

ZDRAVLJE MLADIH IZNAD PROFITA

CALL FOR PROPOSALS

„YOUTH HEALTH AHEAD OF PROFIT”

Greater consumer protection of minors from alcohol sale

Ref.: 2024/460-764



GUIDELINES FOR GRANT APPLICANTS

1. BACKGROUND

Serbia's 2010 Consumer Protection Act—aligned with **Chapter 28 of the EU acquis**—unequivocally bans sale of alcohol and tobacco to anyone under 18, requiring vendors to check IDs. Yet enforcement has stalled: between 2019 and 2024, zero penalties were recorded for under-age alcohol sales nationwide, and CZOR's 2022 study found that 49.5 percent of minors attempting to buy alcohol in stores were never refused. Complicating matters, Serbia's Law on Public Peace and Order defines the legal drinking age as 16, allowing cafés and nightclubs to serve younger teens.

Early initiation of alcohol use is rising sharply. Between 2022 and 2024, the share of 10–17-year-olds reporting their first drink increased from 48.7 percent to 77.8 percent. In early 2024 alone, 33 minors were hospitalized for acute ethanol poisoning after binge-drinking incidents—evidence of both easy retail access and uncontrolled beverage quality. Harmful alcohol use underpins over 200 diseases and contributes to 10 percent of non-communicable illnesses, while also aggravating mental-health crises and youth suicide risk.

CZOR and its partners have spearheaded evidence-based advocacy, highlighting legislative gaps and mobilizing a cross-sectoral working group with WHO, UNICEF, UNODC, and government ministries. Despite producing clear recommendations to harmonize conflicting laws and strengthen on-the-ground inspections, only a minor reduction in penalties was enacted. In January 2023 the government formed a government-only working group tasked with law harmonization, but no concrete results have come from this initiative.

To address above-mentioned challenges, the Action aims to enhance the capacities of grass-root CSOs to be effective and accountable independent actors able to engage constructively the government to push for prioritization of minors' consumer health and safety protection over profit of specific "*interest groups*".

Project's objectives

Overall objective of the project is to strengthen participatory democracy and the EU integration and approximation process in Serbia, through an enhanced contribution by civil society in policy advocacy processes in enhancing consumer protection on right to health and safety.

Specific objective of the project is: Enhanced greater consumer protection of minors from alcohol sale in Serbia by expanded space for civil society in policy-advocacy processes, harmonization of relevant laws with EU, grass root community engagement and cooperation with the government.

The project is co-funded by European Commission and IOGT-NTO Movement and implemented by Centre for Youth Work (CZOR), Media & Reform Centre Nis (MRCN) and Association for consumer protection in Vojvodina (UZPV).

2. ABOUT THE CALL FOR PROPOSALS

2.1 Objectives

Overall objective:

Empowered grass root CSOs (with priority outside of Belgrade) in Serbia to participate in national advocacy processes for consumer protection of minors from alcohol sale, local engagement and mobilization of local stakeholders' through local grass root initiatives.

Specific objectives:

1. To ensure implementation of the local grass root initiatives as part of national advocacy processes for consumer protection of minors from alcohol sale across Serbia with priority outside of Belgrade.
2. To enable broader citizens and youth initiatives on local level in Serbia for active engagement in consumer protection of minors from alcohol sale with priority outside of Belgrade.

2.2 Scope of the Call

Centre for Youth Work and its partners launch a public Call for proposals for civil society organizations in the Republic of Serbia that work with young people and preferably have experience in the promotion of healthy lifestyles, prevention of alcohol consumption and other psychoactive substances, or consumer protection.

Within this call, **a total of 6 civil society organization will be selected**, to participate in a capacity building programme and, afterwards, implement various grass-roots initiatives in their local communities.

A specific Manual for a given service has been developed and will be presented during the educational process. Within the Application form (Annex 1), the CSO should explain the suggested approach based on specific requirements as well as define a budget not exceeding the amount intended for the implementation.

