



**Contracting Body:** OXYGen Foundation for Protection of Youth and Women Rights

**Funding Agency:** European Union, within framework of the EU-Armenia: Partnerships for Change Programme

**Project:** EQUAL – EU 4 Women Empowerment in Armenia

**CALL for PROPOSAL (CfP) for a Subgrant**

**CSO-BUSINESS NETWORKING FOR WOMEN ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT**

**Reference number:** EU4GE-OxY-FSTP09

**Deadline for submission:** 08 December 2024 at 24:00 local time

**Notice:** To help applicants to clarify any **uncertainties to the extent possible/allowable** before the online submission, an on-line information session via Zoom will be organized on **29 November 2024 at 11:00**.

Should you be interested in this session, please send an email by **28 November, 15:00** to [grants@oxygenfund.am](mailto:grants@oxygenfund.am) indicating: name, surname, and email address of the persons who are going to participate as well as the organisation they represent. **An on-line link will be e-mailed before the session to all registered participants.**

**Expected subgrant duration:** 8 months maximum

**Size of the subgrant:** 20,000 Euro

**Starting date of the subgrant:** January 2025

**Open to:** organizations legally registered in Armenia; non-profit; with experience relevant to the topic of the call. Organizations that have already been awarded a subgrant under the project EQUAL cannot be eligible for this subgrant.

**Language of the proposal:** English (preferred because there are international partners in the selection committee) or Armenian.

**Number of awards:** Only one subgrant will be awarded.

**Application:** Applications should be sent to [grants@oxygenfund.am](mailto:grants@oxygenfund.am) no later than the deadline. No links/Google files will be accepted.

More details on the application process are provided under **Article 7**.

### 1. OxYGen Foundation

OxYGen Foundation for Protection of Youth and Women Rights (OxYGen) is an independent advocacy and development foundation driven by its vision of an Armenia free of poverty and suffering, in which women and men can exercise their rights and influence decisions that impact their lives.

OxYGen is implementing its program interventions based on its 5-year strategy in line with its strategic priorities: Gender Equality, Youth Empowerment, Accountable Governance, Economic Justice, and Resilience Building and Humanitarian assistance.

### 2. The Project EQUAL

**EQUAL – EU 4 Women Empowerment in Armenia** project is funded by the EU (referred to as **EQUAL**).

The project “EQUAL - EU 4 Women Empowerment in Armenia” aims to elevate and empower women in Armenia to bring about societal change across the country. To do so, EQUAL provides women with support to exercise their political, economic and socio-cultural rights, targeting specifically those from vulnerable and disadvantaged groups. EQUAL adopts a cross-cutting approach to tackling women's issues that are often pushed to the margins of policymaking, including human trafficking, sexual and reproductive education, harassment in the workplace, or the impact of gender norms in social groups.

One of the main pillars of EQUAL supports public information campaigns on shifting stereotypes and perceptions hindering women empowerment, notably through capacitating local organizations into doing so – with financial and technical support.

#### **Objectives of the project EQUAL**

**Overall objective:** State and non-state actors take meaningful actions to address and prevent all forms of gender-based violence and discrimination and contribute to gender equality in Armenia for women, men, girls, and boys in all their diversity.

**Strategic objective:** strengthen their resilience and ability to take meaningful action to address and prevent all forms of gender-based violence and discrimination in Armenia.

Main components of the project EQUAL: **Freedom from Gender-based violence and discrimination in Armenia.**

The project EQUAL implies the subgrant component via financial support to third parties (FSTP). **This particular subgrant and the following ones**, all together will allow involvement of NGOs working with women and girls facing multiple forms of discrimination and violence, as well as safeguard their meaningful participation with their priority interventions and solutions to detected issues through awarding-supported interventions.

### 3. The Proposal

The current Call for Proposal is envisaged within the project EQUAL – EU 4 Women Empowerment in Armenia.

Based on the [ArmStat](#) data, participation in the labor market remains more limited among women than men. The gap is relatively large in Armenia compared with peer countries and has been widening in recent years. In 2022, less than half of working-age women were in the labor force, more than 20 percentage points below the male labor force participation rate. Moreover, the gap grew in 2018–22, as the labor force participation rate rose to a greater extent among men than among women (this and below statements are based on the Armenia Country Gender Assessment 2024 by World Bank<sup>1</sup> unless otherwise referred to). 26 percent of working-age women (compared with negligible percent among men) cite family circumstances (household chores and care responsibilities, as a result of the rooted perception of women’s role to better fulfill them) as the primary reason for not being in the labor force. Social norms affect women’s labor force participation as well, considering men as main breadwinners.

