework.

The overall Theory of Change (ToC) of the programme is that if local pro-democratic civil society is **enabled** to utilise digital technology to **amplify** their agendas, and if civil society utilising digital technology are **protected** and **defended** from digital threats, then civil society efforts to promote and protect inclusive democratic space online and offline will be strengthened.

The programme works towards its objective through two mutually reinforcing outcome areas, with defined intervention areas guiding immediate outcomes.

Outcome 1. Enable and Amplify: *Inclusive democracy and civic space are expanded and protected through the improved use of digital technology for civic engagement by local civil society actors operating in restrictive contexts in the Global South.*

Building a localised and Southern-facing sub-granting and support infrastructure capable of providing funding and capacity to local civil society actors

Sub-granting to support activities of local civil society actors focused on the use of digital technology to promote inclusive democracy online and offline

Supporting local civil society capacity to utilise digital technology to strengthen their engagement in the promotion of inclusive democracy online and offline

Facilitating Southern-led cross-border learning and knowledge generation pertaining to challenges, opportunities, best practices and solutions for local engagement in digital democracy

Outcome 2. Defend and Protect: *Strengthened digital resilience and security of pro-democracy civil society actors, and more rights-respecting policies and standards, safeguarding the use of digital technologies and online spaces.*

Providing emergency response to civil society actors, including human rights defenders, under threat from digital repression and repercussions

Supporting civil society capacity for self-protection and strengthening capacity of local intermediate actors in providing digital protection to local civil society

Supporting global and national policy monitoring and advocacy efforts promoting rights-based regulation of online spaces and the use of digital technology

Promoting global and national multi-stakeholder dialogue and civil society learning to strengthen knowledge and networks relevant for digital protection and promotion of rights-based use of digital technology

To formulate a successful concept note / full proposal during this CfP, it is essential to read the full descriptions of the programme ToC, outcomes and immediate outcomes on pages 12-18 in the DDI Programme Document ([Find the Programme Document on the DDI website](#)) and demonstrate how the project contributes to the overall DDI objective and change pathways, as well as how it relates to specific DDI outcome level indicators.

Each proposed project needs to clearly define the specific need(s)/issue(s) it plans to address and specific pathways of change that will lead to addressing the need(s)/issue(s). The project descriptions will also need to consider how they relate to the DDI cross-cutting priorities (outlined in Programme Document, pages 6 – 7), which include *Local Leadership, Gender Equality, Youth Inclusion, Working with Informal Actors, Human Rights-Based Approach (HRBA).*

Applicants are encouraged to demonstrate how their proposed solutions build on existing approaches or innovative methods, and how they can contribute to lasting change.

3. PROCESS
The process for the CfP will be conducted in two steps: a preliminary phase, where concept notes are submitted, evaluated and pre-selected, followed by an invitation to selected applicants to submit their full proposals.

STEP ONE - PRE-SELECTION BY CONCEPT NOTE
Applicants may express their interest in applying for a partnership under the Digital Democracy Initiative for the period 2024-2026 with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark (MFA) by submitting the "Concept Note" form (Annex 1).

The concept notes will first be assessed according to the eligibility criteria as stated in Section 9 in this Information Note. If the applicant meets these eligibility criteria, the concept note will be assessed according to the evaluation criteria for concept notes as stated in Section 10. The Assessment Committee will score the applications and the 1-3 best scoring applications under each lot will be invited to send a full proposal. See Section 13 for a detailed description of the process.

STEP TWO - FULL PROPOSAL
The shortlisted applicants will be informed about their tentative level of funding and will receive feedback on the concept note during dialogue meetings with the PMT. However, the MFA shall not define any activity and/or output. Applicants will submit a full project proposal using the template in Annex 3. The full proposal and required documentation will be assessed according to the evaluation criteria for full proposals - as stated in Section 11 in this Information Note. The Assessment Committee will score the applications and the highest-scoring proposals will undergo an appraisal by the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, before a final contract can be signed. See Section 13 for a detailed description of the process.

4. THEMATIC FOCUS OF THE THREE LOTS

Projects submitted under the CfP are expected to contribute to the overall objective of the DDI: **Promote and protect local inclusive democratic space,** also constituting the development objectives of this call. Project proposals should further reflect outcomes and priorities as outlined in the DDI project document and summarised in section 2 of this Information Note. Within this framework, projects are expected to be designed in alignment with the **priorities** under one of the **three specific lots:**

- ❖ **Lot 1:** Combatting Technology Facilitated Gender-Based Violence
- ❖ **Lot 2:** Leveraging digital technologies for climate activism
- ❖ **Lot 3:** Strengthening youth engagement in the digital democratic space

The focus areas and priorities under each of these lots are described below, as well as examples of possible activities.

