



Organizational Capacity Development Support for LGBTQIA+ organizations

Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, North Macedonia and Serbia

Info session - Novembre 14, 2025

Agenda

- Short round of introductions
- Context: ERIM, ERA and the FIER·ES project
- The opportunity: OCA & Capacity Building support: structure of support (3 phases), eligibility and selection criteria
- How to apply: documents for application
- Q&A
- Future opportunities within the FIER·ES project



Who are we?

ERIM – Equal Rights and Independent Media

- Non-profit organization, Lyon (France)
- Support for human rights organizations and independent media in EaP, Eurasia and Med-Mena regions
- Extensive experience in conducting organizational capacity assessment (OCA)

ERA – Equal Rights Association For Western Balkans And Türkiye

- Regional non-profit umbrella organization operating in Western Balkans and Türkiye (based in Belgrade, Serbia)
- Promote and advocate for human rights of LGBTI+s
- Expertise includes advocacy, capacity building, knowledge production and sharing, strategic networking, subgranting, raising awareness

FIER·ES programme (Fostering the Inclusion, Equality and Resilience of LGBTQIA+ people)

- 2,5 years programme to support LGBTQIA+ organizations and activists in the EaP countries and the Balkans (Ukraine, Moldova, Armenia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, North Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia)
- Capacity Building for CSOs and activists, Advocacy and Campaigning, Psychosocial and emergency support + networking events
- The programme is co-funded by Agence française de développement, coordinated by ERIM and led with Genderdoc – M (Moldova) and the LGBTI Equal Rights Association for Western Balkans and Türkiye (ERA)



OCA & Capacity Development Support

Eligible groups

LGBTQIA+ Civil Society Organizations in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, North Macedonia and Serbia seeking long term capacity development support

Particularly welcomed : CSOs that operate outside capital cities and/or work with marginalised or underserved populations (including LGBTQIA+ women)

Registered or unregistered (formal or non-formal initiatives) can apply

At least 2 years experience and 1 permanent staff or member committed for project duration

In line with democratic and HR principles and support for LGBTQIA+ rights

... main mission is to promote the rights or provide services to the LGBTQIA+ community



OCA & Capacity Development Support

Phase I (up to 1 month – 19 January – 19 February 2026)	Phase II (up to 3 weeks – 19 February – 12 March 2026)	Phase III (up to 12 months – 12 March 2026 – 12 March 2027)
Organizational Capacity Assessment (OCA): An evaluation of each organization across eight key areas, conducted by an OCA expert selected by ERIM.	Capacity Development Plan: Designing a tailored plan, based on the results of the OCA, outlining priority actions to strengthen the organization.	Implementation of the Capacity-Building Plan: Implementation of the agreed actions, supported by a grant of up to €14,000.

Estimated timeline:

Selection of beneficiaries: Mid – December 2025

OCA Assessment: mid-January to mid-February 2026

Grant contracts and capacity development plan: February to March 2026

Implementation of capacity development plan (project): March 2026 to March 2027

Final reporting (narrative and financial): April 2027



How does OCA take place?

- OCA expert (parallel recruiting process)
- Desk research
- In-depth interviews with team members

Goal: To identify priority areas for organizational improvement and develop a tailored capacity development plan. Activities may be adjusted based on organizational needs, but adherence to the expert's recommendations is strongly advised.

(!) Your team will need to allocate adequate time for training, consultations with experts, sharing insights with other team members, and implementing changes over the long term.



Activities and eligible costs

- Consultancy and mentorship in developing or improving policies/planning documents
- Strategies, structures, and processes: strategic plans, professional development plans, communications strategies, emergency response plans, business planning, fundraising strategies
- Training courses and focused technical assistance based on organizational needs in areas such as, but not limited to, board development and governance, public relations, strategic planning, financial management, volunteer systems, advocacy and communication, informational technology (IT), digital security, etc.
- Monitor and evaluate the progress of the organizational development

.... ++ Other needs identified through the OCA

*Human Resources costs: acceptable per reasonable balance with the rest of the budget and aiming at implementing the project

*Resilience: max 20% of budget and if justified



Eligibility and Selection Criteria

Minimum eligibility criteria

- Statute and mission are in line with **democratic and human rights principles** and support for LGBTQIA+ rights
- Main mission it to promote the rights or provide services to the **LGBTQIA+ community**
- Established in **Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, North Macedonia or Serbia**
- Applicants must have been active for a minimum of **two years**
- Applicants must have at least 1 staff member or permanent member

