

Funding Guidelines of Schüler Helfen Leben

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The Foundation SHL is an operative and funding body. The allocation of funding is carried out according to the guidelines laid out below. As stipulated in the charter, the Foundation's aim is "the support of projects concerned with humanitarian and social assistance for children and young people and youth work."

1. Funding purpose

The funding purpose is to strengthen the social development of children and young people in Southeastern Europe with particular emphasis on supporting democratic educational work and social integration. The ultimate aim is to strengthen civil societies, in which young people can take on responsibility and participate.

2. Funding content and goals of the projects

The projects funded by SHL are embedded in the educational youth work branch and serve those needs which are either not at all or insufficiently met by state or supranational institutions. The main focus varies (according to the theme of the Call for Proposals, the main areas of operation of the organization, etc.).

The projects should enable young people to have access to training, education or care and be open for all youth regardless of gender, religion, nationality, origins, financial situation and the societal group to which they belong.

The projects should also:

- enable young people to become responsible and critical members of a democratic state and/or
- encourage or facilitate/assist young people in using their own initiative and /or
- support voluntary work and/or
- bring people of different origins and religions closer together, to create lasting stability in the region and /or
- include politically relevant campaigns or cultural activities which strengthen civil society and/or
- guide young people how to become financially independent.

The projects should be tailored according to the needs of the region. The projects should give young people good organizational skills and, to the extent that their abilities allow, involve them in the planning and implementation. SHL welcomes projects which are innovative and can be seen as models for work with young people from the Western Balkans, and also successful concepts and successful approaches. Only projects which match the activity profile of an applying organization will be funded. Experience with similar projects is an advantage but is not a precondition.

3. Region

The geographical region in which SHL operates derives from the organization's origins and its commitment for a common Europe. The following countries in the Western Balkans belong to the funding regions of SHL: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Kosovo, Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia.

4. Project Partners

Our project partners are local Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) that are characterized by a high degree of professional working experience in the youth sector in general or in one of the focus areas mentioned above. Throughout the application process this has to be proven by relevant project references and other supporting documents showing the professional capacities of the applicant (i.e. financial statements, strategies, articles of the association, external evaluations). Further essential requirements for funding include the organizations strong links to local partners, stakeholders, networks and beneficiaries relevant to a successful implementation of the project.

5. Application

SHL is publishing its Call for Proposals annually in the context of the *Social Day*. In the framework of this campaign, school students work one day and donate their salaries to SHL. To sum it up, German school students get active for their peers in Southeast Europe. Those who provide us with funds – school students - are participating in the project selection process. The project selection proceeds as follows:

5.1. Procedure

5.1.1. 1st pre-selection following short application

Any organization or initiative which fulfils the funding conditions can apply via the online application form. The link for the form will be sent with the Call for Proposals.

All applicants will be notified by email after the short applications have been assessed. Approximately 10-20 applicants will then receive a request for a long application. The other applicants will at this stage no longer be part of the application procedure.

5.1.2. 2nd pre-selection following long application

The long application consists of an extensive application form, a detailed budget plan and a logical framework, which the applicant should send by email. In addition, all documents concerning the organization, such as charter, mission and vision and the confirmation of the non-profit status should be provided.

After these detailed applications have been assessed, 4-8 projects will then be informed via Email that they have been accepted to the final round. All other applicants will at this stage no longer be part of the application procedure.

5.1.3. Final selection through school students

Each year, before the *Social Day*, the SHL organizes a *Project Selection Conference*, to which about 300 school students from all over Germany are invited. They spend one weekend learning about current issues in the region and project management issues. At the end of this, they select the projects to be funded with the funds from the *Social Day*. After this meeting, all projects will be notified on the decision. Additionally, all schools students that participated in the *Social Day* have the opportunity to take part in the project selection through an online voting platform.

5.2. Dates and deadlines

The SHL Call for Proposals is issued every year in fall. All relevant dates and deadlines are made available along with the respective Call for Proposals.

5.3. Selection committee

Both the short and the long applications are assessed by a selection committee that is comprised of Foundation employees, the Foundation board, the current generation of volunteers and, if necessary,

external experts. The members of the committee change every year. The final selection is carried out by school students who participated in the *Social Day*. To integrate as many individuals as possible SHL offers school students who were nominated the opportunity to attend the so-called *Project Selection Conference* during which the final project will be selected.

6. Funding modalities

SHL sees the funding of an organization and/or project primarily as a partnership and expects the process to be carried out in an honest, open, transparent way in terms of all positive or negative developments that may occur in connection with the project.

6.1. Completion of contract

Consecutively to the school student jury's decision, the project receives a funding agreement. From this moment until the project actually starts, staff from the Foundation will visit the new project partner. In addition to getting to know each other personally, all details of the project plan will be discussed. SHL considers this direct and detailed communication a basic requirement for a positive, in-depth partnership. Finally, the documents required for contract completion will be processed by the project partner. This joint process of project development ends with the signing of the cooperation contract, which stipulates the individual modalities of the funding (cooperation). The completed project application and the budget are a binding part of the contract.

The cooperation contract also establishes in which form and how regularly the funding recipients should report on the activities and use of the funds. In addition, it stipulates how the funds are to be spent and what evidence of the expenses should be provided.

6.2. Requirements for applicants

All recognized non-profit organizations which operate within the Western Balkan countries as listed in point 3 are eligible to apply.

The applicant must be a responsible organization to its donors and beneficiaries: it must be capable of reaching the goals it sets, and it must constantly and critically monitor and evaluate this process. The use of funds in a proper and transparent way, both in the past and the future, is a precondition. Organizations which apply for a project should be able to prove via charters/articles of association, vision/mission statements, strategies, financial statements, etc. that they have already been working professionally for a number of years.

Another precondition is the cooperation within an existing local network of partners and stakeholders who are relevant to the project. SHL considers it an advantage, if this can be demonstrated through relevant documents, such as memoranda, partnership contracts, etc.

6.3. Budget and type of costs

The funding budget will be specified in the Call for Proposals.

In case SHL requests a long application subsequent to the 1st pre-selection the applicant has to submit a detailed cost plan. The online application form (short application) only requires a short overview of the planned costs.

Own or third party funds are welcome but not a precondition.

All types of costs can be covered from this Call for Proposals.

6.4. Duration of funding

The funding period will be established at the beginning of the project in the cooperation contract and lasts for two years from September 1st following the launch of the Call for Proposals.

7. Expenditure of funds

Detailed information concerning the use and proof of the expenditure of funds is contained in the guide to finances, which is a binding part of the cooperation contract. Funds must always be used sparingly and economically, comparable with local standards.

8. End of funding period

As a rule, funding ends when the period stipulated in the cooperation agreement/contract is over.

SHL reserves the right to reduce or freeze funds, or make a demand for repayment if overpayment of funding has occurred due to incomplete or incorrect information, or if other funding has been acquired for the project, or if funds have not been/are not being used according to the cooperation contract and appendices, or if obligations concerning implementation, financial records/bookkeeping and notification have not been observed. Any of these situations can result in the withdrawal of financial support.

9. Validity of funding guidelines

These funding criteria are valid as of December 1st 2009. The Foundation SHL intends to adapt them according to its experience in funding activities.

10. Liability and legal information

The basic official language for all written communication, narrative and financial reports and all final financial statements and documentation is to be German or English. Representatives of SHL, or individuals or groups designated by SHL, can inspect the project at any time and gather information, books, invoices and other business documents concerned with the project, or check the project's funding by making enquiries locally or have this done by representatives.

The cooperation contract and all appendices are subject to German law. The place of jurisdiction is Berlin.