



► **Development & Cooperation**

Guidelines for programme grants

Programme grants are financial contributions provided to strengthen overarching, long-term initiatives of not-for-profit organisations active in international cooperation. Through these grants, the Canton supports the effectiveness and innovative capacity of strategically relevant organisations headquartered in the Basel region.

This guideline serves as an orientation for organisations wishing to submit a programme proposal. It summarises:

- the [minimum requirements](#) for programme grants
- the [assessment criteria](#) used by the Commission for International Cooperation to evaluate proposals
- the [content](#) to be covered in the proposal
- the [documents](#) to be submitted

We recommend contacting us before the submission deadline to receive a non-binding assessment of whether the minimum requirements are met and to clarify outstanding questions.

1. Funding criteria

1.1 Minimum requirements

1.1.1 Eligibility

- ☐ The organisation is not-for-profit and active in the field of international cooperation
- ☐ It is a legal entity headquartered in the Basel region¹
- ☐ The organisation is ZEWO-certified or has average annual revenues of at least five million Swiss²

1.1.2 Institutional capacity

The organisation demonstrably has:

- ☐ appropriate governance structures
- ☐ professional financial management
- ☐ technical expertise
- ☐ the ability to develop and reform.

1.1.3 Alignment with the funding purpose

The programme contributes to poverty reduction and to strengthening sustainable development at the global level:

¹ Subject to the decision of the Cantonal Government regarding the implementing ordinance. The Basel region is defined as the Swiss territory of the Trinational Eurodistrict Basel (TEB) in its current valid version (<https://www.eurodistrictbasel.eu/de/ueber-den-teb/unser-gebiet-und-unsere-mitglieder.html>). The headquarter is defined as the statutory seat according to the commercial register or, if no commercial register entry exists, according to the UID register. In addition, the organisation must demonstrably direct its operational activities primarily from this location.

² Subject to the decision of the Cantonal Government regarding the implementing ordinance. Average annual revenues of more than five million Swiss francs in the two years prior to the submission of the programme proposal. The audit reports on the annual financial statements are decisive.

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- ☐ **Poverty reduction:** The programme addresses poverty as a multidimensional issue and – depending on the needs – strengthens the economic, human, political, sociocultural and self-protection capacities of the target groups.
- ☐ **Strengthening of sustainable development:** The programme aligns with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and takes their ecological, social and economic dimensions into account. It particularly promotes participation, local ownership and the strengthening of local structures (localisation principle).
- ☐ **Thematic scope:** Programmes are supported in the areas of development cooperation, peacebuilding and human security. In fragile and conflict-affected contexts, the integrated *Humanitarian–Development–Peace (HDP) Nexus* approach must be taken into account. Within this framework, humanitarian measures may also form part of the funding. Programmes consisting exclusively of humanitarian aid are excluded from funding. The strategic priorities 2026-2029 (health, climate resilience, and culture as a lever for poverty reduction) are only applicable to selected funding schemes as of 2027. Regular project and programme grants are exempt from this.
- ☐ **Geographical scope:** The programme targets countries listed on the current OECD DAC list of recipients of official development assistance (ODA).

1.1.4 Funding period

- ☐ Programme grants are given for a maximum duration of four years.
- ☐ The budget allocation of the programme grant is made on a calendar-year basis.
- ☐ They may be applied for starting in the current or the following calendar year.

1.1.5 Formal requirements for submission

The programme proposal must be submitted on time, complete and in the required form:

- ☐ Proposals must be sent by the submission deadline.
- ☐ Proposals must be submitted in German or English.
- ☐ The programme proposal must be submitted together with all contents and documents required in the guidelines – preferably as a compressed file (.zip).
- ☐ The Excel template must be used for the budget and financing plan.

1.2 Assessment criteria

1.2.1 Relevance

- ☐ Clearly identifiable contribution to the funding purpose and added value compared to existing approaches
- ☐ Identifiable innovation potential or innovative elements enabling additional impact

1.2.2 Impact orientation

The programme is demonstrably geared towards concrete change for the target groups. This includes:

- ☐ a well-founded needs analysis
- ☐ a coherent impact logic.

1.2.3 Efficiency

Resources are used in proportion to the expected results and impact. Required are:

- ☐ economical use of resources
- ☐ appropriate overhead costs.

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1.2.4 Sustainability

Positive effects should continue beyond the programme duration. Key aspects include:

- ☐ viable financial and operational perspectives
- ☐ involvement and strengthening of local actors
- ☐ responsible handling of ecological, economic, social and climate risks.

