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## Call for proposals

### Preventing and combating intersectional violence towards Lesbians\* 2025

EL\*C - EuroCentralAsian Lesbian\* Community is happy to announce its 2025 call for proposals for a violence-free lesbian\* future. Our goal is to support and build capacities of lesbian\* CSOs across the European Union and in [CERV participating countries](#) (currently in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Serbia, Albania, Montenegro, Moldova and Ukraine) so that they can start, continue or develop further their work to combat or prevent gender-based violence (GBV) against lesbians\*. In 2025, EL\*C dedicates 1,104,044 EUR to this project.

**Please note that EL\*C uses the term lesbian with an asterisk (lesbian\*) as inclusive of cis, trans and intersex women, and non- binary persons who self-identify as lesbian, bisexual, and queer.**

**Also, with lesbian\* CSO, the CFP refers to organisations with lesbian leadership and/or lesbian focus.**

- **By lesbian leadership, we mean that in the main decision-making position(s) there is a lesbian majority.**
- **By lesbian focus, we mean that the main focus of the group/organization's activities is lesbians, the lesbian community.**

In addition to financial support, during project implementation, grantee partners will have access to tailor-made capacity-building, including peer learning and mentoring support to become sustainable, strong and effective voices against violence against Lesbians\*. These measures will be provided based on a needs assessment that will take place at the start of project implementation.

### WHAT exactly will be supported?

**Projects which contribute to one or more of the below objectives:**

- 1) **To understand and meet the specific needs of lesbians\* who are victims of gender-based violence (GBV) and provide tailor-made support for them.**

*Please see below a few examples only for illustrative purposes. Projects under this objective may include, among other activities, mapping the needs of lesbian\* victims of GBV, starting outreach and*

*provision of support services for lesbian\* communities directly or through other existing service providers e.g. crisis centers, but also continuing, developing and adjusting existing services, outreach work, developing skills and capacities of staff and volunteers or training professionals working with victims of violence. Educating the public or specific stakeholders or addressing prevention of violence may be also included, etc.*

**2) To ensure that systems for protection and prevention of GBV are used to serve lesbians\* and advocate for changes as needed.**

*Please see below a few examples only for illustrative purposes. Projects under this objective may include, among other activities, researching, analyzing and improving the response to the needs of lesbian\* victims of violence including actions of authorities, service providers, multi-agency collaboration; improving implementation of national or European laws, standards and policies, undertaking capacity-building, finetuning processes and procedures, strengthening coordination between agencies, fostering cross-movement learning, collaboration and coalition-building, and undertaking advocacy to improve laws, educate decision-makers etc.*

**3) To strengthen the sustainability, skills and capacities of lesbian\* CSOs in responding to the GBV-related needs of lesbians\* and in becoming visible representatives for the topic.**

*Please see below a few examples only for illustrative purposes. Projects under this objective may include, among other activities, identifying skills and capacity gaps in responding to the needs of lesbians\*, addressing those gaps as well as gaps in organizational processes, procedures, capacities, resources and gaps in collaborations with other lesbian\* actors and women's rights actors or other key stakeholders, etc.*

**Please note that the project activities have to serve the objectives of actors/communities within the EU and the CERV participating countries. Also, they must take place within the European Union and CERV participating countries.**

**Applications can be submitted in one of two categories:**

**a) Category I.: Starting Up and Tailoring GBV Work**

This category is recommended for lesbian\* CSOs launching new work or tailoring existing work for lesbians\*, or working with other stakeholders on tailoring existing work. For instance, a lesbian\* CSO may launch its own services to support victims or may work with existing service providers – e.g. women's or LGBTIQ crisis centers, other service-providers - on introducing a new element of service in order to meet the specific needs of lesbians\*. It is also recommended for those introducing a new element to the existing service, outreach, prevention or advocacy work in order to meet the specific needs of the lesbian\* community, or its parts (e.g. members living in rural areas, persons exposed to

multiple discrimination, etc.). Projects are encouraged to include collaboration and learning. Grant requests may range between 10,000 and 30,000 EUR.

#### **b) Category II.: Scaling up GBV Work**

This category is recommended for lesbian\* CSOs already engaged in the prevention or combating of GBV and planning to consolidate, grow, expand, develop it in new directions or deepen their work to a new level. It is also recommended for coalitions of CSOs planning to achieve better provision of services and/ or systemic change at the local, national or regional level. Projects are encouraged to include collaboration and learning. Grant requests may range between 30,000 and 60,000 EUR.

Please note that if you received funding in 2024 in the previous cycle of the „Preventing and combating intersectional violence towards Lesbians\*“, the cumulative amount of 60,000 EUR cannot be overstepped in the two cycles.

