



# grant application guidelines

THE OPEN SOCIETY INITIATIVE  
FOR EAST AFRICA



# OSIEA Grant Application Guidelines

Thank you for your interest in OSIEA and its programs. OSIEA plays an active role in encouraging open, informed dialogue about issues of importance in East Africa. OSIEA's key role is to support and amplify the voices of pro-democracy organizations and individuals in the region to strengthen their capacity to hold their governments accountable. This includes efforts to defend and support rights activists and pro-democracy advocates who come under attack for their work.

OSIEA occupies a unique niche as a donor organization in East Africa—its multiple identities as local/international, donor/implementer, outsider/insider give the organization enormous flexibility and reach in terms of access and impact. We join processes that are consultative and participatory. Our ability to be flexible in our funding criteria allows us to respond quickly to changing situations. We add our own voice to debates and are not shy to take on rights issues that are deemed as politically sensitive or controversial.

We support local, daring initiatives with the passion and demonstrated capacity to positively transform society in innovative ways that embrace integrity, inclusiveness, and diversity.

The following guidelines are to assist you to you understand how OSIEA reviews and processes proposals. They also answer the questions most frequently asked by OSIEA grant applicants. Please review them carefully BEFORE submitting a grant application.

## 1) What kind of activities does OSIEA fund?

OSIEA awards grants in the following focus areas:

- Freedom of Expression and Information
- Governance and Accountability
- Health and Rights
- Justice and Human Rights
- Regional Initiatives

Grant seekers should carefully review our program priorities on our website (<http://www.soros.org/initiatives/osiea>) to better know what we fund under each of the focus areas.

## 2) Does OSIEA award grants to individuals?

NO. OSIEA awards grants ONLY to organizations/ groups seeking to implement projects in our above focus areas.\*

As a rule, OSIEA DOES NOT fund travel to attend conferences, seminars or workshops. We also do not provide scholarships for individual studies.

\* A limited number of individual fellowships and grants are available through the **OSI Fellowship program** ([http://www.soros.org/initiatives/fellowship/focus\\_areas/guidelines](http://www.soros.org/initiatives/fellowship/focus_areas/guidelines)), the **OSI Justice Initiative Fellows Program** (<http://www.justiceinitiative.org>), and the **OSI Youth Initiative - Youth Action Fund** ([http://www.soros.org/initiatives/youth/focus\\_areas/action](http://www.soros.org/initiatives/youth/focus_areas/action)).

To determine your eligibility for other grants, fellowships and scholarships awarded on a regular basis, please visit (<http://www.soros.org/grants>).

## 3) How do I apply for an OSIEA grant?

Applicants must complete the Application Form and Budget below in full and submit with the proposal.

[[need link for form](#)] Download OSIEA Grant Application Form

[[need link for form](#)] Download OSIEA Budget Template

Please note that OSIEA Budgets are calculated in US dollars. Ensure all budgets are presented US Dollars using the exchange rate of the moment.

#### **4) What are your deadlines for receipt of proposals?**

There are no deadlines. Proposals are reviewed on a rolling basis throughout the year.

#### **5) Can I submit a proposal for more than one project?**

YES. You are allowed to submit more than one application so long as each is for a distinct project. However, we generally only support organizations with one grant at a time.

#### **6) How does OSIEA decide on which proposals to fund?**

OSIEA reviews grant proposals strictly based on merit. Grant proposals are typically assessed on a range of criteria including but not limited to the following:

- Project's fit within OSIEA's focus areas and scope of mandate
- Extent to which the proposed project addresses OSIEA's strategic objective of supporting and promoting public participation in democratic governance, the rule of law, and respect for human rights
- Innovativeness/originality, i.e. distinctiveness from other similar projects being funded
- Relevance of the project to the problem and overall social/political and economic context
- Local organizations based in the region
- Feasibility of the project in terms of objectives, expected outcomes and given time-frame
- Recognition of possible challenges to achieving outcomes and plans to meet these challenges
- Consultation and participation of beneficiary groups, stakeholders, partners and alliances
- Organization's financial and operational capacity
- Sustainability
- Potential for measurable impact and meaningful change
- Budget and cost effectiveness
- Availability of funding at the time of submission

#### **7) Can you share a copy of a model grant proposal?**

NO. We consider all grant proposals the sole intellectual property of the applicant and do not share them outside OSIEA.

There is no one correct way to write a grant proposal.

## **8) How long does it take for an award decision to be reached?\***

Due to the high volume of proposals we receive, award decisions typically take an average of four to five months. OSIEA's decision to approve or decline a proposal is final. We do not offer critiques of proposals submitted.

Once a decision is reached, you will receive formal, written notification. OSIEA will need an additional four to five weeks for processing before your grant is released.

\*Please note that OSIEA does not charge any fees nor does it employ agents for handling of proposals.

## **9) What is the average size and duration of your grants?**

The average size and duration of OSIEA grants varies greatly and depends on the scope and complexity of the project.

With a few exceptions, OSIEA has typically made grants ranging from \$ 10,000 to \$ 200,000 in the past three years. Most grants run for one to two years.

## **10) Do I have to meet OSIEA staff to discuss my proposal?**

Occasionally, people discuss ideas with members of OSIEA staff before submitting a proposal.

Please note that you DO NOT need to talk with OSIEA staff before submitting your proposal in order for it to be reviewed or supported. We strive to uphold fairness in evaluating all proposals and final decisions are based strictly on merit. All proposals are reviewed according to the same procedure regardless of whether an applicant has spoken to a staff member before submitting a proposal.

*Kindly note that visits to OSIEA offices can only be by APPOINTMENT due to the high volume of daily correspondence. Please read all the information on our web page. Additional queries can be addressed to [info@osiea.org](mailto:info@osiea.org) for our response.*