1.2.5 Transparency

Planning and implementation must be documented openly and comprehensibly. Important elements are:

- ☐ clear cost and financing planning
- ☐ appropriate evaluation mechanisms
- ☐ accountability reports to ensure learning and steering capability.

2. Contents of the proposal

2.1 Cover page of the proposal

- ☐ Title of the programme
- ☐ Duration of the programme
- ☐ Budget of the programme (for the entire programme duration)
- ☐ Requested programme grant (for the entire programme duration)
- ☐ Name and address of the organisation
- ☐ Name, function and contact details of the contact person

2.2 Executive Summary

- ☐ Description of the context, the overall programme objectives and direct beneficiaries, as well as the intervention strategy with the key outputs during the programme period (max. 200 words, to be published on the website of the Canton of Basel-Stadt).

2.3 Presentation of the organisation

- ☐ Vision, mission and strategy of the organisation
- ☐ Systems and instruments of the organisation in the areas of governance, results-based planning, monitoring and reporting, and evaluation
- ☐ Accounting and audit processes in accordance with national and international standards
- ☐ Track record of the organisation in relation to the funding purpose / the proposed programme

2.4 Presentation of the programme

2.4.1 Context

- ☐ Problem statements and context-relevant framework conditions
- ☐ Relevant national actors, systems and strategies

2.4.2 Programme relevance

- ☐ Justification of the programme and expected added value and contribution to the funding purpose

2.4.3 Target groups

- ☐ Beneficiaries / target groups of the programme with detailed information on number of persons, gender, age and other characteristics relevant to the problem statement
- ☐ Consideration of disadvantaged individuals and groups – in line with the “leaving no one behind” principle

2.4.4 Geographical scope

- ☐ Countries in which the programme is implemented and where the programme’s target groups / beneficiaries are located

2.4.5 Objectives and intervention strategy(ies)

- ☐ Overall objective(s), expected outcomes and planned outputs per outcome (including specification of the geographical scope)
- Overview of the theory of change to be added in the annex (e.g. logframe matrix)
- ☐ Intervention strategy(ies) referring to good practice and lessons learnt from previous or similar programmes
 - ☐ Key intervention measures
 - ☐ Concrete approaches to ensuring the long-term sustainability of the programme’s outcomes
 - ☐ Organisational structure and partner organisations
 - ☐ Planned innovations and innovation management (where applicable)

2.4.6 Risk management

- ☐ Key contextual, programmatic and institutional risks for the programme and planned risk management measures
- ☐ Possible impacts of the programme on ecological, social or economic sustainability and planned mitigation measures

2.4.7 Budget and financing

- ☐ Budget of the programme (per year and for the entire programme duration), including allocation per outcome (CHF and percentage share of the programme)
- ☐ Requested programme grant from the Canton of Basel-Stadt (per year and for the entire programme duration)

→ Budget and financing plan to be added in the annex (according to the Excel template)

2.4.8 Monitoring and steering of the programme

- ☐ Monitoring system with a focus on outcome level
- ☐ Timeline and responsibilities for monitoring and steering
- ☐ Completed and planned reviews and evaluations

→ Monitoring and evaluation plan to be added in the annex (including outcome indicators, baselines and target values, data sources, as well as methods and timeline)

3. Documents to be submitted

3.1 Organisational documents

- ☐ ZEWO certificate or statutes of the organisation, annual reports of the last three years, annual financial statements of the last three years, audit reports for all annual financial statements (in accordance with the statutory audit requirements applicable to the organisation)
- ☐ Strategy (if available as a publication)

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- ☐ VAT / UID number
- ☐ IBAN
- ☐ Self-declaration and evidence of equal pay for women and men (only for programme grants of more than CHF 100,000 per year)³.

3.2 Programme documents

- ☐ Programme proposal (including all content required in chapter 2)
- ☐ Overview of the theory of change (e.g. logframe matrix)
- ☐ Monitoring and evaluation plan (including outcome indicators, baselines and target values, data sources, as well as methods and timing of data collection)
- ☐ Budget and financing plan (according to the Excel template)

³ The relevant information is available here: <https://www.bs.ch/pd/gleichstellung-und-diversitaet/gleichstellung-der-geschlechter-und-sexuellen-orientierungen/gleicher-lohn-fuer-gleichwertige-arbeit/lohngleichheit-bei-staatsbeitraegen#was-muss-eingereicht-werden>