Selection criteria

- Clear areas for improvement identified;
- Community-led organisation
- Willingness to participate and motivation to improve clearly identified
- Relevant ideas of activities to strengthen capacities are proposed in application (provisional CD plan)
- A reasonable budget aligned with the proposed activities is included in the application (tentative budget)
- Impact of the project on organization is clearly described
- Sustainability is explained



Application process

DOCUMENTS:

1. Application Form
2. Self-Assessment Questionnaire
2. Tentative budget

Deadline: **December 1st, 17:00 CET**

Email: ocasupportwb@media-csos.com

*Applications can be submitted in local languages too, but provide an English version (via Google Translate or any other online translator)

Self-Assessment Questionnaire

Please fill in the scores using the dropdown lists in columns C and D.
 If some specific organisational development fields are a priority for your organisation (and receives a score equal or higher than 3 in the Priority Level column), please fill in the two areas next to it with the required information (Column E: explanation to the realities and challenges your organization faces in that particular field; Column F: the activity(ies)).
 Please make sure to fill in Columns C and D (using dropdown lists) for all organisational development fields.

COMPONENT / ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT FIELDS	DEFINITIONS	On a scale from 1 to 5, which of the following best defines your organisation today or in the near future? For each area/component, please select the relevant value from the drop-down menu.			
		Initial Self Assessment	Priority Level	Please explain your Initial Self Assessment Score	Please indicate here activity(ies) you think could be usefull to meet the capacity development need identified
Example: Contingency and Adaptive Performance	<i>The organization has a contingency and adaptive performance plan to ensure it functions well during stress or opportunities. The organization continuously improves its plans based on past experiences and emerging risks, and it also engages in strategic financial planning and risk management for long-term viability.</i>	<i>2 - Basic awareness of potential risks, but no formal contingency and adaptive performance plans.</i>	<i>4 - Crucial to longer-term sustainability</i>	<i>Our organization is aware of potential risks but lacks a formal contingency plan. We need to develop this plan and hire legal counsel to understand recent legislative changes in the country and get advice on mitigation strategies, such as relocation. Additionally, staff stress over the current situation is affecting their personal lives and work. This is crucial for our organization.</i>	<i>Activity 1: Hire legal counsel. Activity 2: Provide five psychosocial support sessions to members of the organization.</i>
Good Governance and Leadership	The organization/group has a well-defined internal structure (e.g., board, executive team, committees). All individuals understand and respect this structure, and decisions are made transparently in alignment with it. All members of the organization can access knowledge about the strategic direction and priorities of the organization.				
Strategic planning	Regular strategic planning is conducted with a clear long-term vision in step with the organisation's mission. Strategic plan in monitored and adjusted				
Income diversity & resources	Organisation has multiple revenue streams and funders. Organisation dedicates adequate human resources to business development.				
Outreach, branding and external communication	The organization communicates effectively with its key audiences, whether stakeholders, partners, beneficiaries, or the general public. It has dedicated staff or clearly				

Application Form

FOER-ES **ERA** **erim**
Equal Rights & Independent Media

Organisational Capacity Assessment (OCA) and Capacity Development Grants for LGBTQIA+ organisations

Application form

Organisational Self-Assessment Questionnaire (Guidelines)

I. Please fill in the Excel document 2. ~~OCA Self-assessment questionnaire~~

Fill in the scores using the dropdown lists in columns C and D. Please make sure to fill in Columns C and D for all organisational development fields.

If some specific organisational development fields are a priority for your organisation (and receives a score equal or higher than 3 in the Priority Level column), please fill in the two areas next to it with the required information (Column E: explanation to the realities and challenges your organisation faces in that particular field; Column F: the activity (s)).

Before submitting the proposal, please review and ensure that all sections are consistent.

We invite you to fill in the Self-assessment questionnaire before filling in the present application form as we believe the assessment might help you building a strong application.

