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Call for applications; discretionary government grant for anti-racism activities

Discretionary government grant for the development of civil society organisations' anti-racism activities

The Prime Minister's Office announces the opening of a call for applications for discretionary government grants supporting the development of anti-racism activities by civil society organisations representing ethnic minorities for the years 2025–2026.

Overview of the discretionary government grant

The Prime Minister's Office coordinates the implementation of the national action plan to combat racism, which is based on the equality statement issued by the Government. The action plan includes 62 measures to be implemented by several ministries and other stakeholders.

Civil society organisations' participation in the implementation is supported in various ways, including through joint events (e.g. a civil society forum). In the spring of 2025, an anti-racism cooperation network will be launched to enhance the participation of anti-racism civil society actors in the monitoring of the action plan. The participation of organisations representing ethnic and religious minorities in anti-racism work is important, as these organisations operate close to communities affected by racism and possess specific expertise on the phenomenon of racism and its impacts on individuals.

This discretionary government grant is intended to support the anti-racism activities of civil society organisations representing ethnic minorities.

The total amount of funding available under this call is EUR 240,000.

The grant is available to registered associations, registered foundations and other non-profit organisations. The government grants are paid from the budget item 23.01.21 of the Prime Minister's Office (Implementation of the communication on equality, gender equality and non-discrimination, three-year transferable appropriation).

The application period begins on 12 May 2025 and ends on 30 June 2025 at 16.15. Applications received after the deadline will not be considered.

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The grant may be used immediately upon award and must be used by 31 December 2026.

The grant will be awarded in full, meaning no self-financing share is required. The funding decisions are expected to be made by the end of August 2025. Applicants will be informed of the decisions by email to the address they have provided in the application form.

The grant is subject to the Act on Discretionary Government Grants (688/2001) and the Administrative Procedure Act (434/2003). The specific conditions and restrictions concerning the use of the grant will be defined in the grant decision.

Purpose of the discretionary government grant

The purpose of this discretionary government grant is to support the anti-racism activities of civil society organisations representing ethnic minorities. The grant is specifically intended to strengthen the core activities of such organisations, whose main objective is to promote anti-racism work, in development of new forms of activity.

Priority areas of the call

Priority area 1: Supporting communities affected by racism

Priority area 2: Strengthening anti-racist advocacy work

Priority area 3: Developing working methods and tools that promote anti-racism

The aim is to fund at least one project in each priority area. For priority areas 1 and 2, more comprehensive projects are preferred, and the maximum budget per application is EUR 50,000. In priority area 3, the goal is to support the production of individual tools and working methods (e.g. training materials, videos), and the maximum budget per application is EUR 10,000.

Eligible costs

Acceptable costs are those necessary and reasonable for the achievement of the project's objectives, including:

- 1) administrative costs;
- 2) personnel costs;
- 3) travel and accommodation costs;
- 4) other essential costs not falling under the categories above that are necessary to achieve the defined objective.

Special attention must be paid to ensuring that the project plan does not include overlapping activities with other projects funded with discretionary government grants.

Evaluation of applications

Criteria for evaluating applications:

Grant funding is discretionary. Applications will be evaluated and compared based on an overall assessment. The comparative evaluation will consider the available appropriation, and how well the specific and general criteria, as well as the conditions laid down in the Act on Discretionary Government Grants, are met.

The specific evaluation will pay attention to the following aspects:

- how well the project responds to existing needs;
- the realism and clarity of the project plan;
- the sustainability of the results;
- the reach and scope of the target group;
- networking and cooperation with other stakeholders;
- the connection to the objectives of the government action plan to combat racism;
- the involvement of population groups vulnerable to racism and discrimination in different stages of the project.

General criteria

In the evaluation and comparison of applications, it may be considered an advantage if the activity or project seeks to promote one or several of the following general objectives set out in the strategies or commitments adopted by the Prime Minister's Office:

Promotion of equality and non-discrimination; see the Act on Equality between Women and Men (609/1986) and the Non-Discrimination Act (1325/2014), the principles of which also apply to activities and projects funded by the Prime Minister's Office.

Promotion of the objectives of the government action plan to combat racism:

<https://valtioneuvosto.fi/en/a-new-boost-for-equality-in-finland#/>.

General conditions under the Act on Discretionary Government Grants

The Prime Minister's Office may award grants only if the general conditions for awarding grants under the Act on Discretionary Government Grants are met. The Prime Minister's Office also considers these general conditions when determining the amount of the grant.