2.2.1. Specific requirements

Each selected CSOs will be required to provide the following:

1. **Appoint 3 members of organization to participate in 2 regional trainings** in Serbia for reinforcing CSOs' capacities and resilience by networking and merging. **Both training courses will last 4 days per training**, and will be organized in the period September – October 2025 (the exact dates will be confirmed later).

The 1st training will be focused on a) The state of play regarding minor consumer protection from alcohol harm (EU and Serbian consumer policy – challenges and areas for improvement) b) Active participation of young people, the mystery shopper methodology, and data collection. Joint operational planning for the mystery shopper actions and public forum session, will also take place. One training day will focus on EC (PRAG) rules and procedures and visibility requirements for sub-granted actions.

The 2nd training will be focusing on a) Advocacy, community mobilization, networking and civil society participation in decision-making processes b) The role of media campaigns in advocacy and community mobilization. Joint operational planning for local-level media campaigns will be covered, including discussions on CSO advocacy network.

2. **Implementation of 6 sub-granted CSOs grass-root initiatives**

These initiatives will be implemented by the 6 sub-granted CSOs in their local communities.

A) Mystery shopper and collecting data.

- Recruit 20 young activists (ages 15–20, at least 60% female). *These youth will be the core of the initiative — active in learning, conducting research, and leading awareness efforts.*
- Implement 20 structured workshops over 6 months. *Workshops should cover topics such as: activism, decision-making, consumer rights, how to identify illegal sales, relevant laws, and how to safely perform “mystery shopper” tasks (other topics may also be included).*
- Map 7–10 alcohol retailers per community. *Participants will identify local points-of-sale to monitor potential underage alcohol sales.*
- Conduct two rounds of compliance checks (at project start and project end). *This helps to assess the current state of underage alcohol sales and whether changes occurred due to awareness efforts.*
- Ensure ethical oversight:
 - o Brief approx. 15 parents/caretakers about the project and secure written parental consent for participation. *This step is mandatory to protect minors and ensure transparency.*
- Present collected data at the final conference. Youth should be able to explain findings and advocate for better enforcement of consumer protection laws.
- Contribute local-level evidence to national and regional campaigns. *This is essential to influencing broader policy change.*

B) Education of citizens, young people, retailers in cooperation with the Association of consumer protection.

- Organize 1 public forum – a multi-stakeholder event involving 30 – 35 participants (youth, parents, retailers (at least 10 representatives of retailers), local decision-makers and other relevant stakeholders), supported by UZPV. The aim of the public forum is to raise awareness, discuss the risks of early alcohol consumption, emphasize the role of families (*other aims may also be included*);
- Present mystery shopper findings to retailers and community members, to promote transparency and invite retailers to voluntarily improve practices;
- Introduce “Responsible Retailer” pledge and visual sticker. Retailers who commit to preventing underage sales will receive a visible symbol of accountability, which they can display alongside the official no-sale signage.
- Promote the public forums widely through local media, social media channels, and project websites.

C) Citizen signed support (up to 10.000 signatures);

- Develop (jointly with other sub-granted CSOs) and promote a public citizen pledge supporting stronger protection of minors from alcohol sales. *The pledge in this context is a tool for advocacy and awareness, not a formal legal instrument.*
- Contribute to collect up to 10,000 signature across Serbia.
- Involve youth in direct advocacy, including but not limited to: campaigning at local events, promoting the pledge during sessions.
- Share progress updates with stakeholders and the media.

The following activities will be implemented after the expiration of the sub-granting contract, but all contracted CSOs are expected to:

- **Participate in the Final conference on sharing experience and cooperation**

The final conference, scheduled for final year of project implementation (2027), will focus on three key areas: a) progress in improving policies and laws related to minors' consumer protection from alcohol sales; b) the cross-sectoral working group as a model for CSO participation and collaboration with the government; and c) lessons learned from external evaluation. Sub-granted CSOs and young people are expected to present their findings and results. All costs incurred by participants in connection with their attendance at the final conference – travel, accommodation, and refreshment, shall be borne by CZOR.