LOT 1: COMBATTING TECHNOLOGY-FACILITATED GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

Technology facilitated gender-based violence (TFGBV) is a pervasive issue that affects women, girls as well as LGBTQ+ persons worldwide. These groups face greater online hate speech, slander, mis- and disinformation campaigns, and other forms of harassment, resulting in increased self-censorship. TFGBV limits the ability of women decision-makers (WDMs) and women human rights defenders (WHRDs) to attain and remain in key public positions, and deters them from using digital technologies and participating in public debate both online and offline. As a result, TFGBV not only has serious and long-lasting impacts for many individuals, but also represents a serious threat to an inclusive democratic space. TFGBV contributes to the spread of gender stereotyping, misogynistic beliefs or behaviours, and significantly impacts democratic participation online and offline. TFGBV is estimated to be significantly underreported, with only a fraction of cases of cyber harassment or other forms of cyber violence being reported or taken to court. Despite its increasing prevalence, there is no clear definition or understanding of the impact of TFGBV on democratic participation. Existing regulations do not offer sufficient safeguards and protection, hampering both individual and collective capacities to address the threat of TFGBV to democratic space. This lot will have a specific focus on WDMs, girls and WHRDs. Proposals which additionally include LGBTQ+ persons and other vulnerable groups are also relevant and welcome.

Applicants under this lot are expected to respond to two interrelated focus areas.

1.1: Digital skills to empower women decision-makers and WHRDs
The first focus area under this lot aims at enabling WDMs and WHRDs to engage safely in online democratic spaces and debates, increase their protection and capacity to respond to threats of TFGBV, and support resilience, safety and mental and psychosocial support to those who are already impacted by TFGBV. **The priorities of this focus area are to:**

- Enhance the digital skills, resilience and protection of WDMs and WHRDs at risk of, or already impacted by, TFGBV;
- Increase safety and provide legal support, and Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS) to WDMs and WHRDs impacted by TFGBV;
- Increase capacity of WDMs and WHRDs who are impacted by TFGBV to develop counter-strategies and respond to TFGBV.

The following activities are examples, and applicants are neither bound nor limited by these:

⇨ Build and/or strengthen capacity of existing regional, national or local civil society organisations to support WDMs and WHRDs who are at risk of, or already impacted by, TFGBV.
⇨ Provide learning opportunities and/or tools to strengthen the digital skills and protection of WDMs and WHRDs.
⇨ Establish and/or support structures that provide MHPSS for WDMs and WHRDs who are impacted by TFGBV.
⇨ Support WDMs and WHRDs who are impacted by TFGBV to develop counterstrategies or other responses to TFGBV, including, reporting, actions to remove digital content, actions to hold digital platforms accountable, or legal action against perpetrators of TFGBV.
⇨ Build and/or strengthen digital communities and support networks to foster solidarity and knowledge-sharing among WDMs and WHRDs.

1.2: Advocacy and Policy Action against TFGBV

The second focus area aims at strengthening public awareness of, and advocacy and policy work against TFGBV. It is important to foster a better understanding of TFGBV's impact on the democratic participation of WDMs and WHRDs, of the broader legislative and policy frameworks related to TFGBV, and of how they can be strengthened. **The priorities of this focus area are to:**

- Increase knowledge, understanding and public awareness of TFGBV and its impact on the democratic participation of WDMs and WHRDs;
- Contribute to strengthening legislation, policy and regulation to prevent and protect individuals from TFGBV;
- Help foster a more enabling environment for WDMs and WHRDs to register and report cases of TFGBV, or take other action in response to TFGBV.

The following activities are examples, and applicants are neither bound nor limited by these:

⇨ Conduct research on the scope and impact of TFGBV on the democratic participation of WDMs and WHRDs, especially those in public-facing positions, and identify current gaps or barriers in combatting TFGBV.
⇨ Conduct campaigns or advocacy to raise awareness of TFGBV among women and girls, the general public, and decision-makers.
⇨ Conduct advocacy aimed at strengthening accountability and response mechanisms of digital platforms in relation to TFGBV.
⇨ Support the development of legal and policy solutions e.g. through the convening of actors such as civil society and international organisations, national human rights institutions, academia, and UN Special Rapporteurs.
⇨ Advocate for stronger legal and policy frameworks to prevent TFGBV and through advocacy and oversight ensure that duty bearers carry out their responsibilities.

LOT 2: LEVERAGING DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES FOR CLIMATE ACTIVISM

Protecting the vast forests is vital to tackling the climate crisis and preventing extensive global biodiversity loss. Indigenous communities account for 6 % of the world's population, yet are custodians of an estimated 80% of the world's remaining biodiversity. Research shows that recognising the rights of indigenous peoples to their land is one of the most cost-effective actions for protecting forests. The struggle of indigenous peoples and other climate activists, to safeguard forests from encroachment, is in many countries taking place in an increasingly shrinking and hostile space. Despite being

frontline climate defenders, they often struggle to be heard and are underrepresented in both national and global debates. Digital technologies hold significant potential to strengthen indigenous advocacy and to promote indigenous participation. At the same time. there is a marked increase in technology-facilitated violence, surveillance, stigmatization and de-legitimization targeting indigenous climate and environmental activists, calling for supporting their capacity for digital defence and protection.

Climate disinformation is also on the rise. Well-established scientific facts are being widely denied or distorted, creating harmful misperceptions that undermine efforts to combat climate change and protect the environment. Research shows that disinformation about climate and environmental protection has surged on social media platforms in recent years, despite commitments by digital platforms to address climate disinformation on their platforms.

