# Guidelines for hackathoN applicants

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### Call for Applications under

**2018 Eastern Partnership Civil Society Hackathon**

**Minsk, Belarus**

**NOTICE**

This is an open call for hackathon applications. Applications for 2018 EaP Civil Society Hackathon are accepted via the online application system. The deadline for the submission of applications *from CSOs and activists* is 18.00 (CET) on Monday, April 23, 2018. The deadline for the submission of applications *from IT professionals and graphic designers* is 18.00 (CET) on Monday, May 14, 2018.

Please check the eligibility criteria before applying. When submitting their application applicants must follow all instructions contained in the guidelines and complete the on-line application form. Failure to submit the required information and documentation within the deadline specified may lead to rejection of applications.

Should you have questions regarding your application, please contact [ict@eapcivilsociety.eu](mailto:ict@eapcivilsociety.eu).

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**List of abbreviations**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **CSO** | **Civil Society Organisation** |
| **EU** | **European Union** |
| **EaP** | **Eastern Partnership (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova, Ukraine)** |
| **ICT, or IT** | **Information communication technologies** |
| **TA team** | **Technical Assistance Team** |

### Timetable

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| STEP | DATE | TIME |
| Call for CSOs and activists opens | **9 April 2018** | **Not applicable** |
| Call for Applications among CSOs and activists for project ideas announced | **9 April 2018** | **Not applicable** |
| Deadline for requesting clarification | **20 April 2017** | **18.00 CET** |
| TA team responds to queries from applicants | **9-19 April 2018** | **17.00 CET** |
| Applications from CSOs and activists due | **23 April 2018** | **18.00 CET** |
| Notification of winning applicants | **30 April 2018** | **18.00 CET** |
| Approved and rejected applicants are informed of the selection process results | **4 May 2018** | **18.00 CET** |
| Pre-hackathon capacity building for successful applications (webinars & e-learning course) | **3-15 May 2018** | **Not applicable** |
| Call for IT professionals and graphics designers opens | **4 May 2018** | **Not applicable** |
| Call for Applications among IT professionals and graphics designers announced | **4 May 2018** | **Not applicable** |
| Deadline for requesting clarification | **11 May 2017** | **18.00 CET** |
| TA team responds to queries from applicants | **4-11 May 2018** | **17.00 CET** |
| Applications from IT professionals and graphics designers due | **14 May 2018** | **18.00 CET** |
| Notification of winning applicants – IT professionals and graphics designers | **18 May 2018** | **18.00 CET** |
| Participants of the Hackathon receive a Letter of Commitment | **18 May 2018** | **Not applicable** |
| Approved and rejected applicants are informed of the selection process results | **21 May 2018** | **18.00 CET** |
| Online meeting of the Hackathon participants: pitching the project ideas & building the first hack teams | **22 May 2018** | **-** |
| Holding EaP Civil Society Hackathon, Minks, Belarus | **1-3 June 2018** | **-** |
| Hackathon Jury nominates three top-scoring ICT tool ideas for Digitalisation for Civil Society Award | **3 June 2018** | **-** |
| Restricted Call for Applications among the nominees opens | **11 June 2018** | **Not applicable** |
| Restricted Call for Applications among shortlisted nominees is announced | **11 June 2018** | **Not applicable** |
| Deadline for requesting clarification | **28 June 2018** | **18.00 CET** |
| TA team responds to queries from applicants | **29 June 2018** | **18.00 CET** |
| Applications from shortlisted nominees due | **2 July 2018** | **12:00 CET** |
| Notification of winning applicant | **16 July 2018** | **18.00 CET** |
| Approved and rejected applicants are informed of the selection process results | **18 July 2018** | **18.00 CET** |
| Successful applicant receives the Award contract | **26 July 2018** | **-** |
| Development and launch of the winning ICT tool project | **July-December 2018** | **-** |

### Description and Overall Objective

The European Union is committed to supporting civil society in Eastern Partnership countries through developing ICT tools for transparency, accountability, digital participation and public services.

2018 **EaP Civil Society Hackathon** brings together 60 civil society activists, IT professionals and designers from the Eastern Partnership (EaP) region to work face-to-face on software projects that would enable civil society better to contribute to reforms and democratic changes in their home countries.

The overall goal of the EaP Civil Society Hackathon is to **establish long-term cooperation between civil society and IT community from the EaP region** that would results in developing new ICT tools to empower digital participation of citizens, to improve transparency and communication of governmental decisions and spending, to enable broader participation in decision making process and to advance public services.

