



CALL FOR APPLICATIONS 2020: CIVIL SOCIETY

The Asfari Foundation is a British grant-making charity set up by Ayman and Sawsan Asfari in 2006. Our vision is for a just world where people have equal opportunities to transform their lives, invest in their communities, and shape the future of their countries. Our mission is to invest in the development of a resilient and empowered civil society infrastructure; and in innovative youth, who can collectively lead transformational change in their communities and countries. More information about our programmes can be found on our [website](#).

THE FOUNDATION'S KEY OBJECTIVES:

1. To enable the development of a resilient, effective and accountable civil society by developing the sustainability, productivity and scalable impact of high-potential civil society organisations (CSOs).
2. To create non-traditional learning and economic opportunities by providing innovative support to young entrepreneurs to help them build sustainable enterprises and tackle social challenges.
3. To empower partners to transform their organisations, increase their impact, and strengthen learning and collaboration - locally, regionally and globally - through community-led, localised knowledge-sharing.

THE ORGANISATIONS WE SUPPORT:

- Share our values and are aligned with our objectives.
- Have strong track records in implementation.
- Demonstrate clear purpose and strategy linked to a specific constituency/target group.
- Actively seek to become more effective, accountable and sustainable.
- Actively seek to transform and grow their organisation, and the ecosystem in which they operate, including the professional development of their staff.
- Adopt innovative approaches to programming.
- Address systemic weaknesses in our thematic areas.
- Are committed to transparency, active partnership, and sharing learning and insight.

THE CIVIL SOCIETY PROGRAMME (CSP):

This programme supports the development of resilient, sustainable civil society, and currently focuses on Lebanon and Syria. We aim to strengthen social infrastructure to better tackle the chronic challenges facing the region. We do this by investing in the organisational development of civil society organisations to increase their resilience, sustainability and impact.

CSP goes beyond grant-making. We encourage curiosity and seek to support innovators who turn ideas into action. We connect, bringing together diverse actors from across local, regional and global networks who share a vision for the region. We invest in learning and knowledge-sharing across these networks. We work to build a global community of practice dedicated to social and economic change in our region, guided by evidence and experience, and led by the expertise and commitment of local CSOs.

Please visit our [website](#) for more information.



IN 2020, CSP OFFERS:

- **Six flexible grants of up to £225,000 each are available in total** (dispensed over up to three years in equal instalments of up to £75,000 each year).
- Early-stage access to online learning, knowledge-sharing tools, and a new community of practice via the Asfari Portal (piloting in 2020).
- Where applicable, support and certification from organisational development (OD) experts.
- Access to networking and collaboration opportunities in leading social change.

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA:

Organisations wishing to apply:

- Must be **registered with the appropriate local authorities** (and able to provide proof of registration).
- Must have an overall annual budget in 2019 falling between £100,000 and £750,000.
- Must be:
 - Syrian-led CSOs serving Syrians living in Lebanon; or
 - Syrian-led CSOs working on global issues that affect all Syrians; or
 - Lebanese or Syrian-led CSOs based in Lebanon and serving the Lebanese, Syrian and/or Palestinian communities in Lebanon.

Concept notes must address at least one of the following areas:

- **Strengthening governance; e.g.**
 - Strengthening the governance of CSOs.
 - Nurturing young leaders.
 - Sharing good governance practices.
 - Working to hold authorities and those in power accountable.
 - Safeguarding local or international civil society space.
- **Promoting active citizenship; e.g.**
 - Enabling individuals in the Foundation's target countries to access their social, political and economic rights.
 - Ensuring freedom of association.
 - Supporting the participation of young people and marginalized groups.
 - Providing platforms for marginalized voices in home or hosting countries.
- **Development of independent, high-quality media; e.g.**
 - Informing the public with credible, reliable and objective news and analysis of the situation in the Foundation's target countries.
 - Contributing, and inviting the public, to debate solutions to tackle chronic problems facing the region.
 - Investing in building the capacity and skills of media staff, other media channels and workers.



FUNDING DETAILS:

Applicant organisations **may apply for grants to cover organisational development (OD) costs, and core costs where these are supporting OD.** These may include for example:

- Consultant costs where these relate to OD.
- Salaries of key staff, rent, and legal fees.
- Training and capacity development of individuals or teams within the organisation.
- Systems' development (e.g. fundraising, monitoring & evaluation and procurement).
- Development of strategy documents, policies and procedures.
- Communication and convening costs.
- Organisational learning and knowledge management.

Please note:

- The **grant does not cover direct project or programme costs** unless applicants can propose to use the fund in ways that sustain and develop their programmatic work – this will require discussion with the Programme Manager.
- In 2020 we are **piloting a self-assessment exercise to help shortlisted applicants identify areas of focus for organisational development.** Successful applicants will receive support to develop and implement a pathway for their organisation's development, including formal OD certification where applicable.

HOW TO APPLY:

- Concept notes **must be submitted using the online form** located on the Asfari Foundation website [here](#).
- Applications must be submitted in English. Unfortunately, **we cannot accept applications in Arabic** at this time. We will endeavour to enable this for future calls.
- For more information about the application process:
 - See our **Frequently Asked Questions** document [here](#).
 - Attend our **Webinar - Asfari Foundation Civil Society 2020 Call and Concept Note Q&A:**
 - Date: **19 February 2020, 1300 - 1500 UK time (provisional).** Keep an eye on our website [here](#) for any updates.
 - To access the webinar (hosted on Zoom) use the details below:
 - [Link to webinar](#)
 - **Meeting ID: 440 477 590 / Password: 001927**
 - If you would prefer to join the webinar via mobile/landline telephone call, please contact us ahead of time and separate joining instructions can be shared with you.
 - **Submit your questions in advance via email before 17 February 2020 to: programmes@asfarifoundation.org.uk** (please specify in the email subject heading which programme your question relates to).
 - The webinar will be recorded and posted on our website, along with the submitted questions, after the event.

SUBMISSION DEADLINE:

Concept notes **must be received by 0900 UK time on 20 March 2020.** Late submissions will not be considered.

APPLICATION TIMELINE:

23 January 2020	<p>Stage One: Concept Note applications open (online).</p>
19 February 2020 (provisional)	<p>Stage One: Webinar: applicants Q&A with Programme Manager (PM). - Please keep an eye on the website for any change of details/date. - Submit questions by 17 February 2020 to: programmes@asfarifoundation.org.uk</p>
20 March 2020	<p>Stage One: Deadline for Concept Note submission.</p>
1 April 2020	<p>Stage Two: Applicants informed of outcome by email. Shortlisted applicants invited to complete Proposal Application (online).</p>
20 April 2020 (provisional)	<p>Stage Two: Webinar: applicants Q&A with PM. - Please keep an eye on the website for any change of details/date.</p>
8 May 2020	<p>Stage Two: Deadline for Proposal submission.</p>
By end of May 2020	<p>Stage Three: Unsuccessful applicants informed of outcome by email. PM visits shortlisted applicants for face to face assessments.</p>
By mid-June 2020	<p>Stage Three: Face to face assessments completed.</p>
30 June 2020	<p>Stage Three: Shortlist reviewed by Asfari Foundation (AF) Board of Trustees.</p>
31 July 2020	<p>Decision: AF Board chooses a selection of applicants for funding. Applicants will be notified by the PM of the Board's decision.</p>

FURTHER INFORMATION:

For more information about the Foundation, the application process, or our strategic priorities, please visit our website [here](#) or email us at programmes@asfarifoundation.org.uk.