Applicants under this lot are expected to respond to two interrelated focus areas.

2.1 Digital Technology to Assist Indigenous Climate Activists

The first focus area under this lot aims to leverage digital technologies to support the work of indigenous climate activists, by increasing their access to digital technology to monitor and document environmental damage and violations. Digital skills and capacity will also be reinforced, and digital protection of indigenous climate and environmental activists will be strengthened. **The priorities of this focus area are to:**

- Strengthen development and application of digital tools and technologies in support of indigenous activists fighting climate change and protecting the environment;
- Increase the digital capacity of indigenous climate and environmental activists to utilise digital technology and engage in digital advocacy;
- Strengthen the digital resilience and protection of indigenous climate and environmental activists against digital threats.

The following activities are examples, and applicants are neither bound nor limited by these:

- ⇨ Provide digital tools in the form of both software and hardware to indigenous climate and environmental activists, to support their documentation of environmental violations, such as illegal deforestation – e.g. access to satellite monitoring, encrypted apps, or drones.
- ⇨ Support capacity development and learning opportunities to enhance the digital skills of indigenous climate and environmental activists.
- ⇨ Provide training and support coordination of indigenous climate and environmental activists to promote digital advocacy.
- ⇨ Provide learning opportunities, security training and/or tools to strengthen the long-term digital protection of indigenous climate and environmental activists.

2.2 Fighting Disinformation on Climate Change and the Environment

The second focus area aims at addressing mis- and disinformation on climate change and the environment, with a focus on strengthening the capacity of civil society to counter disinformation and increasing public awareness and resilience to mis- and disinformation on this topic.

The priorities of this focus area are to:

- Strengthen the capacity of CSOs to respond to climate and environmental disinformation;
- Raise public awareness of disinformation about climate change and the environment;
- Strengthen societal resilience to disinformation on climate change and the environment.

The following activities are examples, and applicants are neither bound nor limited by these:

- ⇨ Develop research on the extent of mis- and disinformation on climate change and the environment and the impact on climate CSOs.

⇨ Provide capacity building of CSOs engaged in addressing climate change to increase their digital protection and their capacity to counter disinformation.
⇨ Conduct research to identify legal, policy or other challenges or barriers to combat climate and environmental disinformation.
⇨ Carry out campaigns and advocacy to raise public awareness of disinformation on climate change and the environment.
⇨ Conduct media literacy activities on disinformation about climate change and the environment.

LOT 3: STRENGTHENING YOUTH ENGAGEMENT IN THE DIGITAL DEMOCRATIC SPACE

The world today has the largest ever generation of youth, and youth represent a rapidly growing proportion of the population in many countries of the Global South. Young HRDs and activists in the Global South can be effective actors of change provided they are given the capacity and means to create change.

While holding immense potential for democratic change, youth are still underrepresented in the democratic debate, including in the digital sphere. Digital technology presents new opportunities for their democratic participation and engagement. However, although young people are the most digitally connected age group worldwide, many continue to be digitally disenfranchised and have limited access to digital tools, skills, and online spaces.

Online harassment targeting young HRDs and activists is also having an adverse effect on their participation in the online democratic space. Mis- and disinformation, too, poses major challenges to their work, blurring the lines between truth and lies and discouraging young people from engaging in civic activism.

Applicants under this lot are expected to respond to two interrelated focus areas.

3.1 Digital Technology and Capacity of Youth Activists

The first focus area under this lot aims to strengthen the digital access and capacity of young HRDs and activists, with a specific focus on youth, in urban areas in the Global South presenting high levels of both demographic density and political mobilisation. This focus area is both directed at new users of digital technology requiring greater digital access and skills, and at young HRDs and democratic activists who could benefit from strengthened digital skills and protection.

The priorities of this focus area are to:

- Strengthen the digital access and skills of young HRDs and democratic activists;
- Increase the skills and capacity of young HRDs and democratic activists for digital advocacy;
- Reinforce the digital protection and resilience of young HRDs and activists.

The following activities are examples, and applicants are neither bound nor limited by these:

⇨ Develop community youth hubs providing access to digital technology and internet access, in support of youth democratic engagement.
⇨ Address the digital divide by outreach and inclusion of marginalized and disadvantaged groups within urban areas.
⇨ Provide learning opportunities and/or software and equipment to strengthen the long-term digital protection of young people.
⇨ Increase the digital advocacy skills and strategies of young HRDs and activists, with a focus on public engagement, outreach, and creating meaningful inclusion and participation in democratic governance and decision-making processes.
⇨ Reinforce cross-border exchanges and learning related to digital activism among young HRDs and activists.

3.2 Increasing the Resilience of Youth to Online Harassment and Mis- and Disinformation

The second focus area under this lot aims to support young HRDs and activists who already use digital technology in navigating the digital landscape and increasing their resilience to online harassment and mis- and disinformation. And while Artificial Intelligence (AI) undoubtedly will become a powerful tool for civil society in the coming years, there is a risk, that it can be used to further exacerbate the challenges with mis- and disinformation. Young people are contributing

to a rapid transformation of information ecosystems by using new digital platforms and creating new forms of content. This presents an opportunity to support a new generation of ethical and socially conscious content producers, who can meet increased demands for quality, fact-based, local-language content.

