



# Grant Manual Voice in Lao PDR

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## 1. A letter from.....

"We pledge," says the UN, in its manifesto on the Sustainable Development Goals, *"that no one will be left behind [in the collective journey to end poverty and inequality]."* In addition, the most marginalised will be prioritised: "We will endeavour," the UN pledges, *"to reach the furthest behind first."*<sup>1</sup>

It is in this context that the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs ("the Ministry") designed a special fund, called Voice, with the objective to support the most marginalised and discriminated groups in their efforts to exert influence in accessing productive and social services and political participation. Voice forms an integral pillar of the Ministry's overall Dialogue and Dissent policy framework<sup>2</sup> which aims to strengthen the capacity for lobby and advocacy of civil society organisations in low- and lower-middle-income countries to allow for participation in mainstream development processes. Voice is executed by a consortium of Oxfam Novib and Hivos which coordinate the programme at national level in the ten Voice focus countries<sup>3</sup>: Oxfam in Laos is responsible for Voice in Laos. Overall Voice targets five groups, although it depends on the country's contextual analysis which groups will be served in each Voice focus country:



People living with disabilities;



Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex (LGBTI) people;



Women facing exploitation, abuse and/or violence;



Age-discriminated vulnerable groups, notably the young and elderly;



Indigenous groups and ethnic minorities.

Following Laos' contextual analysis, Voice focuses on the intersections and linkages between these groups.

These groups are often the hardest to reach. Therefore innovative approaches to strengthening capacity of lobby and advocacy as well as empowerment are essential. A linking and learning process encourages sharing of lessons learned, and provides a forum for mutual learning and empowerment of the most marginalised and discriminated groups. Voice is initially a five-year programme, for which a total of €50 million is available for programme-, grants-, management- and linking and learning costs. This includes a total of €35 million available for grants for ten countries, the Voice 2016-2020 Fund.

Most –if not all- the information is available via [www.voice.global/laos](http://www.voice.global/laos) including all Calls for Proposals and relevant information regarding the grantees.

<sup>1</sup> <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/post2015/transformingourworld>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.government.nl/binaries/government/documents/parliamentary-documents/2015/07/01/voice-the-accountability-fund-and-the-participation-of-civil-society-organisations-in-theme-based-calls-for-proposals/letter-to-parliament-on-voice.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> The Voice focus countries are: Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda, Indonesia, Philippines, Laos and Cambodia.



This grants manual is meant for (potential) grantees to help them decide on whether and how to make a grant and what the reporting requirements are. As with all documents in Voice it is a 'living' document; hence if you have any feedback on how Voice can improve its grant-making, you are very welcome to do so via [laos@voice.global](mailto:laos@voice.global).

Thank you for joining us on this exciting journey!

The Voice family

## 2. What types of grants will be awarded?

The Voice grant facility is designed to support informal groups as well as formal organisations and networks, although the applicant needs to be legally registered or recognised and have a bank account in the applicant's name. The Grant types are as follows:



**Empowerment grant:** Targeting (informal) groups or organisations to raise awareness, develop transformative leadership, build confidence and skills and work against stigmatisation of marginalised and discriminated groups. Smaller grants with a duration of 14 months, which are accessible for informal groups through for example a partnership with formal organisations. Empowerment grants are available from €5,000 to €25,000.



**Influencing grant:** Targeting organisations and networks to strengthen their influencing, lobby and advocacy capacities and amplify the voices of marginalised and discriminated groups. Influencing grants that are country specific are available from €25,000 to €200,000 with time period 18 months and maximum 30 months.



**Innovate and learn grant:** For groups on organisations that want to learn from innovation and/or test and scale new approaches to address the marginalization, discrimination, and exclusion experienced by Voice target groups. Innovation and learning grants are available from €5,000 to €200,000 with time period of minimum 12 months and maximum 24 months.



**Sudden opportunity grant:** Creating flexibility on urgent circumstances to undertake collective action to address specific unanticipated opportunities to influence policy or deal with a threatened reduction of civil space which discriminate, marginalise, exclude, and criminalise one or more of the Voice target groups in one or more of the impact themes. Grants responding to a sudden opportunity are available from €5,000 to €90,000 with time period minimum 6 months and maximum 12 months.

Remark: Currently there are only Empowerment Grants and Sudden Opportunity Open call for proposals.

