



## GUIDELINES FOR HACKATHON APPLICANTS

Call for applications under

### 2026 EaP Civic Tech Hackathon

March – April 2026

Online & Offline

#### NOTICE

This is an open call for hackathon applications. Applications for the 2026 EaP Civic Tech Hackathon are accepted via the online application system at <https://ict.eapcivilsociety.eu/>. The deadline for the submission of applications is 23.00 (CET) on Monday, the 2<sup>nd</sup> of March 2026.

Please check the eligibility criteria before applying. When submitting their applications, the applicants must follow all instructions contained in the Guidelines and complete the online 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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## 1. Background

The European Union is committed to supporting civil society in Eastern Partnership (EaP) countries (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine) and as such channels part of its support through its **Eastern Partnership Civil Society Facility**. In coordination with a range of projects and programmes, the EaP Civil Society Facility project sets out to strengthen the role and increase the capacity of civil society organisations (CSOs) and activists in the Eastern Partnership to engage in policy-making processes and policy dialogue, promote reforms and public accountability, foster local democracy, local development, and engage citizens in public debate. The EaP Civil Society Facility was established in 2011, and the current phase of the project is for the period 2021 to 2028.

EaP Civil Society Hackathons were part of the EaP Civil Society Facility since 2017 and supported the development and launch of five civic tech<sup>1</sup> solutions. Civil Society Hackathons are competitions in which civil society activists, mentors, developers and designers meet to engage in collaborative coding and software development to develop digital solutions addressing societal challenges. Thus, Civil Society Hackathons provide the opportunities, the environment, mentoring, and technical and financial support to follow through with the development of the best ideas. Details about the digital solutions prototyped within the previous hackathons can be found on the Bank of IDEAS website (<https://ideas.eapcivilsociety.eu/>). Applicants are advised to review these digital solutions ideas to better understand what is possible within the programme and avoid unnecessary duplication.

## 2. Hackathon Objective

EaP Civic Tech Hackathons seek to unleash the potential of digital technologies to contribute to improved transparency and accountability in the EaP countries, as well as to address the concrete needs of communities, and/or lead to the improvement of public services.

**The 2026 EaP Civic Tech Hackathon** will bring together around 15 teams consisting of civil society activists from the EaP countries and technical experts (IT developers and graphic designers) from the EaP countries and EU Member States to work on new digital solutions addressing specific needs (challenges) in their home countries, in the EaP region or faced by EaP citizens living abroad, namely counteracting online disinformation & misinformation, tackling society polarisation, addressing the needs of refugees, IDPs & asylum-seekers, and advancing resilience of civil society<sup>2</sup>. The Hackathon winner(s) will receive financial and expert support from the European Union to develop and launch their civic tech solutions.

Participation in the EaP Hackathons is open to all citizens of EaP countries who demonstrate strong civic engagement and hands-on experience in civic initiatives, regardless of whether they have previously worked with a registered civil society organisation.

In addition, technical experts (IT developers and graphic designers) – citizens of the EU Member States are invited to join the 2026 EaP Civic Tech Hackathon as members of the Hackathon teams.

<sup>1</sup> Civic technology, or civic tech, are public, social or private initiatives that contribute to enhancing the citizens' power to act, facilitate public participation, increase the transparency of the public sector, and improve the delivery of services (usually by government) to the people. Source: <https://wesolve.app/exploring-civic-tech-and-gov-tech/>

<sup>2</sup> For detailed information on challenges please see Section 3 "2026 Hackathon Challenges"



Thus, the EaP Civil Society Facility seeks to engage young activists outside of traditional CSOs, and to build relations and stimulate cooperation between civilly minded people from EaP and the EU.

All applications to the Hackathon programme which match the eligibility requirements in Section 7 below and which are in line with the objective described above will be considered by the Selection Committee.