The priorities of this focus area are to:

- Strengthen the capacity of young HRDs and activists to address challenges and tap into opportunities for an inclusive digital democratic space;
- Provide opportunities for youth to use new platforms and content formats to foster ethical, fact-based, socially conscious content;
- Strengthen young people's understanding of online harassment and mis- and disinformation, and how bots and AI exacerbates these threats.

The following activities are examples, and applicants are neither bound nor limited by these:

⇨ Activities or trainings to increase the capacity of young HRDs and activists to address mis- and disinformation as well as online harassment.
⇨ Activities aimed at empowering young HRDs and activists to use new digital platforms, tools, and content formats, to foster ethical and socially conscious content online.
⇨ Facilitate hackathons for democratic tech solutions, blogathons for collective campaigning, or other support to collective youth action, addressing opportunities or barriers to inclusive digital democratic space and digital participation of young HRDs and activists.
⇨ Support identification and dissemination of best practice on digital advocacy and democratic participation of youth HRDs and activists.

5. GEOGRAPHICAL COVERAGE AND TARGETING

The DDI is resourced by development funding. While a global programme, all activities are expected to be related directly to issues experienced in countries in the Global South and to be addressed at the local level. Applicants are expected to identify priority countries or regions for project interventions. Project activities must take place primarily within countries featured on the OEDC DAC list. However, flexibility will be given, so transnational, cross-border and diaspora groups will be able to work from outside their local context. The number of priority countries to be included in each project must be between 5-15 countries. If the countries are not identified at application stage, the region must be identified and a plan for identifying the specific countries must be included in the application.

The applicant is expected to prioritise the selection of countries based on an analysis of relevance and potential impact, this should include reflection of contexts where the lot-specific challenges and priorities are i) presenting the most significant threats, ii) undergoing democratic regression, or iii) presenting significant positive change that can be bolstered by the project.

The assessment committee will prioritise a geographically balanced portfolio of activities, having in mind that the DDI programme should present a wide and balanced coverage across the Global South.

Beneficiary selection and targeting done by the applicant within priority countries should be clearly justified and explained reflecting the priorities of the DDI as well as the specific lot. Applicants should as part of proposals describe how the project complements and expects to coordinate with existing activities. During the implementation phase, all projects are expected to coordinate with other relevant interventions, partners and institutions working within the sector and/or geographical area of implementation.

6. APPLICANTS, PARTNER MANAGEMENT, AND PARTNERSHIPS

This call for proposals can be accessed by two different types of applicants. The applicant can be:

1. A single Civil Society Organisation (CSO) or Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO)
2. A consortium where one of the members takes on the role as lead applicant. The lead applicant must be a Civil Society Organisation (CSO) or Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO)

Co-applicants could be National Human Rights Institutions, Universities, Research Facilities or other independent state institutions or non-governmental and not-for-profit actors. The responsibilities of the lead applicant will include overseeing, supporting and guiding project implementation and participating in the governance structure of the programme, e.g. in meetings with the PMT, becoming a member of the Project Coordination Group together with the other DDI partners and ensuring collaboration and knowledge sharing with the other partners. The lead applicant will be the recipient of the grant and will sub-grant to the consortium members. Applicants (single or as member of a consortium) can only submit one application per lot. An organisation can only be lead on one application.

Applicants are encouraged to present and reflect on implementation partnerships both in the concept note and in the full proposal. The DDI emphasises local leadership and projects are expected to prioritise local partnerships, including with local implementing partners, sub-granting, or other mechanism for funding to local partners. Where feasible, set-up can also accommodate social movements and informal groups.

The current partners of the DDI can apply as co-applicants in a consortium, with another applicant taking on the role as lead applicant. Lead applicants under one lot can only apply as co-applicants under another lot.

7. MONITORING, EVALUATION AND AUDIT

It is expected that, as a minimum, all projects will take part in the DDI programme mid-term review scheduled for 2025 and the external final evaluation as well as an annual financial, compliance and performance audit, all of which need to be duly reflected in the budget. See pages 24-27 in the DDI Programme Document ([Find the Programme Document on the DDI website](#)) for a detailed description of the program's plan for monitoring and evaluation.

Both concept notes and full proposals should reflect on the sustainability of the proposed action.

8. BUDGET INFORMATION AND DURATION

The available budget for this call is a maximum of 147 million Danish Kroner (approximately 20 million Euro). Each applicant / consortium should submit a proposal for funding of minimum 30 mill. DKK.

The allocated budget for the lots are:

- Lot 1: 49 million Danish Kroner
- Lot 2: 49 million Danish Kroner
- Lot 3: 49 million Danish Kroner

Allocation of funding for each lot can change as part of the evaluation of full project proposals. The DDI maintains the right not to allocate the maximum available funding.