**The Eastern Partnership Civil Society Hackathons are an integral part of the European Union's Eastern Partnership Civil Society Facility.**

### Objectives and Methods of Implementation

2018 EaP Civil Society Hackathon seeks to strengthen the role of civil society in reforms and democratic changes in the EaP region through the development of relevant ICT tools. The ideas of ICT tools proposed by applicants should contribute to better dialogue and partnership between citizens, civil society and governments. Possible topics can be, for example, public monitoring of budget execution, election monitoring, citizens reporting, crime mapping, interactive mapping, citizen journalism, and many others.

Participants of the EaP Civil Society Hackathon will work in hack teams consisting of three to four experts: one subject-matter expert from a civil society organisation (CSO), one or two IT professionals (programmers, coders, front-end developers, etc.) and a graphic designer.

Participation in 2018 EaP Civil Society Hackathon is open to all citizens of EaP countries with a strong civil position and real experience of civic work, regardless of their experience in working for a CSO. In this way, the EU-funded EaP Civil Society Facility pursues to engage young activists outside of traditional CSOs into development of their home countries.

On the final day of 2018 EaP Civil Society hackathon, an independent jury and participants will vote for the best ICT tool developed during the Hackathon. Three top-scoring ICT tool ideas will be nominated for Digitalisation for Civil Society Award, a special facility that seeks to support the full-fledge development of the best ICT tool designed by participants of 2018 Hackathon. The nominees will be invited to apply for the Award within the Restricted Call for Applications.

Based on the applications submitted within this Call, the independent Selection Committee will select one of the three proposed ICT tool ideas for the full development and launch. The decision of the Selection Committee and TA Team on the winner and the amount of the financial support is final.

### Cost of Participation

Participation in the EaP Civil Society Hackathon is free.

Organisers cover travel and accommodation expenses of 2018 EaP Civil Society Hackathon participants, including:

* travel expenses outside or within the host country: a return trip between the address specified in the application (an EaP country) and the hosting city – Minsk, Belarus
* hotel accommodations for the period of 2018 EaP Civil Society Hackathon (1-3 June 2018)
* meals for the period of 2018 EaP Civil Society Hackathon (1-3 June 2018)
* Per diems for participants outside of Belarus for the period of 2018 EaP Civil Society Hackathon (1-3 June 2018)

### Financial Support Available to Winner

The TA team makes sure the winning ICT tool is fully developed and launched.

The type and amount of support for the winner will be determined on a case-by-case basis depending on the subject matter of the project, technical and innovative value of the project, etc., as well as in accordance with the terms of the memoranda on co-operation between the TA project and the successful applicant.

Next to the financial support, the winner of 2018 EaP Civil Society Hackathon will be provided with supervision, administrative support and assistance in promoting the developed ICT tool.

### Eligibility Criteria

Participation in 2018 EaP Civil Society Hackathon is open to citizens/residents and CSOs from the Eastern Partnership countries – **Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine**.

Applications from grassroots activists and young IT professionals from across the region are encouraged.

There are three sets of eligibility criteria, relating to:

1. the applicants from CSO and activists groups:
2. the applicants – IT professionals and graphic designers:
3. the ideas of ICT tools.

###### 6.1 Eligibility of applicants from CSOs and activists groups

In order to be eligible for participation in 2018 EaP Civil Society Hackathon the applicant must:

* be a natural person;
* be a national and a resident of one of the Eastern Partnership countries;
* have a proven track record of working in a CSO, groups of civil activists or taking an active role in their communities in one form or another;
* have a good command of English and/or Russian languages.

As proof of eligibility an applicant should provide the following documents:

1. scanned copy of passport or national identity card as proof of nationality;
2. a letter of support from a relevant CSO, an activists group or a community organisation (if available).

###### 6.2 Eligibility of applicants – IT professional and graphic designers

In order to be eligible for participation in 2018 EaP Civil Society Hackathon the applicant must:

* be a natural person;
* be a national and a resident of one of the Eastern Partnership countries;
* have a proven track record of working in such areas as programming / coding, graphic and web design, interface developing, cloud computing, mobile computing, solutions architecture, etc.
* have a good command of English and/or Russian languages

As proof of eligibility an applicant should provide the following documents:

1. scanned copy of passport or national identity card as proof of nationality;
2. examples of an applicant’s work (portfolio).

###### 6.3 Eligibility of ICT tools ideas

Definition

ICT tool is software designed to solve a specific problem, or deal with a specific issue.