Women are increasingly entering roles that demand advanced skills, thanks in part to their higher levels of education. However, their access to labor market opportunities remains constrained, as evidenced by their disproportionately large share of part-time employment - nearly twice that of men. While some women choose part-time work, a significant portion face involuntary part-time employment driven by employer demand, with 21% of women affected compared to only 9% of men.

Women remain engaged in sectors that are traditionally female activities, are considered socially acceptable by being largely related to social perceptions on the types of activities that are better suited for women and are associated with lower pay.

Armenian women earned only around 71 percent of men’s hourly wages in 2022, a gap that has remained unchanged since 2018 and that persists regardless of the employment type, the occupation, or the educational level.

Civil society organizations (CSOs) in Armenia play an important role in promoting gender equality both at the community and national levels. They play a key role in preventing and addressing gender-based violence (GBV) by providing outreach and training programs and facilitating crucial assistance for domestic violence survivors. They can play a role in anti-discriminatory practices (starting from job announcement, hiring, career advancement to firing), safeguarding, and gender sensibilization of businesses – from small to medium and bigger sizes.

Survey on Domestic Violence Against Women ([ArmStat2021](#)) revealed that a majority of respondents in Armenia believe that the financial dependency of women on their partners is a major driver of GBV. A woman who does not earn money is 3.5 percentage points more likely to become a victim of domestic violence, and the share of unemployed women is the highest (28.6 percent) among the victims of physical violence. This is problematic as 23 percent of urban and 22 percent of rural women, respectively, have been subjected to at least one type of economic activity restriction.

Economic dependency and cultural norms make women vulnerable not only in families but also at the workplace, especially those from displaced population groups and with disabilities. They are often forced to engage in vulnerable ‘black market’ and informal jobs ([UNFPA 2024](#)).

To empower women economically, it is essential to facilitate their access to the labor market, ensure equal pay, and prevent discriminatory practices by introducing gender-sensitive policies and mainstreaming inclusive practices and procedures in workplaces. Special attention must be given to

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<sup>1</sup> World Bank. 2024. [Armenia Country Gender Assessment](#). Washington, DC: World Bank.

survivors of GBV and women with disabilities. CSO-business networks can play a pivotal role in achieving these objectives.

The proposal under FSTP09 is to be developed around the following:

**Goal:** CSOs enable businesses to adopt gender-sensitive practices and create opportunities that economically empower women from vulnerable groups, with a specific focus on GBV survivors and women with disabilities.

**Objective 1:** CSO partnership with businesses raises their awareness on gender equality and safeguarding and sensitizes toward GBV.

**Objective 2:** Gender sensitized businesses offer apprenticeship and employment opportunities to women from vulnerable groups, with a specific focus on women from vulnerable groups.

**Examples of eligible activities** [*\*the list is indicative, not obligatory, not exhaustive*]:

- Establishing networks with small and/or medium size businesses or working with established business associations for introducing gender sensitive policies and practices
- Conducting anti-harassment, GBV awareness, gender- and disability-sensitive workplace training for businesses
- Developing and promoting clear policies and procedures within businesses that support gender equality, ensure equal opportunities for career advancement, and address issues of harassment or discrimination
- Establishing networks with businesses or working with established business associations interested in offering apprenticeship and employment opportunities to vulnerable women and willing to offer formal employment to high-performing women after apprenticeship completion
- Arranging with businesses apprenticeship programs for specific technical skills, followed by mentoring by business professionals. These would allow women to gain hands-on and real-life experience and skills
- Public campaigns to raise awareness about the importance of gender diversity in male-dominated sectors and promote gender equality

**Note:** the inclusiveness requirement implies that among project beneficiaries must be PWDs (people with disabilities) and other vulnerable groups, where

- At least 70% of project direct beneficiaries should be girls and women
- At least 20% of the project direct beneficiaries should be PWDs
- At least 30% of the project direct beneficiaries should be youth

The NGO must specify clearly what the funding will be used for, and how the sought objective(s) will be achieved.

**The following types of activities are ineligible**

- actions concerned only or mainly with individual sponsorships for participation in workshops, seminars, conferences, and congresses

- actions concerned only or mainly with individual scholarships for studies or training courses
- actions supporting political parties
- actions supporting charitable fundraising

**Note:** *The subgrant may not be used to finance actions which have already been completed. Financed activities cannot commence prior to the award of the subgrant.*

#### Outcomes:

- At least one innovative CSO-Business partnership is established for women access to male dominated sectors. This partnership will be mutually beneficial: enhancing the role and capacity of the CSO on one side (e.g. acting as a bridge between vulnerable women and the business) and making the business a more diverse and inclusive workplace on another
- Businesses engaged in the project have gender sensitive policies and practices in place
- Number of women from vulnerable groups are engaged in the most relevant activities, practices, and networks to get a new or better employment
- Women from vulnerable groups (including GBV survivors and women with disabilities) increase their income by successfully applying respective knowledge and skills, and by effectively marketing their offer as prospective employees.