There is no requirement for co-funding. If a consortium applies, the lead applicant shall hold the full financial responsibility. The consortium members shall submit their fund requests to the lead applicant, who will review their performance and requests before disbursing funds.

If the proposed project is funded by more than one donor, the concept note and full proposal must describe the entire project and reflect the total budget. The budget format has to specify the DDI funding part as a percentage of the total

budget. For concept notes, budgets are expected to be preliminary. A format is included as part of the concept note template in Annex 1. The budget for the full proposal must be output-based and use the template provided in Annex 4.

Administration costs may be a maximum of 7% of the project direct costs. Audit costs are not to be included in the direct cost calculations.

Partnerships will be managed under the Danida General Guidelines for Financial management, which are available [here](#).

Projects are expected to start in Q1 or Q2 of 2025 and end by 31st of December 2026.

9. ETHICS AND CODE OF CONDUCT

Grant applicants are expected to live up to high ethical standards as well as organisational integrity, including respect for human rights as well as environmental legislation, compliance with core labour standards and zero-tolerance for sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment (SEAH) and corruption. Applicants may be excluded at any stage of the selection process if they do not live up to requirements in this area.

10. ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA FOR CONCEPT NOTE

The eligibility of the concept note will be assessed on the basis of the following mandatory criteria. Failure to comply with the criteria or any diversion in templates will result in an administrative rejection of the application.

Concept notes must use the template provided by the MFA (Annex 1)

GENERAL ELIGIBILITY
Governance
The lead applicant is an organisation operating on a non-for-profit basis within development cooperation, which has approved articles of association, and an independent governing board. (Co-applicants could be National Human Rights Institutions, Universities, Research Facilities or other independent state institutions or non-governmental and not for profit actors.)
Programme Management Expertise
The applicant/consortium as a whole have managed a minimum of three projects above 10 million DKK each in DAC countries that were ongoing within the last two years.
Lot Specific Alignment and Capacity
The lot-specific priorities are reflected as specific priority areas in the lead applicants existing strategy.
The applicant/consortium as a whole, has a minimum of 3 full-time staff employed working on the lot-specific priorities.
The applicant/consortium as a whole, has existing or prior project engagement of minimum 20 million DKK aligned with the lot-specific priorities and target group.
Geographical Experience
The applicant/consortium as a whole, has an established office, ongoing project presence, or experience from working (project activities above 10 million DKK) in the chosen focus countries or region.
Financial Management Experience
The applicant/consortium as a whole has audited annual financial statements without substantial qualifications for the preceding two fiscal years (e.g. 2021, 2022, 2023).

The applicant/consortium as a whole, has had an annual turnover of minimum 80 million DKK over the last two fiscal years.	
The applicant/consortium as a whole, has a track record of delivering results effectively and efficiently in cooperation with Denmark and/or the EU in the past.	
Integrity and Solvency	
The applicant/consortium as a whole, has not been in any of the following situations within the previous five years: i) bankruptcy or insolvency, ii) breach of obligations, iii) final judgement of grave professional misconduct, vi) final judgement of fraud, corruption, terrorist financing, child labour, or any form of trafficking of human beings.	
The applicant(s) has an approved and functional organisational anti-corruption policy.	
The applicant(s) has an approved and functional organisational SHEA policy.	

11. EVALUATION CRITERIA FOR CONCEPT NOTES

The concept notes and relevant documentation will be examined and evaluated by an assessment committee consisting of staff from the PMT of the DDI and the European Commission, with the possible assistance of external assessors. All concept notes will be assessed according to the following steps and criteria.

If the examination of the concept notes reveals that the proposed action does not meet the eligibility criteria stated in section 10, the application will be rejected on this sole basis.

The assessment committee reserves the right not to select any partner in any of the thematic areas through this call. The assessment committee assesses concept notes according to unified criteria but may choose to only support parts of a submitted concept note. The assessment committee reserves the right not to allocate all available funds through the present call.

If applicants are eligible, their concept notes will be assessed according to the evaluation criteria in the grid below. This will help to evaluate the quality of the applications in relation to the objectives and priorities set forth in this information note.

Evaluation criteria will be scored based on an adapted version of the World Bank inspired rating scale 'LEADS', allocating scores from 1 (poor) to 5 (excellent). Hence, the minimum an organisation can score is 1 and the maximum is 5. An average of 3 for each criteria, under each category, is considered acceptable.

LEADS stands for	Score		The score is given when there is
L	Little action/evidence	1	Weak indication that supports the criteria
E	Some Evidence	2	Some indication that supports the criteria
A	Action taken	3	Indication that supports the criteria
D	Developed	4	Solid indication that supports the criteria
S	Sustainable	5	Comprehensive indication of implementation and/or indication of an established approach/system that supports the criteria

Each criteria score is weighted both in relation to the contribution of the entire criteria category (e.g. context analysis, ToC, project management), towards a combined maximum score of hundred, as well a relative weight of each specific criterion within that category. Each concept note will be ranked based on their actual score out of the maximum 100 and the 1-3 best ranking applications from each lot will be invited to submit a full proposal.