**Activities listed below may receive funding. Please note that activities not listed below cannot be funded.**

- Activities on preventing and combating gender-based violence against lesbians\*, including where such violence is committed online or in the context of people fleeing from Russia’s war of aggression against Ukraine;
- Coalitions and partnerships among lesbian\* CSOs and feminist CSOs in the field of preventing and combatting gender-based violence; coordination and strategic cooperation between lesbian\* CSOs, feminist CSOs and other stakeholders, public or private sector entities;
- Provision of free advice, watchdog and monitoring activities on EU and international policies in the field of preventing and combatting violence against women, such as the Istanbul Convention or other EU legal and policy documents;
- Promotion of the implementation of adopted laws in the field of preventing and combatting gender-based violence, regulations and Court cases;
- Lobbying/ Advocacy to influence policy and decision-making processes, including revision/updating/adoption of policies and legislation in the field of preventing and combatting gender-based violence;
- Research and analysis aimed at informing policymaking at EU and national level, development of tools and standards to support EU policies and actions in the prevention and combatting gender-based violence against lesbians\*;
- Provision of gender-sensitive support services to lesbians\*, such as victim support tailored to the specific needs of victims who are lesbians\*, including specific medical and psychological support, victim-centered and trauma-informed services, access to national helplines, access to justice, increased accessibility of shelters, including comprehensive support for victims of sexual harassment at work, training of professionals, etc.;
- Awareness raising and communication/information’s activities aimed in particular at creating links and animating communities in the field of preventing and combatting gender-based violence against lesbians\*;

- Community-based mobilization with direct involvement of lesbians\* (e.g., working with violence survivors, with cultural mediators, with community leaders, etc.);
- Tackling gender stereotypes as root causes of gender-based violence against lesbians\*;
- Awareness-raising and capacity-building to foster participation, ownership, and knowledge in the development, adaptation and/or implementation of legislation and/or frameworks or action, for instance, through a multidisciplinary working group (which meets regularly and has appropriate decision-making power), enhancement of coordinating mechanisms and procedures (e.g., protocols).

Other activities not listed above cannot be included in the project; for example, regranting cannot be included.

### Grant size, duration, start and end date

- a) The project request can be **minimum 10,000 EUR and maximum 60,000 EUR**.
  - Grant requests for Category I. should range between 10,000 and 30,000 EUR; and for Category II. between 30,000 and 60,000 EUR.
  - Please note that if you received funding in 2024 in the previous cycle of the „Preventing and combating intersectional violence towards Lesbians\*“, the cumulative amount of 60,000 EUR cannot be overstepped in the two cycles.
- b) **No co-funding** is necessary, EL\*C will cover 100% of the costs.
- c) The length of the project may be **between 6 months and 12 months**.
- d) The start date should be **between September 15 and October 30, 2025**.
- e) For all projects 50% of the grant amount will be paid out immediately and the other 50% following the approval of the interim report. The interim report is due at midterm of the project while a final report needs to be submitted 30 days after the end date.

### WHAT costs can be included in the application?

General principles for admissible costs are the following:

- they must be actually incurred by the applicant
- they must be incurred in the grant period
- they must be incurred within EU member states and CERV participating countries
- they must be declared under one of the budget categories included in the application forms
- they must be incurred in connection with the planned actions
- they must be identifiable and verifiable, in particular, recorded in the applicant's accounts in accordance with the accounting standards applicable in the country where the applicant is established and with the applicant's usual cost accounting practices

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- they must comply with the applicable national law on taxes, labor and social security
  - they must be reasonable, justified and must comply with the principle of sound financial management, in particular, regarding economy and efficiency.

Categories of costs **that can be included** are the following:

- Personnel costs
- Subcontracting costs
- Travel and subsistence costs
- Equipment costs (must be declared as depreciation costs)
- Other goods, works and services

Costs **that are not allowed** are the following:

- costs or contributions that do not comply with the conditions set out above
- costs related to return on capital and dividends paid by a beneficiary
- debt and debt service charges
- provisions for future losses or debts
- interest owed
- currency exchange losses
- bank costs charged by the beneficiary's bank for transfers from EL\*C
- excessive or reckless expenditure
- deductible or refundable VAT (including VAT paid by public bodies acting as public authority)
- costs incurred or contributions for activities implemented during grant agreement suspension in-kind contributions by third parties
- costs or contributions declared under other EU grants (or grants awarded by an EU Member State, non-EU country or other body implementing the EU budget)
- costs or contributions for staff of a national (or regional/local) administration, for activities that are part of the administration's normal activities (i.e. not undertaken only because of the grant)
- costs or contributions (especially travel and subsistence) for staff or representatives of EU institutions, bodies or agencies.

As for specific guidance for the various budget categories included in the application forms, we will add more information in the Q&A document on the [EL\\*C Grants Program's webpage](#), and we will talk about these in the information sessions.

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## WHO will be funded?