#### 4. The package

The full package of documents will comprise of the following:

- a. The proposal and budget prepared in the proposed format (attached to this call for proposal):
  - Annex 1: Grant Proposal Form and**
  - Annex 2: Budget Template**
- b. Scanned version of the NGO State Registration Document

#### 5. Criteria for the proposals' evaluation

The proposal packages will be evaluated by the selection committee (also referred to as "SelCom"), against the below criteria.

##### 5.1 Relevance of the planned project: max. 35 points

- Quality of the problem analysis and potential solutions: the specific policy issues and the interests of the target groups, beneficiaries and other involved parties have been comprehensively appraised.
- Quality of proposed interventions: considering their adequacy to address the identified problems.
- Gender empowerment and social inclusion: to what extent the proposed project contributes to strengthening gender equality and promoting social inclusion, making sure it leaves no one behind.

- Participation and engagement of beneficiaries at grassroots level: the project allows equal participation of all target groups, without discrimination based on gender, race, social status, ethnicity, or religion.
- Experience of implementing projects of similar nature

### **5.2 Feasibility of the planned project: 30 points**

- Consistency of the logic of intervention: coherence between the project objective, planned outputs and expected outcomes.
- Implementation methodology: based on previous experience and lessons learned from best practices, the proposal must showcase how the expected results are achievable
- Project planning: the proposed timeframe and activity planning realistic under the given circumstances and with the budget available.
- Clear management structure - responsibilities, coordination, and collaboration modalities.
- Risk assessment and mitigation measures.
- MEAL: modes of data gathering and monitoring, defined data sources, accountability and learning.

### **5.3 Sustainability of the planned project: 20 points**

- Sustainability planning: the applicant has demonstrated clear consideration and a comprehensive understanding of the project's sustainability and of the steps required to ensure the positive effects and impacts after the project's closure.
- Capacity building: the proposal contributes to capacity building at the level of the individual and/or the organization/institution.

### **5.4 Financial criteria: 15 points**

- Alignment with activities: the proposed costs detailed in the Budget Template directly correspond to activities described in the Grant Application Form.
- Budget transparency: the budget includes a detailed breakdown of all costs, and these are clearly **justified in narrative form in the corresponding sheet of the Budget Template.**
- Cost effectiveness: the proposed costs are reasonable and within the range of what would typically be expected for similar products
- Legal and regulatory compliance: all proposed costs comply with relevant laws and regulations.
- Logical proportionality: the admin and activity budgets are reasonably shared.

## **6. Decision**

The final award decision is made at OXYGen, after (i) the activities, methodology and budget details are discussed, revised as necessary and mutually agreed upon with the 1<sup>st</sup> best organization and (ii) it has

successfully passed the capacity and risk assessment by OxYGen. The entire process of selection will be described in detail in a protocol and the contracting process will commence.

## 7. From Application to Contracting

- Applications should be sent to [grants@oxygenfund.am](mailto:grants@oxygenfund.am) no later than the deadline.

Each applicant may submit **only one application**.

Reference number: **EU4GE-OxY-FSTP09**

Deadline for submission of proposals: **08 December 2024 at 24:00** Yerevan time

- **Important:** Please indicate in the subject line of your e-mail: **The reference number of the call and the applicant name**

**Attached to the email message:** The proposal file must be in an unprotected PDF or Word format. The budget will be in the Excel format. The scanned certificate of state registration.

**Note: no links/Google files will be accepted.**

- A submission confirmation notice of No-Reply will be sent to each applicant.
- After the evaluation conducted and selection decision is made, the applicant will be notified about being rejected or put on a reserve or selected for an award. The latter will receive a pre-award notice from OxYGen.
- Final award notice will be sent after the assessment is completed satisfactorily.
- The contract will be signed.

Attached [Annex 1](#): Grant Application Form

Attached [Annex 2](#): Budget Template (*Attention: the latter has two sheets*)

*“EQUAL - EU 4 Women Empowerment in Armenia” project is implemented by OxYGen Foundation, European Partnership for Democracy NGO, Netherlands Helsinki Committee NGO, Women’s Support Center NGO, WINNET Goris Development Foundation in cooperation with Winnet Sweden NGO. The project is funded by the European Union.*