For a full overview of the scoring matrix for these evaluation criteria, please refer to Annex 2.

Evaluation Criteria for Concept Notes	Relative weight / Basis for Assessment
Lot Specific Organisational Alignment and Capacity	*Total weight: 20*
• The degree to which there is existing strategic and organisational alignment to the lot-specific priorities. *(relative weight 10%)* • The extent to which existing organisational capacity relevant to the lot-specific priorities and target group is described. *(relative weight 10%)* • The extent to which relevant operational experience and capacity in countries prioritised by the application is explained. *(relative weight 15%)* • The extent to which existing global or local partnerships relevant to the priorities and target group of the proposed lot is illustrated. *(relative weight 25%)* • The extent to which the applicant has described experience and capacity for reach and relevant engagement with the lot-specific target group. *(relative weight 20%)* • The extent to which the applicant has explained existing experience and capacity for implementing through or sub-granting to local partners. *(relative weight 20%)*	*Applicant Background Information*
Context Analysis	*Total weight: 15*
• The degree to which the problem and needs analysis is clear, including specific opportunities and barriers relevant to the priorities and target group of the proposed lot. *(relative weight 40%)* • The extent to which project problem identification and correlating project ambition is justified, aligned with the objective of the DDI, and reflects existing policy or programmatic challenges and opportunities. *(relative weight 30%)*. • The extent to which geographic priorities are relevant and justified. *(relative weight 30%)*	*Context Analysis Section*
Project Objective and Design	*Total weight: 20*
• The extent to which ToC presents a clear link between problem identification, outcomes and immediate outcome areas and is supported by clear and relevant assumptions. *(relative weight 40%)* • The extent to which elaboration of types of activities/outputs and design reflections on e.g. project modalities, TA, etc. are clear, relevant and present considerations and choices, relevant to lot specific priorities and target group. *(relative weight 40%)* • The degree to which it is clear how the proposed project will prioritise the DDI cross-cutting priorities – outlined in the DDI Programme Document, pages 6 – 7. *(relative weight 20%)*	*Project Objective and Design Section*
Beneficiaries, Target Groups, and Geographic Priorities	*Total weight: 15*
• The degree to which prioritisation of geographic priority countries is clear and justified. *(relative weight 30%)* • The extent to which selection of project beneficiaries, target groups, and other stakeholders is justified and relevant to the lot-specific priorities. *(relative weight 40%)* • The degree to which elaborations of mechanism and modalities to reach beneficiaries/stakeholders is clear, relevant, and efficient. *(relative weight 30%)*	*Beneficiary identification, target groups and geographic focus*

Project Management and Partnership Arrangements	Total weight: 15
• The extent to which organisational set-up for governance and management of the project is clear and allows for stakeholder inclusion. (*relative weight 30%*) • The extent to which the project documents has a relevant approach to selection of partners, partnerships and local leadership. (*relative weight 40%*) • The degree to which the procedures for monitoring learning, quality assurance and reporting are clear, support adaptation, and present clear links to implementing partners. (*relative weight 30%*)	*Project Management and Partnership Arrangements Section*
Budget and Financial Management	*Total weight: 15*
• The degree to which the project's cost level and overall budget are justified and seem proportionate with planned activities and expected results. (*relative weight 40%*) • The extent to which overall procedures and mechanisms for financial management, including sub-granting, are clear. (*relative weight 30%*) • The extent to which the proportion of funding sub-granted to/implemented through local partners seems proportionate to the project design and DDI prioritisation of local leadership. (*relative weight 30%*)	*Budget and Financial Management*
Total maximum score	*100*

Once all concept notes have been assessed, a shortlist will be drawn up with the proposed partnerships ranked according to their total score.

Secondly, the number of candidates will be reduced, taking account of the ranking and the distribution in lots, to the maximum number of the 3 highest ranking under each lot in this call. If two of the highest ranking candidates have the same ranking, they are both invited to submit a full proposal.

All applicants will receive an email indicating the respective results. Shortlisted applicants will subsequently be invited to submit a full proposal.

12. EVALUATION CRITERIA FOR FULL PROPOSALS

The full proposals will be examined and evaluated by an assessment committee consisting of staff from the PMT of the DDI and the European Commission, with the possible assistance of external assessors. All full proposals will be assessed according to the following steps and criteria.

The assessment committee reserves the right not to select any partner in any of the thematic areas through this call. The assessment committee assesses full proposals according to unified criteria but may choose to only support parts of a submitted full proposal. The assessment committee reserves the right not to allocate all available funds through the present call.

It is not expected for any partnership agreements to be signed before the end of Q4 of 2024.

All budgets and disbursements are made in Danish kroner (DKK).

Evaluation criteria will be scored based on an adapted version of the World Bank inspired rating scale 'LEADS', allocating scores from 1 (poor) to 5 (excellent). Hence, the minimum an organisation can score is 1 and the maximum is 5. An average of 3 for each criterion under each category is considered acceptable.