- **Participate in project evaluation**

An overall project evaluation will take place in the final year of project implementation (2027). Sub-granted CSOs will be expected to provide timely project data and documentation (e.g. activity reports, indicator results), and attend and actively engage in evaluation focus groups, interviews or debriefing sessions, to share lessons learned and best practices.

2.2.2. Ongoing support and monitoring

Relationship of project consortium partners with sub-granted CSOs will be based on cooperation – not only as donors-grantees but as implementation allies. The aim is to build capacity for long-term advocacy and network-building.

Project consortium partners (CZOR, MRCN, UZPV) will have a strong supportive monitoring role CSOs in conducting sub-granted projects with regular meetings and field visits. Accordingly, expert mentors will deliver structured mentorship support to sub-granted CSOs throughout the lifetime of each sub-grant. Mentors will support content development, community engagement, and advocacy planning.

All communication and spending must be in line with EU rules (PRAG rules) and project branding protocols. All activities must ensure transparent, accountable practice, including: financial integrity, inclusive participation, and safe and ethical work with minors.

2.2.3. Added Benefits: Participation in the CSO advocacy network

In order to promote cooperation and partnership, enhance access to best practices and evidence-based data, and boost advocacy impact (not only in Serbia but also across the Western Balkans and potentially on a global scale), a non-formal CSO network will be formed, to advocate for greater consumer protection of minors in Serbia. The network will act as a protective mechanism, combining resources and expertise to enhance legitimacy, credibility, and opportunities for dialogue with the government institutions.

This network is expected to emerge from ongoing CSO partnership between project consortium partners and 6 sub-granted CSOs, which would act as the initial board. With joint efforts, additional relevant stakeholders will be mapped to join the network initiative. The network is expected to include up to 20 members and will initially operate as a non-formal association, with the potential to formalize in the future.

The network importance is highlighted by a parallel initiative by CZOR, the IOGT-NTO Movement, and strategic partners from Bosnia and Herzegovina and Montenegro to form the **Balkan Alcohol Policy Alliance (BAPA)**. BAPA aims to unite stakeholders from SRB, BIH, and MNE to collaboratively protect minors from alcohol harm.

All costs incurred by participants in connection with their attendance at the advocacy network meetings – travel, accommodation, and refreshment, will be borne by CZOR.

2.2.4. Indicators to be achieved

The following targets apply to each individual sub-granted CSO and are designed to ensure the consistent, high-quality implementation of local initiatives:

- Implement local initiatives including a) Mystery shopper and collecting data; b) Education of citizens, young people, and retailers in cooperation with Association for consumer protection in Vojvodina; c) Citizen signed support;
- Directly include and capacitate 20 young people age 15 – 20 (at least 60% female) in mystery shopper campaign, education and support signing events;
- Involve approx. 15 per CSO parents/caretakers in project info sessions;
- Involve 30 – 35 participants (out of which, 10 must be representatives of retailers) directly in 1 public forum;
- Involve approx. 2 local media in development and distribution of media campaigns on consumer protection of minors from alcohol sale during the local initiatives implementation;
- Reach approx. 100.000 people through local media campaigns;
- Contribute to 10,000 citizens' signatures collected to support advocacy initiatives for consumer protection of children/youth.

2.3 Financial allocation

The total budget for this call for proposals is EUR 150,000, from which up to six grants will be awarded. Individual grants will range from a minimum of EUR 20,000 to a maximum of EUR 30,000. The project consortium partners reserve the right to limit the number of awards and to adjust individual grant amounts – including awarding fewer or smaller grants – based on the overall quality and suitability of the applications received.

For the grant approved under this call, 100% funding will be accepted without the need for funding from other sources. According to the approved project, payments will be made in 3 installments (the 3rd installment in the amount of 10% will be paid after the approval of the final report).