Eligible sectors

2018 EaP Civil Society Hackathon accepts ideas of ICT tools that empower digital participation of civil society, improve transparency of public institutions and enable broader citizen involvement in decision making processes, including such areas as:

* **eParticipation:** helping citizens engage in politics and policy-making, making decision-making processes easier to understand and enabling constant feedback and two-way communication
* **eTransparency:** making public sector decisions and actions more open to scrutiny and enabling public control over civil servants, public procurements and budget spending
* **eGovernment and eServices**: improving the activities of public sector organisations, including administration process, information access, connecting citizens and providing public services to them. This also includes mGovernment and mServices solutions
* **Citizens mobilization**: utilizing instruments for citizen journalism to engage and motivate stakeholders and allies for a specific development need or cause
* **Citizens-to-citizens services**: supporting CSOs in providing services to citizens
* **CSO transparency & accountability:** supporting CSOs in improving accountability mechanisms of their organisations and in better linking activities to citizens' needs

Technically, ICT tools developed within the framework of 2018 EaP Civil Society Hackathon may be:

* Online based solutions (blogs, websites, web-platforms, interactive maps, etc.) and plugins, including development of mobile versions
* Mobile applications
* SMS-based solutions

The proposed ICT tools may cover any or several of the specific areas with a special focus on the activities aimed at engagement and mobilization of local and grassroot communities.

All ideas supported under this programme shall be designed and implemented in accordance with principles of good governance and human rights, gender equality, cultural diversity, environmental sustainability and the inclusion of socially or economically disadvantaged groups, including, but not limited to national/ethnic/religious minorities, disabled persons, children or IDPs,wherever these issues are of particular relevance.

The following types of project ideas are ineligible:

* websites and platforms of individual organisations, institutions, communities, projects, groups, etc., and/or networks of such organisations;
* ICT tools supporting political parties;
* ICT tools including proselytism;
* IT solutions for activities normally carried out by the applicant and/or affiliated entities.

Target audience

Suggested ideas of ICT tools need to target and be utilised by citizens of one or more EaP member state.

Number of applications per applicants

The applicant may **not** submit more than one application for this call for Hackathon applications.

### How to apply and the procedures to follow

To apply for participation in 2018 EaP Civil Society Hackathon, the applicants need to:

1. Check eligibility criteria
2. Collect necessary supporting documents
3. Fill in the online application form at <http://ict.eapcivilsociety.eu/> and submit it before 18.00 (CET) on 23 April 2018, if the applicants represent CSOs or activists groups, or before 14 May 2018, if the applicants are IT professionals or graphic designers.

In order to build long-term partnership and cooperation between civil society and professional IT communities in the EaP region, applicants for 2018 EaP Civil Society Hackathon are encouraged to apply in hack teams that consist of at least one subject-matter-expert from a CSO in the EaP country and one IT professional responsible for the technical implementation of ICT tools.

At the same time, the TA Team provides possibility to civil activists and IT professionals to apply for 2018 EaP Civil Society Hackathon individually.

According to the targeted groups of participants, there are two online application forms for EaP Civil Society Hackathons:

* for civil activists / SCOs suggesting an idea for an ICT tool for eDemocracy to be developed within 2018 EaP Civil Society Hackathon, and
* for IT professionals and graphic designers that want to participate in the development of selected ICT tools.

Applications must be submitted in accordance with the instructions in the Hackathon application form and the Guidelines for Hackathon Applicants. Applicants may apply in English and Russian languages. The provided application forms in Annex B are included for information purposes only. In order to submit an application, an applicant should fill in the online application form at <http://ict.eapcivilsociety.eu/> and upload all requested documents in the requested format.

Questions may be sent by e-mail no later than one working day before the deadline for the submission of applications to [ict@eapcivilsociety.eu](mailto:ict@eapcivilsociety.eu).

To ensure equal treatment of applicants, the Selection Committee cannot give a prior opinion on the eligibility of applicants or an action.

No individual replies will be given to questions. All questions and answers as well as other important notices to applicants during the course of the procedure, will be published at <http://ict.eapcivilsociety.eu/>, as appropriate. It is therefore advisable to consult the abovementioned website regularly in order to be informed of the questions and answers published.

###### 7.1 ICT tool proposal

Applying with an idea of ICT tool for eDemocracy to be developed at 2018 EaP Civil Society Hackathon, applicants need to describe the proposed ICT tool in brief, indicating:

* the existing problem(s) to be addressed and how the proposed tool will help solving it/them;
* main users of the proposed ICT tool and how they will benefit from the launch of the tool;
* other ICT tools that tackle the same problem (if exist) and the differences with the proposed solution;
* how the proposed ICT tool contributes to the democratic changes in their home country and the EaP region;
* how the proposed ICT tool will be maintained and updated in future.