### 3. 2026 Hackathon Challenges

The 2026 EaP Civic Tech Hackathon is **focused on developing new digital solutions** that address one or more of the following societal challenges in the EaP countries or faced by EaP citizens living abroad:

- **Online disinformation & misinformation.** The European Union is tackling the spread of online disinformation and misinformation to ensure the protection of European values and democratic systems. While both disinformation and misinformation mean false or misleading content, disinformation is spread for economic or political gain, and misinformation is shared without harmful intent, though the effects can still be harmful. The spread of both disinformation and misinformation can have a range of harmful consequences, such as threatening democracy, polarising debates, and putting the people's health, security and environment at risk<sup>3</sup>.
- **Societal polarisation** refers to the growing separation of people and groups into opposing camps with little room for shared understanding or compromise. It often arises when complex issues are reduced to simple "us versus them" narratives, eroding trust, empathy, and cooperation across communities. Tackling polarisation requires promoting inclusive dialogue, encouraging collaboration across diverse groups, and supporting initiatives that build shared identities and common goals. By fostering spaces for respectful exchange and collective problem-solving, societies can rebuild social cohesion and resilience against division.
- **Civil society resilience.** The EU's latest 2025 Strategic Foresight Report<sup>4</sup> introduces the concept of "Resilience 2.0", shifting towards proactive and forward-looking resilience to navigate today's unpredictable global landscape. Within this Call, civil society resilience is viewed as the capacity of its entities, including organisations and networks, to '*stand ready to change whenever needed, staying ahead of the curve*' to be able to maintain their functions, values and legitimacy.
- **Forced displacement: refugees, internally displaced persons (IDPs) and asylum-seekers.** Every year, millions of people are forced to leave their homes due to conflict, violence, human rights violations, persecution, disasters, and the impact of climate change. As of April 2025, the number of forcibly displaced people in the world has reached a staggering 122 million, a number that nearly doubled in the last decade. Their survival depends on the availability of assistance provided by the authorities, local communities, and humanitarian organisations, and puts a strain on host communities and resources. Refugees and IDPs often face protection challenges and lack access to shelter, food, education, livelihood and other basic services. This can be a result of their fragile legal status in the countries where they are currently living. The most vulnerable people are often hard to reach, as they try to avoid violence, exploitation, abuse, detention or arrest. Thus, in urban areas, they struggle with poverty, lack of psychosocial support and various challenges in

<sup>3</sup> For more information on the EU policies on tackling online disinformation and misinformation, see <https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/policies/online-disinformation>.

<sup>4</sup> [https://commission.europa.eu/strategy-and-policy/strategic-foresight/2025-strategic-foresight-report\\_en](https://commission.europa.eu/strategy-and-policy/strategic-foresight/2025-strategic-foresight-report_en)



normalising their legal status. Violence, abuse, and exploitation against them (especially women and girls) often peak in the aftermath of new emergencies<sup>5</sup>.

#### 4. Hackathon Implementation

The 2026 EaP Civic Tech Hackathon will be held in a hybrid format. The working language of the Hackathon is English.

Applications to the 2026 EaP Civic Tech Hackathon are accepted **only from teams** with an idea of a civic tech solution and a minimum set of technical skills to prototype it. As a minimum, each hackathon team shall include:

- the author of the respective idea of civic tech solution (a civil society representative) who will act as the team leader and be fully responsible for the development process and the outcome,
- two or more IT professionals (developers, designers, data experts, etc.), including at least one developer (depending on the technical aspects of the proposed solution).

There is no top ceiling on the number of members of a hackathon team. However, the organisers will be able to **cover the travel and accommodation for a maximum of 3 persons per team** to participate in the 2026 Hackathon; the rest of the team members can work on the ideas remotely. The teams that want to apply for the Hackathon but need to strengthen the team may contact the Hackathon organisers at [ict@eapcivilsociety.eu](mailto:ict@eapcivilsociety.eu) for referral to potential team members before submitting the application.

In exceptional cases, if the author of the idea of a civic tech solution has the technical skills needed to work on the prototype, the team may have only 2 team members.