II. General information about the applicant

Official name of the organisation (if informal group, include the name used by the group)	English:
Registration number of the legal entity (if applicable)	Original:
Country and region of the organisation	

The FIER-ES project is funded by Agence française de développement

France **AFD**

Contact person (full name and position)	
Email	
Phone number / signal	
How long has your organisation/initiative been active?	
Indicate the number of members of your organisation/initiative: (full-time employees, part-time employees, volunteers)	
Is your organisation / initiative part of a LGBTQIA+ oriented coalition?	
Website and social media page(s) of the organisation (if applicable)	
the geographical area in which the activities of your organisation / initiative are implemented	
Please provide 2 professional references (e.g., donor representatives, partner organisations) whom your organisation or initiative have worked with, including their e-mail contacts.	
Are you comfortable working in English?	☐ Yes ☐ No
Summary of your provisional capacity development project (max 150 words)	
Tentative budget of provisional capacity development project (EUR)	

Please provide a brief description of your organisation (maximum 200 words).
You can include information about your mission, vision, target group(s), main activities to support the LGBTQIA+ community, the number of people involved in your organisation/initiative, community-led organisation, etc.
Please describe if and how your organisation operates outside capital cities and/or work with marginalised or underserved populations (including LGBTQIA+ women).

Tentative budget

Budget category and item	Cost description: Please Explain why the cost is reasonable and how it relates to the project activities	Unit	Number of Units	Price (EUR)	Total (EUR)
<i>Example: Human Resources - Project manager (35%</i>	<i>The Project Manager will be engaged at 35% of their time to oversee and coordinate the project. This includes tasks such as planning, execution, monitoring, and reporting.</i>	<i>month</i>	<i>4</i>	€ 800,00	€ 3 200,00
<i>Example: Transportation</i>	<i>Airline tickets for the digital security trainer</i>	<i>persons</i>	<i>1</i>	€ 250,00	€ 250,00
<i>Example: Consultancy - Fee for the psychologist</i>	<i>Fee for conducting 5 group therapy sessions</i>	<i>consultation</i>	<i>5</i>	€ 50,00	€ 250,00
				€ -	€ -
				€ -	€ -
				€ -	€ -
				€ -	€ -
				€ -	€ -
				€ -	€ -
				€ -	€ -
Overall Total					€ -

Q&A - Questions on the profile of applicants

- **If we are a new association, active for only half a year, do we have a chance to apply for the competition, or will we be rejected from the start?**

A new organisation or initiative is not eligible for this opportunity based on the call criterias. Future opportunities will be available and better suited to the needs of recently established organizations or initiatives.

- **Can organizations that already have basic internal policies (e.g., anti-corruption, gender, data protection) but wish to update or strengthen them apply?**

Yes, the OCA will support the improvement and updating of these policies. The Self-Assessment Questionnaire can also help identify areas that may require further development or change.

- **Can we apply as a coalition 2-3 LGBTIQ+ organizations?**

No coalition for an OCA. It is one organization-based capacity building.

- **We are a small NGO, consisting of only 4 permanent members at the moment. Are we still eligible to apply?**

Yes of course.

Q&A - Questions on eligible activities and costs

- **What exact type of activities can be implemented with the grant? / What type of activities can be funded through the capacity development grant?**

There is a big range of activities, we cannot imagine all of them.

Funded activities will focus exclusively on capacity development actions derived from the OCA results and the corresponding Action Plan. Capacity development activities may include mentoring, trainings, development of strategies and internal policies, procurement of equipment (on a case-by-case basis), monetization initiatives, and the development of communication strategies to enhance visibility, etc.

As staff members will be involved in the implementation, a reasonable portion of human resource costs can be covered.

Capacity development activities for your team (staff, members) can be covered, not for your community or beneficiaries, the aim is to support the organisation itself.

- **The grant won't be covering core funding, does that include Human Resources?**

The support does not aim at supporting daily activities of the organisation that is what we mean when we say “no core funding” however, a reasonable amount of human resources, needed to implement the project can be included in the project.

Q&A - Questions on eligible activities and costs

- **What level of development of organisation will be eligible for this call?**

We don't have specific criteria in our selection about the level of development, it can be relatively young organisation (minimum is 2 years of activity but it could even be an history as an informal group), but it could also be usefull for organisation having 10 years or even 30 years of experience.

- **The call for applications document mentions resilience support. What does this include?**

The Resilience Support is not a core grant and therefore does not cover daily operational or routine activities of the organisation. However, it can include specific costs that are necessary to ensure the organisation's stability and enable the implementation of the project – for example, temporary HR support, basic administrative needs, or essential operational adjustments.