Please note that **VAT is not an eligible cost under this call**. All budget lines must be presented net excluding VAT.

2.4 Eligibility criteria

2.4.1. Eligibility of applicants

The call is open for CSOs from Serbia, which will implement local initiatives.

In order to be eligible for financing, the applicant must:

- a) Be a legal and non-profit CSO registered in Republic of Serbia
- b) Be registered since at least January 1st, 2024
- c) Minimum 1-year in-house expertise in working with young people and preferably in the promotion of healthy lifestyles, prevention of alcohol consumption and other PAS or consumer protection
- d) Be directly responsible for implementation of local initiatives within the suggested territory

- e) More than 50% of sub-granted activities in terms of project quantity as well as expenditure amount must be outside the city of Belgrade
- f) Have previous experience and willingness to contribute to community development in general
- g) Strongly supported cooperation with local communities, especially in deprived areas, will be an asset
- h) Able to prove the technical and professional capacity to implement the service through the accompanying documentation:
 - h.1) References for previous similar projects or activities with young people and preferably in the promotion of healthy lifestyles, prevention of alcohol consumption and other PAS or consumer protection
 - h.2) To have technical equipment that could be used for the execution of the activities beside the one purchased by the project
- i) That CSO can prove the financial and operational capacities to implement the proposed action through the accompanying documentation:
 - i.1) Proof of registration issued by the relevant institution

Exclusion criteria:

- a) If selected CSO and responsible people involved and benefiting from the project are at the same time employed as a local authority, university or judicial entity representatives.
- b) If selected CSO is not grass/root national/local CSO
- c) If selected CSO employees are also employees and/or consultants of the project partner organization
- d) If the actions proposed are not in line with the project plan and its objectives,
- e) If selected CSO is linked with political parties, linked to tobacco industry (CAEN code 16), production of alcoholic distilled beverages (CAEN code 1591), arms and munitions (CAEN code 296)

In a certain number of situations defined by [EU PRAG](#), CZOR may require proof that the project applicant complies with local legislation in various ways. In that case, the project applicant must provide proof that it is not in situation of bankrupt or bankruptcy, that the management has not been convicted of any criminal offense or unprofessional conduct, that it fulfills obligations based on the local Employment Act or in connection with the payment of taxes, that it is not under investigation due to fraud, etc.

2.4.2. Partnership

Partnerships are not necessary, but they are allowed.

Partners participate in the creation of the project and its implementation and use financial resources under the same conditions that apply to the applicant.

In case of partnership, the project budget must be presented in a single table. For each budget line managed by a partner, append the responsible entity in parentheses, using its full legal name or approved acronym. The lead applicant is ultimately responsible for transferring any partner-managed funds to the respective partner(s).

Neither the lead applicant nor any partner may have a conflict of interest with any member, associate, or stakeholder of the *“Youth Health ahead of profit – Greater consumer protection of minors from alcohol sale”* project.

All partners must satisfy the same eligibility criteria as the lead partner/applicant. The same exclusion criteria applies to all partners.

2.4.3. Associates

Organizations other than the applicant and the partner may also be involved in the implementation of the project. They have the status of “associates”. Associates have a role in implementation but shall not receive funding from the project budget.

Associates do not have to meet the criteria that apply to applicants and partners. Associates can be public institutions, local governments, representatives of the business community, etc. Project associates should be presented in *Annex 1 – Application form*.

2.4.4. Eligible activities

The eligible activities are those described in part 2.2.1. **Specific requirements**. Applicants are invited to present their approach to implementation of the specific requirements and they are welcome to suggest any other relevant activity (which would support the implementation of the eligible activities described in part 2.2.1. *Specific requirements*), such as: developing educational materials, establishing partnership with local media, schools, other grass-root initiatives, etc.