Under section 7, subsection 1 of the Act on Discretionary Government Grants, a discretionary government grant may be awarded if the following conditions are met:

- The purpose for which the grant is applied is socially acceptable.
- The objectives set for its use justify the awarding of a grant.

- Awarding a grant is necessary considering other public aid received by the applicant and the type and scope of the project or activity in question.
- Awarding the discretionary government grant is estimated to cause only minor distortion to competition and the market.

Impediments to awarding discretionary government grants

Applicants who have previously received government grants from the Prime Minister's Office must ensure that they have submitted the reports on the use of the funds by the set deadline specified in the government grant decisions. The Prime Minister's Office will reject applications if applicants have essentially neglected their duty to provide information required for the supervision of the use of government grants that have been awarded to the applicants in the past.

Late applications will also be rejected.

Conditions for the use of discretionary government grants

The grant may only be used for the purpose for which it was awarded.

The grant awarded by the Prime Minister's Office may cover a maximum of the share of acceptable costs of the supported activity or project as specified in the grant decision. The acceptable costs are determined in the grant decision and its appendices.

Together with other forms of public aid, the government grant may not exceed the maximum amount set for discretionary government grants or other public aid in the legislation of the European Community and Finland.

The grant recipient's financial management and administration must be arranged appropriately.

The recipients must submit a report on the use of the government grant by the date specified in the government grant decision.

The Prime Minister's Office has the right to carry out inspections of the finances and activities of the grant recipient as necessary for the payment and supervision of the grant (section 16 of the Act on Discretionary Government Grants).

The grant recipient must find out whether it is under an obligation to comply with legislation on public procurement and concession contracts and take this into account in its operations. A recipient other than a state authority, a local authority or a religious community may also have the duty to arrange competitive tendering of their procurements in accordance with the procedures laid down in the Act on Public Procurement and Concession Contracts.

If the grant recipient receives a grant for certain procurement with the grant amounting to more than 50 per cent of the value of the procurement, the grant recipient must comply with the Act on Public Procurement and Concession Contracts in this procurement (Act on Public Procurement and Concession Contracts 1397/2016).

The Prime Minister's Office has outlined that a government grant recipient must invite tenders from more than one supplier in such procurement of goods and services whose value is below the national threshold value but exceeds EUR 20,000 exclusive of VAT.

Reporting the results and the use of the grant

Evidence on the use of the grants must be provided at the latest on the day mentioned in the decision. The reporting obligation covers both financial reporting and result reporting. Cost centre-based financial reporting is required of the grant recipient if the grant awarded is a special grant or a general grant intended for a specific part of the activities.

Reports on the use of awarded grants must be submitted using a designated form, which will be published later on the Prime Minister's Office website. Reports must be submitted to the Registry of the Prime Minister's Office, using the record number specified in the grant decision.

Applying for a grant

The grant must be applied for using the application form. The application form must be accompanied by the following attachments as specified in the form: the project plan, the budget of the project, a list of the community's ongoing projects and other pending applications, the organisation's most recent annual report, financial statements and auditor's report, and proof of the organisation's signing authority (e.g. an extract from the Register of Associations, Foundation Register or Trade Register).

The application period begins on 12 May 2025 and ends on 30 June 2025 at 16.15. Applications must be received by the Prime Minister's Office by this deadline. Applicants are strongly encouraged to submit their applications by email to the Registry of the Prime Minister's Office: [kirjaamo.vnk\[at\]gov.fi](mailto:kirjaamo.vnk[at]gov.fi) by title **"Discretionary government grant for anti-racism work VN/13789/2025"**. Applications received after the deadline will not be considered. Applicants are responsible for ensuring that their application is received by the deadline.

Any supplementary documents or requests for changes to the application must also be submitted by email to the Registry of the Prime Minister's Office.

Applicants will be notified of the decision in writing.

Applicants may submit questions regarding the call during the application period by email. Questions must be submitted no later than 2 June 2025 at 16.00. All questions and answers related to the call will be published no later than 6 June 2025. The list of questions and answers will be published on the website of the Government Equality Project: <https://valtioneuvosto.fi/yhdenvertaisuuden-edistaminen/valtionavustus-kansalaisjärjestöille>.

Inquiries

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General information about discretionary government grants: <https://vm.fi/en/discretionary-government-grants>

Attachments to the application

Application form (in Finnish, can be filled in English)
Guidelines for preparing the project plan