The development of the proposed ICT tool should start no later than July 31, 2018.

###### 7.2 Applications from IT professionals and graphic designers

IT professionals and graphic designers applying for participation in 2018 EaP Civil Society Hackathon need to:

* detail their work experience in developing IT solutions (portfolio),
* list their areas of expertise, and
* describe their experience of or interest in working with civil society for developing ICT tools for eDemocracy.

### Evaluation and selection of applications

Applications will be examined and evaluated by the Hackathon Selection Committee with the possible assistance of external assessors. All applications will be assessed according to the following steps and criteria.

If the examination of the application reveals that the applicant and/or the proposed idea of ICT tool do not meet the eligibility criteria stated in Section 6, the application will be rejected on this sole basis.

**STEP 1: ADMINISTRATIVE CHECKS AND EVALUATION OF SUBMITTED APPLICATION FORM**

The following will be assessed:

* Compliance with the submission deadline. If the deadline has not been met, the application will automatically be rejected.
* All requested supporting documents are provided.

If any of the requested information is missing or is incorrect, the application may be rejected on that **sole** basis and the application will not be evaluated further. The applications that pass the first administrative check will be evaluated on the relevance and design of the proposed ICT tool.

**STEP 2: EVALUATION OF ICT TOOL PROPOSALS**

The quality of the applications, including the proposed ICT tool and capacity of the applicants, will be evaluated using the evaluation criteria in the evaluation grid below. There are two types of evaluation criteria: selection and decision criteria.

**The selection criteria** help to evaluate the applicant(s)'s motivation and operational capacity to ensure that they:

* are committed to values associated with respect for fundamental human rights;
* have appropriate language skills for participation in the Hackathon;
* are directly responsible for the preparation and management of the proposed ICT tool;
* have management capacity and professional competencies to develop the ICT tool and maintain it throughout the proposed action.

All selection criteria have to be met by an applicant in order to proceed to the next stage (decision criteria stage).

**The decision criteria** help to evaluate the quality of the applications in relation to the objectives and priorities. They cover the relevance of the proposed ICT tool, its consistency with the objectives of the Hackathon, quality, expected impact, sustainability and cost-effectiveness.

The Selection Committee will use the following criteria for assessing applicants’ ideas of ICT tools:

* proposed idea contributes to strengthening democratic changes in an EaP country or improving the quality of public services provided to the citizens
* proposed idea is within one or more key areas, as described in Section 6.3
* proposed idea is in line with / contributes to the implementation of the national policy on the Digital Society development, and/or implementation of the association agreements and/or EaP Digital Agenda
* proposed idea is relevant for more than one country of the EaP region (multiplication effect)
* proposed idea is technically implementable and sustainable
* proposed ICT tool is user-friendly.

The Applications will receive an overall score out of 75 using the breakdown in the evaluation grid below. The evaluation will also check on compliance with the instructions on the ICT Tool Proposal, which can be found in Section 6 of The Guidelines.

The evaluation criteria are divided into headings and subheadings. Each subheading will be given a score between 1 and 5 as follows: 1 = very poor; 2 = poor; 3 = adequate; 4 = good; 5 = very good.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | | Scores | |
| 1. Operational capacity |  | | 15 |
| 1.1 Does the applicant have sufficient experience of leading IT projects? | 5 | |  |
| 1.2 Does the applicant have sufficient technical expertise? (especially knowledge of the issues to be addressed) | 5\*2 | |
| 2. Relevance of the ICT tool | **Sub-score** | | 30 |
| 2.1 How relevant is the proposed ICT tool to the objectives and priorities of the Call? | 5\*2 | |  |
| 2.2 How relevant is the proposed ICT tool to the needs of the society / community? | 5\*2 | |
| 2.3 How clearly defined and strategically chosen are the specific needs / problems to be addressed? | 5 | |
| 2.4 Does the proposed ICT tool contain specific added-value elements, such as environmental issues, promotion of gender equality and equal opportunities, needs of disabled people, rights of minorities and rights of indigenous peoples or best practices? | 5 | |
| 3. Effectiveness and feasibility of the action | **Sub-score** | | 20 |
| 3.1 Is the proposed ICT tool consistent in relation to objectives and expected results? | 5\*2 | |  |
| 3.2 Is the proposed ICT tool implementable in technical terms? | 5\*2 | |
| 4. Sustainability of the ICT tool | **Sub-score** | | 10 |
| 4.1 Is the proposed ICT tool likely to have multiplier effects? (Including scope for replication, extension and information sharing.) | 5 | |  |
| 4.2 Is the proposed ICT tool sustainable?  1) Financially (how will it be financed / maintained after the funding ends?)  (2) Institutionally (will structures allowing the ICT tool to continue be in place after the initial launch? Will there be local 'ownership' of the developed ICT tool?)  (3) At policy level (is there legislative framework in place to ensure effective utilization of the proposed ICT tool, etc.?) | 5 | |  |
| TOTAL SCORE |  | | 75 |