For each grant modality, there are different approaches related to making applications, assessing grants and reporting against grants. Empowerment grants and smaller grants designed to address sudden opportunities will be more flexible and contain fewer requirements. Influencing and Innovate and Learn grants will





Step 5	Selection	Once the screening is complete recommendations for grant awards plus recommendations capacity development will be submitted to the Country Office of Oxfam for final approval. Each short-listed application will be rated and ranked using the selection criteria provided below
Step 6	Agreements	Once the project is finalised, Voice will enter into a Grant Agreement with successful organisations. The Grant Arrangement will apply for the period of time required to complete the project. The time plan and approved budget will be an integrated part of the Grant Agreement. The Grant Agreement will outline the requirements under the grant and other terms and conditions.

### *When should your organisation submit an Application?*

Calls for proposal will be published annually at a minimum via [www.voice.global/laos](http://www.voice.global/laos) and [www.facebook.com/voice.global.online](https://www.facebook.com/voice.global.online). Applications for Empowerment grants, Sudden Opportunity and Innovate and Learn grants will be accepted on a rolling basis (i.e. applicants can send their applications anytime). However, the review and feedback process will only be done during a specific timeframe (see schedule below). This means that proposals submitted before the deadline of the first review cycle will be reviewed during that cycle, anything after determined dates, for example, will be reviewed in the next cycle. For Influencing grants, applications will be accepted in accordance with the deadlines.

For Sudden Opportunity grants you can write an Email any time to [Laos@voice.global](mailto:Laos@voice.global) to explain the Sudden Opportunity in one or two paragraphs on why the opportunity is so sudden and unique.

Here is the schedule of applications submission:

Type of grant	Submit By / Deadline	Response Date	Contract Signing
Empowerment grants	May 31, 2019 5:00 PM (Local Time)	July 31, 2019	August 30, 2019
Sudden Opportunity	Opens All Times  (but every project has to finish by December 2020)	<b>Pitch your idea by sending the concept note to <a href="mailto:Laos@voice.global">Laos@voice.global</a> to be invited to submit a full proposal</b>	

This means that Oxfam in Laos has at least 6 (Six) weeks to review all proposals against eligibility and project criteria. After six weeks the rejected applicants will receive a response. Those proposal that are taken to the final stage (“*organisational assessment*”) will have up to 10 weeks more for proposal and budget revisions, organisational assessments, donor checking and contracting. All applicants will be notified of the outcome of their application, but only those that have undergone a project check will receive detailed feedback.

























- We have outlined some more detailed outcome-level questions that are linked to empowerment (creating safe spaces, building confidence and skills), alliance building and influencing instruments.
- Change stories: At the end of your project, we would like to ask you to think about narrating a story that depicts the change on an individual or a group that your project has contributed to. The way that you will narrate the story is completely open: It could be in a narrative form, audio, video, etc. We have classified the categories of change that we would like to zoom in, on the report itself. Our global Monitoring and Evaluation officer is at your disposal for any questions in relation to the stories.

In general, to ensure learning from the process is not lost, grantees should reflect on the learning journey of the programme. Based on the organisation's change agenda and learning questions, grantees will be invited to participate in local learning events or national and global communities of practice. Grantees will be contributing with their project experiences to a process of learning about transformational change based on practical experiences. We also suggest, a project based reflection. We recommend carrying out an evaluation with the organisation, key target group and stakeholders on the challenges faced and strategies developed to overcome these; on the engagement process of all stakeholders. It can be useful to write up your thoughts on the process as well as the outcomes and any thoughts you have regarding the socialisation of the knowledge/learning products and how they could be used more widely in Voice. The Voice Country Team will be able to support and provide guidance.

Financial reporting also depends on the size and the life span of the grant and will therefore be included in the grant agreement. Financial reports need to be delivered in the template provided.

Your organisation will maintain a separate ledger for the Voice grant that includes all project expenses. Based on this ledger you will calculate the project expenses per budget line, register this in the appropriate column in the template and calculate in a separate column how much money is left for that budget line and percentage. You may shift funds from one budget line to another, but only to a maximum of 10% and you will always inform the Voice team about such changes in advance. If you required changes over 10% you will have to obtain approval of the Voice team beforehand.

Supporting documents, that prove that you made the expenditures, will need to be kept on file for a period of 10 years after the project ended for a possible audit. More details on which supporting documents you need to keep on file will be given to you by the Voice Country and/or Coordination Team.

### **Forms**

The appropriate forms such as application form, budget template as well as assessment template will vary with each Call for Proposals. The right forms will be made available with each Call for Proposal via [www.voice.global](http://www.voice.global)

## 7. Fraud and Corruption