The 2026 EaP Civic Tech Hackathon has the following stages:

- The Online Incubation Programme (19 March – 3 April 2026)
- The EaP Civic Tech Hackathon in Chisinau, Moldova (17-19 April 2026)
- The EaP Civic Tech Award (May-June 2026)

##### Stage 1: Online Incubation Programme

The 2026 EaP Civic Tech Hackathon starts with the Online Incubation Programme, an intensive 2.5-week online work of the Hackathon teams and mentors<sup>6</sup>. **The Incubation Programme will be held online from the 19<sup>th</sup> of March to the 3<sup>rd</sup> of April 2026 and will take up to 20 hours of participants' time.**

Around 15 ideas of civic tech solutions submitted within the open Call for Applications for the 2026 EaP Civic Tech Hackathon will be shortlisted by the Evaluation Committee to participate in the

<sup>5</sup> For more information on the forced displacement and the EU's policies and programmes, see [https://civil-protection-humanitarian-aid.ec.europa.eu/what/humanitarian-aid/forced-displacement\\_en](https://civil-protection-humanitarian-aid.ec.europa.eu/what/humanitarian-aid/forced-displacement_en). In addition, in April 2016, the European Commission adopted the Communication 'Lives in Dignity: from Aid-dependence to Self-reliance. Forced Displacement and Development', which presented a development-led approach to forced displacement that aims to harness the productive capacities of refugees and IDPs.

<sup>6</sup> Hackathon Mentors are experts and professionals with hands-on experience in civic tech and/or IT project management, who guide and advise the participants on finetuning their ideas and developing the prototypes.



Incubation Programme. The Evaluation Committee will strive for gender and country balance when selecting the participating ideas and teams.

During the Incubation Programme, the shortlisted teams will present their ideas to the mentors and organisers (the EaP Civil Society Facility project team), strengthen their skills in designing a civic tech project, and work individually with the mentors to improve and further develop their ideas.

The Online Incubation Programme will consist of the following activities, in which the civil society activists (authors) are required to participate:

- Introductory online meeting with the organisers, mentors and other participants.
- Online pitching day(s): the participants pitch their ideas to the Hackathon organisers, mentors and participants.
- At least three online capacity building events – webinars delivered by the mentors and/or guest speakers. These webinars aim to build participants' skills and capacities to implement civic tech projects, and cover such topics as product targeting, success stories and failure cases, good practices, pitching and presentation techniques, etc.
- At least three individual consultations with Hackathon mentors and the Hackathon Coordinator to refine and improve their ideas of civic tech solutions.
- Final preparation meeting with the Hackathon Coordinator.

Outside of individual consultations where teams and mentors may individually choose the online meeting platform, all online activities within the Incubation Programme will take place in ZOOM.

**Participation of the authors of the ideas in the Incubation Programme is compulsory;** participation of other team members (designers and/or developers) is desirable but not required. The organisers reserve the right to cancel any team's participation in the 2026 EaP Civic Tech Hackathon if the team fails to meaningfully engage in the Incubation Programme, in particular, fails to pitch their idea and/or misses more than 30% of the sessions, including individual consultations and webinars.

## Stage 2: EaP Civic Tech Hackathon

**The 2026 EaP Civic Tech Hackathon will be held from the 17<sup>th</sup> to the 19<sup>th</sup> of April 2026, in Chisinau, Moldova.** During this time, up to 15 teams will develop prototypes of their civic tech solutions. Hackathon mentors will support them through masterclasses and individual consultations.

The Hackathon participants will work in the same teams as they applied with and participated in the Online Incubation Programme:

- the author of the civic tech solution, who will act as the team leader and be fully responsible for the development process and the outcome, and
- technical experts (developers and/or graphic designers, depending on the technical aspects of the proposed solution).

On the final day of the Hackathon, the teams will present their prototypes to the Hackathon organisers, mentors and other participants. Each participant of the Hackathon evaluates all solutions with the exception of their own, using a 5-point scale, from 1 = very low quality to 5 = excellent. The Hackathon participants and the mentors will use the following criteria to evaluate the presented digital solutions:



1. relevance of the proposed civic tech solution to the challenges of the Hackathon;
2. feasibility of the proposed solution;
3. relevance of the proposed solution to the needs of the target group;
4. impact on the situation and the target group;
5. sustainability of the proposed solution.