In other words, resilience support can be used to help the organisation recover or maintain functionality if it is in a particularly challenging situation. Up to 20% of the total grant may be allocated to such resilience needs, provided that the organisation clearly demonstrates that this support is essential to lay the groundwork for future capacity development.

Q&A - Questions on OCA process

- **Level of involvement of the team / Effort:** When and how the membre(s) of the organisation involved in the process should be involved? *Will it be conducted within working hours?*

The assessment process with the OCA expert will take approximately one month. We estimate that at least one team member will need around three working days (not in a row) to compile the necessary documents and coordinate with the expert.

Follow-up meetings with other team members may last up to one hour per person.

The duration of the capacity development phase will depend on the capacity development plan adopted, which will be tailored to your organization's needs and availability. However, if your team is currently overloaded and unable to dedicate sufficient time to this process, we strongly recommend not applying to this call.

Regarding the moment: usually during working hours, however if the lead person or some people to interview in your team is a volunteer (eg. the president of the CSO) we can take this into account when selecting OCA expert to be flexible on timing.

- **Will the meetings be conducted online or in person? If in person, where?**

We aim to conduct the activity in person, OCA experts will meet at the organisation at least once we expect, and then follow up might be through online meetings.

Q&A - Questions on OCA process

- During the grant implementation, how often will the OCA expert be involved (e.g., monthly, quarterly check-ins)?

The support envisages periodical check-in with the expert. It is to be discussed case by case based on the OCA assessment and the recommended plan. Additionally, ERIM team will organize monitoring calls.

- What will be the working language of the interviews?

ERA and ERIM will try to recruit local or regional OCA experts when interviews will be conducted in local languages

Q&A -

- **How can we prepare the budget if the OCA assessment will influence it later? For example we can identify some needs right now, but if after OCA assessment we will shift the priorities - is it possible? Or the budget is not flexible?**

You are expected to submit a tentative (draft) budget at this stage. This helps us understand your organisation's current needs and priorities during the application process and serves as a starting point for developing your capacity-building plan. However, the final budget will be determined after the OCA assessment in Phase 2. The OCA expert will use your draft budget and other submitted documents as a basis for the assessment. If any of the needs you have identified prove to be key priorities for your organisation, they will be reflected and maintained in the final budget. In short, the budget is flexible and will be adjusted following the OCA results and you will be part of the process.

- **Can we select the mentor ourselves, or will the donor assign one? / Can the applicant organization choose its own consultant or trainer for the implementation of the Capacity Development Plan, subject to ERIM's approval?**

The OCA expert will be selected by ERIM through a competitive process.

Mentors or trainers may be selected by the beneficiary organization in line with procurement rules (e.g., open competition). All selected experts must be confirmed by ERIM. The OCA expert can also assist the organization in identifying and selecting the most relevant trainers or mentors.

The OCA experts will be recruited through an open call shared by ERA, you can circulate the call so that people you think of can apply and their application will be treated in the selection process.

Q&A -

- Are the OCA expert services included in the total 14,000 budget or are they covered by the initiative separately?

OCA experts are selected, contracted and paid directly by ERIM, their fees are not included in the 14 000 EUR budget they are covered separately by the projects.

- How competitive is the process, how many applications do you expect to fund per country? / How many organisation will be selected per country?

It is a regional call and we expect to support at least 4 organizations from the region. We don't have a specific target per country. It depends on the application and the competition.

Other opportunities

- Punctual capacity development grants: ≈ 3500 EUR, Timeline - End 2026 or 2027
- Mentoring and Grants for CSOs to launch advocacy and awareness raising campaigns - Grants around 9 000 euros, Timeline 2026 or 2027
- Anti-burnout retreats and psychosocial support for LGBTQIA+ CSO members : anti burnout retreats to be organised for members of CSOs, indicative timeline second part of 2026 - first part 2027
- Psychological support : individuals to receive psychosocial support (grants or direct support) - indicative timeline: early 2026 call to be launched and open on a rolling basis
- Emergency support fund: ≈ 2300 EUR/ beneficiary (organizations & activists), indicative timeline early 2026 call to be launched and open on a rolling basis

Thank you !



If you have any further questions, please feel free to contact us via email: ocasupportwb@media-csos.com

We look forward to receive your applications!