LEADS stands for	Score		The score is given when there is
L **E** **A** **D** **S**	**L**ittle action/evidence Some **E**vidence **A**ction taken **D**eveloped **S**ustainable	**1** **2** **3** **4** **5**	Weak indication that supports the criteria Some indication that supports the criteria Indication that supports the criteria Solid indication that supports the criteria Comprehensive indication of implementation and/or indication of an established approach/system that supports the criteria

Each criteria score is weighted both in relation to the contribution of the entire criteria category (e.g. context analysis, ToC, project management) towards a combined maximum score of hundred, as well a relative weight of each specific criterion within that category. Each full proposal will be ranked based on their actual score out of the maximum 100 and the best ranking applications will be awarded a grant.

For a full overview of the scoring matrix for these evaluation criteria, please refer to Annex 2.

Evaluation Criteria for Full Proposals	Relative weight / Basis for Assessment
Organisational Capacity	*Total weight: 20*
• The extent to which the applicant's strategy, annual report, and project references reflect capacity for grant management, including financial management, monitoring and reporting. (including experience with funding and sub-granting to local partners) (*relative weight 20%*) • The degree to which applicant's current strategy, portfolio, and organisation structures reflect focus and capacity relevant to the DDI and lot-specific priorities and competencies. (*relative weight 30%*) • The degree to which experience of working with the targeted geography and lot specific target group is evidenced in the applicants' current strategy and portfolio (*relative weight 30%*) • Indication of existing global or local strategic partnerships relevant to the objective of the DDI and lot specific priorities and target group, and the extent to which expertise and experience working with partnerships and local leadership is documented. (*relative weight 20%*)	
Context Analysis and Theory of Change	*Total weight: 15*
• The degree to which the problem and needs analysis is clear and establishes a relevant development problem, including specific opportunities and barriers relevant to the priorities and target group of the proposed lot. (*relative weight 20%*) • The extent to which problem identification and correlating project ambition is justified, aligned with the DDI and thematic lot, builds on previous learning, and reflects existing policy or programmatic challenges and opportunities. (*relative weight 30%*). • The extent to which ToC balances lot specific priorities, presents a coherent and logic link between problem identification, outcomes and immediate outcome areas, and identifies relevant risks and assumptions (*relative weight 20%*). • The extent to which identification of beneficiaries, target groups, stakeholders, and geographic priorities are clearly defined, justified and aligned to the lot specific priorities. (*relative weight 30%*)	
Programme Design, Partnerships, and Intervention Areas	*Total weight: 25*
• The extent to which elaborations of mechanism and modalities for implementation are clear, relevant, feasible, build on existing engagement,	

and include relevant reflections on synergies with other projects within or external to the DDI. (*relative weight 30%*)

- The extent to which reflection of implementing partners is clear and include relevant considerations for local implementing partnerships, sub-granting, or other mechanism to ensure local leadership. (*relative weight 20%*)
- The degree to which description of project approaches are clear, relevant and reflect DDI cross-cutting priorities. The cross-cutting priorities are outlined in the DDI Program Document. (*relative weight 10%*)
- The extent to which description of interventions and types of activities/outputs are logic, adequate, feasible within the timeframe of the project, and include clear and relevant targeting and reach indication. (*relative weight 20%*)
- The extent to which intervention areas reflect knowledge and understanding of the priorities and needs of the lot specific target group, exsisting engagement, and established approaches to ensure relevant targeting and reach. (*relative weight 20%*)

MEAL and Results Framework	*Total weight: 15*

- The extent to which the results-framework presents a relevant and logic flow between outcomes, immediate outcomes, and outputs. (*relative weight 20%*)
- The extent to which the results framework elaborates relevant and measurable indicators, relevant baseline estimates, and expected reach targets are appropriate to the project design and budget envelope. (*relative weight 30%*)
- The extent to which description of MEAL arrangements clearly show how activities are monitored, outcomes are assessed, and feedback, learning, stakeholder inclusion, and adaptation is ensured. (*relative weight 30%*)
- The extent to which the project has elaborated a relevant strategy for communication of learning and results. (*relative weight 20%*)

Budget and Financial Management	*Total weight: 10*

- The extent to which the project's cost level and overall budget are justified and seem proportionate with planned activities and expected results. (*relative weight 40%*)
- The extent to which systems for financial management are elaborated and sound, including management arrangement for funding to partners. (*relative weight 30%*)
- The extent to which budgets managed, transferred, or sub-granted to local partners (within or beyond consortia partners) reflects DDI priority of local leadership. (*relative weight 30%*)

Project Management and Aid Effectiveness	*Total weight: 15*

- The extent to which project governance and management setup is clear, includes relevant roles and functions, and reflects relevant inclusion of stakeholders and local partners and engagement with DDI programme structures. (*relative weight 40%*)
- The extent to which thematic expertise, project management and direct or indirect implementation capacity in priority country is outlined in the project document. (*relative weight 20%*)
- The extent to which the project presents relevant considerations of reporting, donor relations, and coordination with other DDI partners. (*relative weight 10%*)

• The extent to which the project have identified relevant risks and corresponding approaches for management of risks and ensuring safety and security of staff, partners, and beneficiaries. (*relative weight 20%*) • The extent to which the project is justified in terms of relevance, impact, effectiveness, efficiency, coherence, and sustainability and provides reflections for entry, exit and closure relevant for the duration of the project. (*relative weight 30%*)	
Total maximum score	*100*

13. APPLICATION AND SELECTION PROCESS

The application process for each phase is described in detail below.