### Eligibility criteria:

Applicants meeting the following eligibility criteria will be considered for funding:

- **Legally registered, non-profit and non-governmental, civil society organization in their country of operation** at the time of submitting the application
- Established in a **Member State of the European Union** (including overseas countries and territories (OCTs) and **CERV-participating countries, currently Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Serbia, Albania, Montenegro, Moldova and Ukraine**. Please feel free to check the updated list of CERV participating countries on this link: [CERV-participating country](#).)
- **Lesbian\* CSO** (With lesbian\* CSO, the CFP refers to organisations with lesbian leadership and/or lesbian focus. By lesbian leadership, we mean that in the main decision-making position(s) there is a lesbian majority. By lesbian focus, we mean that the main focus of the group/organization's activities is lesbians, the lesbian community.)
- Applicant **respecting EU values** such as dignity, equality and justice (as laid down in Art.2 of the Treaty on European Union and the EU Charter of fundamental rights)
- Fully **completed application form, including budget, submitted** before the deadline.  
*(Applications can be submitted in any EU member state language, however, English is preferred. Submitting in another language will not lead to any disadvantage.)*

Applicants found ineligible will be informed within 2 weeks after the application deadline.

### Selection criteria:

Eligible proposals will be assessed along the below selection criteria:

- a) Operational capacity (20 points)
  - *How complex is the project as compared with the applicant's prior experience? Has the applicant managed other similar projects in the past? Based on the application, does the applicant have the capacity to implement the project?*
- b) Relevance of the proposed action for the lesbian\* community (20 points)
  - *Is the project's goal/ objective relevant from the perspective of the call for proposals? Based on the information provided in the application, is the project relevant for lesbians\* in the applicant's context?*
- c) Design of the action and implementation approach (15 points)
  - *Do the planned activities contribute to the objectives? Are the activities realistic and doable within the project period? Are the activities well-planned? Does the application only include activities that are listed in the call for proposals? What methods are they planning to use? Do the*

*methodologies serve the project's objectives and the values that the CFP is serving? Are the methodologies well-chosen, doable and effective?*

- d) Sustainability of the action (15 points)
- *Is the project's impact going to influence the life of the community beyond short-term gains? What are the mid-term and long-term impacts that the project will contribute to? Is there a vision for potential long-term sustainability?*
- e) Budget and cost effectiveness (15 points)
- *Are the planned budget items reasonable, detailed, and in line with the planned activities/ objectives? Are they under-planned or possibly overestimated?*
- f) Intersectionality (lesbians\* facing multiple hardship, exclusion, discrimination) (15 points)
- *Is the applicant/ project working with lesbians\* facing multiple hardships, exclusion, discrimination, including those living in rural areas? Is this angle integrated into the application?*

A Selection Committee comprising of EL\*C Board Members – thus persons elected by the community - will assess eligible proposals and will make funding decisions. Only a select number of EL\*C Board Members will take part in this work, in particular those who do not have any conflict of interest in relation to potential applicants.

We will acknowledge the receipt of the application. It is possible that EL\*C will be in touch with you with clarifying questions regarding the application. It is also possible that the Selection Committee will suggest changes to the project.

Eligible applicants will be informed about the grant decision as soon as possible. Awarded projects will be also announced on the [EL\\*C Grants Program's webpage](#).

Please note that applicants with awarded projects will be required to express their commitment to upholding European values and standards. Also, in rare cases they may be requested to undergo a due diligence check prior to signing the grant agreement.

## HOW to apply?

You need to submit the completed **application form, including the budget**, before 23:59 CET on **July 31st, 2025**, to the following email address: [grants@lesbiangenius.org](mailto:grants@lesbiangenius.org)  
*Please make sure not to send it last minute, as it may take a few minutes for different mail servers to send the emails.*

You can download the application form in several languages from the [EL\\*C Grants Program's webpage](#).

EL\*C will provide online information sessions in English about the call for proposals. You may register for the information sessions on the [HERE](#). It is sufficient to register for one session, as the information provided will be the same in each session. Following your registration, we will send you the link to the

information session.

- June 5, Thursday at 9:00 CET
- June 11, Wednesday at 12:00 CET
- June 16, Monday at 18:00 CET
- July 3, Thursday at 17:00 CET

A **Question and Answers document** is available on the [EL\\*C Grants Program's webpage](#), with updates after every information session.

In addition, if you cannot find an answer to your question in this document, in the Q&A file, or during the information sessions, you may also send an email to [grants@lesbiangenius.org](mailto:grants@lesbiangenius.org) at any time prior to July 18, 2025. We will regularly update the Q&A document with responses sent to your questions.

### **Complaints Mechanism**

In case you would like to make a formal complaint regarding the selection process or its result, please send it to [grants@lesbiangenius.org](mailto:grants@lesbiangenius.org) within 5 working days after the notification email about the grant decision has been sent. A Complaints Committee will investigate each complaint and will provide an official answer within 30 days. The Complaints Committee consists of three members: an executive director of EL\*C, and two members of the Selection Committee who were not involved in the evaluation of the application.

*This publication was funded by the European Union. Its contents are the sole responsibility of EL\*C - EuroCentralAsian Lesbian\* Community and do not necessarily reflect the views of the European Union.*