*\*\*these scores are multiplied by 2 because of their importance*

The Selection Committee will select between 15 and 20 best scoring applications ensuring equal representation of civil society activists from each country and also gender balance.

The selected participants will be informed by email of the evaluation results.

### Pre-Hackathon Capacity Building

Successful applicants – civil society activists will be required to take part in a series of capacity building online events (pre-hackathon webinars and online course).

These activities aim to build IT-related skills and capacities to manage software development projects, and cover such topics as:

* Management of IT projects, including needs assessment, defining the target audience, their needs and expectations; existing solutions (mobile app, main types of websites) and case analysis, writing a brief on IT project, work planning, budgeting, etc.
* Basics of modern design for web
* Administration of ICT tools and promotion of IT projects
* Information security, including information law, copyright and personal digital security.

A special online meeting will be organised for the selected participants to pitch their ideas of ICT tools and build the first hack teams (see the timing table in Section 1).

### Implementation of the Proposed Action

The selected participants will sign Letter of Commitment (see the timing table in Section 1).

At the final day of 2018 EaP Civil Society Hackathon, the hack teams will present the prototypes or demos of their ICT tools to the independent jury and the participants.

Each participant of the Hackathon votes for one project outside of his/her own. Based on the results of the public vote, the Hackathon Jury will nominate three top-scoring ICT tool ideas for the Digitalisation for Civil Society Award.

Authors of the nominated ICT tool projects will be invited to submit full application for the development and launch of their ICT too ideas. Based on the applications received, an independent Selection Committee comprising of at least four experts will select the winning ICT tool project – recipient of the Award.

The winner will receive support from the TA team for the full-fledged development of the proposed ICT tool, until the launch of the developed ICT solution.

The support is designed in a way to allow the winner to implement his/her idea in two ways:

* **Engagement of additional technical expertise** for those who lack relevant human capacities and resources to fully implement the ICT tool. The support will help to cover the expenses relevant for the full implementation and launch of the winning tool. It may include hiring IT specialists, obtaining additional software, paying for a domain name and hosting at least for one-year period, getting access to the state registers and/or visual databases, etc.
* **Recruiting services of IT agency/company** based in the EaP countries or the EU Member States, depending on the needs and areas of activities of the winning project. The winning team prepares at least three proposals from IT companies (quotes and agencies’ experience in developing similar solutions) and submits to the project and Contracting Authority for final approval. The project provides a formal agreement to be signed with the IT company and the winner that identifies the roles and responsibilities for each party.

The financial support to the winner will be provided in line with the conditions specified in a standard contract. Next to the financial support, the TA team will provide the Award recipient with supervision, administrative support and assistance in promoting the developed ICT tool.

The TA team will monitor the development and launch of the winning ICT tool.

After completion, the Award recipient must submit a final report to demonstrate the results of the developed ICT tool. An outline of the report is presented in Annex A.

###### 10.1 Intellectual property rights and liabilities

Authors of the winning ideas of ICT tools keep intellectual property rights and subsequent liabilities with regards of the developed ICT solution, including the liability to observe international and national copyright laws.

The winners are obliged to support, maintain and update (if needed) the developed ICT tool for a period of not less than 3 years following its launch.

The winners are obliged to provide free and unimpeded access to the developed ICT tool to all citizens – final users of the solution.

###### 10.2 Visibility

The applicants must take all necessary steps to publicise the fact that the European Union has financed the development of the ICT tool.

Applicants must comply with the objectives and priorities and guarantee the visibility of the EU financing (see the Communication and Visibility Manual for EU external actions specified and published by the European Commission at <https://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/communication-and-visibility-manual-eu-external-actions_en>).

###### 10.3 ALUMNI NETWORK

TA team will invite alumni of 2018 EaP Civil Society Hackathon to join the EaP Civil Society Hackathon Network. Alumni will be encouraged to participate in the events organized by the project (for example, participation in Civil Society Fellowship programme), to contribute to a database of the alumni’s ideas of ICT tools for eDemocracy, take part in debates as speakers, elaboration of small common projects, info sessions.