2.4.5. Ineligible actions

The following types of activity and costs are not eligible for financial support:

1. actions that fall within the general activities of competent state institutions or state administration services, including local government;
2. actions concerned only or mainly with individual sponsorships for participation in workshops, seminars, conferences, congresses;
3. activities related to individual tuition fees for studies or training;
4. activities related to academic research;
5. activities related to political parties;

6. activities and courses already funded through other grant schemes;
7. debts and debt service charges (interest);
8. provisions for losses or potential future liabilities;
9. third party lending;
10. purchases of land or buildings;
11. currency exchange losses;
12. activities related to the tobacco industry, production of alcoholic beverages, weapons or ammunition;
13. taxes, including VAT - all expenses under this program are tax-exempt, so the budget should show expenses without VAT.

2.4.6. Eligible direct costs

The following types of costs are eligible for financial support:

1. Costs of human resources (personnel engaged in the project)
2. Travel costs cover travel within the country (bus and train transport, fuel costs). Travel for the activities organized by project consortium partners (e.g. final conference) will be covered by organizers
3. Costs of purchasing basic equipment and materials if they are directly related to the implementation of activities
4. Administrative expenses (office rent, utilities, telephone/internet, office supplies, bank expenses, administrative expenses, etc.) which can amount to 7% of the allocated funds
5. Costs of project activities, other costs and services

All the costs mentioned must be related to the implementation of the project.

2.5 Duration

The activities are carried out in the period September 2025 – October 2026. This time frame applies to implementation of specific requirements 1, 2 and 3 (*please see section 2.2.1*).

2.6 Location

The planned activities will be carried out in the territory of Serbia.

2.7 Number of applications per CSO

- The applicant can submit only one application within this Call.
- The applicant cannot be a partner (co-applicant) in another application.
- Only one grant can be awarded to the applicant.

2.8 Visibility

All applicants must take all necessary steps to emphasize that the European Union finances these projects. Applicants agree with the objectives and priorities and guarantee the visibility of the EU funding (see the [Communication and Visibility Manual for the external activities of the European Union](#) and [Manual for visual identity](#)).

The activities of the supported CSOs must be in accordance also with the Communication Plan and Book of graphic standards developed by “*Youth Health ahead of profit – Greater consumer protection of minors from alcohol sale*” project consortium.

3. HOW TO APPLY

3.1 Application for a project proposal

The call will be published on the website www.czor.org and will remain open until 11.08.2025., at 11:59 p.m.

The application package must be submitted in accordance with the guidelines given in this Call.

Applicants must prepare and submit their application in **English language using: Annex 1 (Application form) and Annex 2 (Budget)**.

These documents must contain all relevant information regarding the action and no additional annexes should be sent. Any mistake and major inconsistency related to the application guidelines and necessary documents could lead to rejection of the application.

Incomplete applications will be automatically rejected.

3.2 Supporting documents

In addition, applicants must apply via email along with the following scanned copies of the original documents:

- a) Proof of registration with the competent state authority
- b) Statute of the organization
- c) Statement signed by the applicant (part of the *Annex 1 – Application form*)
- d) Mandate letter (for co-applicant(s), if applicable)

3.3 Where and how to send the application

The application and accompanying documents must be submitted via email (with attachments) to the email address konkursi@czor.org with the following references in the email subject:

Application for the call for the allocation of funds "Youth Health ahead of profit" - Full name of the applicant

The deadline for submitting application is 11.08.2025 until 11:59 p.m.

Any application submitted after the deadline will be rejected.

3.4 Additional information

Questions can be sent by email **no later than 25.07.2025 until 5:00 p.m.** to the email address konkursi@czor.org with the subject of the email: "Youth Health ahead of profit"- Full name of the potential project holder.

The Centre for Youth Work has no obligation to provide clarifications to questions received after this date. Responses will be provided in a publicly available document no later than 30.07. 2025.