CONCEPT NOTE PHASE

Concept notes must be submitted in the annexed concept note format (Annex 1). The maximum length of the concept note is 16 pages in total – including background information, the project description, overview budget (in DKK), results framework and eligibility criteria. The concept note must be drafted in English, must be submitted using the concept note format (Annex 1), and must be submitted by email to humcivstud@um.dk. It must be submitted at the latest by 4pm (CET) on the 17th of June 2024.

It is the responsibility of the lead organisation to verify that the concept note is complete and using the concept note format. Incomplete concept notes will be rejected.

The concept note is to be completed in Word. Forms must be typed with fonts no smaller than Garamond 12. Please specify in the subject line "DDI Call for concept notes 2024", and the name of the lead applicant.

Only one concept note is accepted from each lead applicant/consortium, and lead applicants under one lot can only apply as co-applicants under another lot. The format requirements must be followed. Applications not submitted in the concept note format, not following the format requirements or exceeding the maximum length will not be considered eligible. Concept notes submitted after the deadline or incomplete applications will be disqualified.

Each applicant will receive a message confirming receipt of the concept note, which will serve as a proof of submission.

Questions related to the CfP, but not concerning any particular concept note content, may be submitted in English to humcivstud@um.dk until the 24h of May 2024. All questions and answers will be posted on the website of the DDI.

FULL PROPOSAL PHASE

The full proposal will need to expand on the information presented in the concept note, providing more details on e.g. budget, results framework, risks, etc. The selected applicant or lead applicant must adhere to the format provided in the "Full Proposal template" and fill in the paragraphs and pages in order. Full proposals must be drafted in English and must be submitted in accordance with the formats (Annex 3, 4, 5, and 6).

The (lead) applicant must submit the full proposals, which must be drafted in English, must be submitted using the full proposal format (Annex 3), and must be submitted by email to humcivstud@um.dk. Full proposals must be submitted at the latest by the 13th of September at 4pm (CET).

When a consortium has drafted a joint application, it is the responsibility of the lead organisation to verify that the full proposal is complete using the full proposal format. Incomplete full proposals will be rejected.

The full proposal is to be completed in Word. Forms must be typed with fonts no smaller than Garamond 12. Please specify in the subject line "DDI Call for full proposals 2024", and the name of the lead applicant.

Each applicant will receive a message confirming receipt of the full proposal, which will serve as a proof of submission.

Prior to assessment, the following eligibility criteria will be assessed. Full proposals that do not comply will not be assessed.

- Respecting the format of the full proposal, including length requirements.
- Lead applicant has been selected at the concept note stage.
- Only one full proposal is accepted from each lead applicant/consortium per lot.
- Full proposals submitted after the deadline or incomplete applications will be disqualified.

14. APPRAISAL OF PROJECTS AND PARTNERS

Before the award of grant, a final appraisal will be conducted e.g. by requiring supporting documents and initiating further inquiries as part of the MFA's obligation to carry out a partner assessment/ due diligence review (MFA Financial Management Guidelines for Development Cooperation). The purpose of this assessment is to ascertain grant recipients' financial, operational, organisational capacity and compliance with general safeguards and MFA requirements. The level of detail of the final appraisal prior to the grant award may vary according to the specific situation and the context. The MFA may also decide to check eligibility at any previous step of the evaluation of applications.

15. TENTATIVE TIMETABLE FOR THE APPLICATION AND SELECTION PROCESS

Tentative Timetable	Date	Time (CET)
1. Call for proposals published	2nd of May	
2. Information meeting about concept notes	8th of May	2pm
3. Deadline for issuing Q&A	24th of May	4pm
4. Deadline for submission of concept notes	17th of June	4pm
5. Information to applicants on preselection	25th of July	4pm
6. Information meeting about full proposals	Week of 12th of August	2pm
7. Deadline for submission of full project proposals	13th of September	4pm
8. Information to applications on evaluation of full project proposals/notification of award of grant	15th of October	4pm
9. Appraisal and dialogue regarding projects and partners	Q4 of 2024	
10. Signature of grant agreement	Q4 of 2024	

16. ANNEXES

Annexes relevant for concept note:
1. Concept Note Template
2. Scoring Sheet for Evaluation Criteria

Full Proposal package to be submitted:

Full Proposal template

Annex 1: Budget

Annex 2: Results Framework

Annex 3: Partner Presentation and Justification

Annex 4: Project References

Annex 5: Current Organisational or International Strategy

Annex 6: Latest Annual Report

Annex 7: Organisational organogram

Annex 8: Partnership, localisation and/or local leadership strategy

It is assumed that Annexes 5-8 are existing organisational documents. If not, you are welcome to provide alternatives if these exist in other forms (approach papers, policy documents or similar). We do not expect you to produce these from new if they do not exist.