To ensure equal treatment of applicants, Centre for Youth Work cannot give an earlier opinion on the suitability of the applicant and work plans or on the mentioned activities. All collected questions together with the answers will be published on the page www.czor.org

The Centre for youth work will organize **info session online** to introduce interested parties with the Call. The info session will be held on **21.07.2025. at 11:00 a.m.** via Zoom platform. If interested to attend the online info session, please register via [the following link](#).

4. EVALUATION CRITERIA (EVALUATION GREED)

It is important that Application provides information about the quality in the approach to the planned implementation of the tasks described in point 2.2.1., and to demonstrate professional, operational and financial capacities to implement the local initiatives. Applicants are advised to pay special attention to the relevance of the objectives of these Guidelines, specific requirements and indicators of the Call and realistic budget.

The process of the evaluation will consist of three separate stages: administrative check, pre-selection and final selection. If the examination of the Application reveals that the proposed application does not meet the eligibility criteria as stated in these Guidelines, the Application will be rejected on this sole basis. If the deadline has not been met, the application will automatically be rejected. If any of the requested information and/or documents from the Application Checklist are missing or is incorrect, the application may be rejected and will not be evaluated further.

After the three-stage application evaluation process, the project coordinator will send notification letters to all applicants. The results will be publicly available at www.czor.org.

Evaluation will be performed according to the following criteria:

- **Criteria for administrative evaluation** - to verify that the applicant has followed the technical guidelines related to the application process
- **Criteria for evaluating the capacity of the applicant** - to evaluate the ability of the applicant to implement the proposed methodology (section 2.2)
- **Application evaluation criteria** - to evaluate the quality and appropriateness of the application

Open Call Evaluation Grid

Administrative Evaluation Criteria	Yes	No
The application met the deadline of the Call		
The applicant meets the eligibility criteria		
The application is submitted in English language as stated in the Open call		
The application contains all the required documents		
The applicant applied with only one application		
The partner (if applicable) is not a project applicant and/or a partner in another application.		
The application is written in accordance with the Guidelines		

Note: the application is automatically disqualified if it doesn't meet any of the Administrative evaluation criteria

Applicants Capacities Evaluation Criteria	Maximum points
The CSO has prior experience working with young people, ideally in promoting healthy lifestyles, preventing alcohol and psychoactive substance (PAS) use, and advancing consumer protection.	10
The CSO possesses previous experience in the specific activities listed on 2.2.1. Specific requirements part	10
The CSO possesses sufficient technical, financial, operational and professional capacities to implement the local initiatives that the CSO applied for.	10
TOTAL:	30

Application Evaluation Criteria	Maximum points
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The proposed application includes adequate approach to achieve expected indicators under this Call.	15
The proposed approach responds to the needs and abilities of the beneficiaries.	15
The proposed application elaborates how CSO will make sure to use the benefits of the program for multiplying effects.	15
The proposed application includes adequate and realistic instruments to evaluate the success of the program.	15
The visibility of the project is provided and adequately planned	10
TOTAL:	70

Note: the application is automatically disqualified if it does not score at least 65% of the points from the Project Evaluation Criteria Table

5. INDICATIVE TIMETABLE

	DATE	TIME
1. Info session (online)	21/07/2025	11:00 a.m.
2. Deadline for requesting any clarifications from the contracting authority	25/07/2025	5:00 p.m.
3. Last date on which clarifications are issued by the contracting authority	30/07/2025	-
4. Deadline for submission of project proposal	11/08/2025	11:59 p.m.
5. Information to lead applicants on administrative checks and evaluation (Step 1, 2 and 3)	29/08/2025	-
6. Contract signature	September 2025	-

6. DOCUMENTATION TO BE COMPLETED AND SUBMITTED AS PART OF THIS CALL

1. Application form and budget proposal - Annex 1 and 2
2. Proof of registration with the competent state authority
3. Statute of the organization
4. Statement signed by the applicant (part of the application form – Annex 1)
5. Mandate letter (for co-applicant(s), if applicable) – Annex 3