Up to 5 top-scoring prototypes (3 by the participants' vote and 2 by the mentors' and organisers' vote) – the Hackathon finalists – will be nominated for the 2026 EaP Civic Tech Award, seeking to support the full-fledged development and launch of the best solution(s) proposed by the 2026 Hackathon participants.

### Stage 3: EaP Civic Tech Award

In May 2026, up to five nominees for the **2026 EaP Civic Tech Award** (the Hackathon finalists) will be invited to apply for the support within a Restricted Call for Applications and submit their applications with updated information on the proposed solutions, following work with mentors at the Hackathon, and detailed budgets.

An independent Selection Committee will select one or more ideas of civic tech solutions for full development and launch. Following approval of the European Commission, the decision of the Selection Committee and the EaP Civil Society Facility team on the winner(s) and the amount of the financial support to be awarded will be announced.

## 5. Cost of Participation

The cost of participation in the 2026 EaP Civic Tech Hackathon will be covered by the European Union and includes:

- If required, travel expenses for the Hackathon participants based outside of Chisinau: a return trip between the address specified in the application (an EU member state or an EaP country) and Chisinau, Moldova;
- hotel accommodations (maximum of 4 nights) for the Hackathon participants based outside of Chisinau, for the period of the 2026 EaP Civic Tech Hackathon (17-19 April 2026);
- meals for the period of the 2026 EaP Civic Tech Hackathon (17-19 April 2026);
- daily allowance for the Hackathon participants based outside of Chisinau for the period of the 2026 EaP Civic Tech Hackathon (17-19 April 2026).

## 6. Financial Support Available to Winner(s) of the EaP Civic Tech Award

The EaP Civil Society Facility team makes sure the winning digital solution(s) is(are) developed and launched and put into use for their purpose.

The expected average amount of support for a winner is EUR 10,000; on an exceptional basis, up to EUR 12,000 may be awarded. The type and amount of support for the winner(s) will be determined on a case-by-case basis depending on the needs, 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 of co-operation between the GDSI, the leader of the consortium implementing the EU-funded EaP Civil Society Facility, and the successful applicant.





In addition to the above-mentioned financial support, the winner(s) of the EaP Civic Tech Award will be provided with mentor and administrative support, and with assistance in promoting the developed civic tech solution.

## 7. Eligibility Criteria

Participation in the 2026 EaP Civic Tech Hackathon is open to all citizens and CSOs from the Eastern Partnership countries – **Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine**. Applications from grassroots activists and young professionals from across the region are encouraged.

In addition, IT professionals (developers and/or designers) who are nationals of EU Member States may participate in the 2026 EaP Civic Tech Hackathon by joining the teams and developing civic tech solutions.

There are three sets of eligibility criteria:

### 7.1 Eligibility of applicants from civil society (authors of civic tech solutions)

To be eligible for the 2026 EaP Civic Tech Hackathon, the applicant must:

- be a natural person;
- be a national of one of the Eastern Partnership countries (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine);
- be above 18 years old;
- have a proven track record of civic engagement, for example, of working (including by volunteering) in a CSO, groups of civil activists or taking an active role in his/her community in at least one EaP country;
- have a good command of English;
- have not received the EaP Civic Tech Award<sup>7</sup> in the past;
- assume responsibility and show commitment to the digital solution proposed, by gathering the team with the skills required to develop a prototype of the proposed solution.

Upon request of the organisers, shortlisted applicants should provide the following documents:

1. a copy of the passport or national identity card as proof of citizenship and age, or any other valid document proving the nationality and age of the applicant;
2. a letter of support from a relevant CSO, an activist group or a community organisation (if any).

### 7.2 Eligibility of the applicants' team members – developers and graphic designers

To be eligible for the 2026 EaP Civic Tech Hackathon, the applicants' team members must:

- be natural persons;
- be nationals of one of the Eastern Partnership (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine) or one of the EU Member States;
- be above 18 years old;
- have a proven track record of working experience as a UX/UI or graphic designer, and/or a software developer (web, mobile, frontend, backend, full stack, etc.).

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<sup>7</sup> Until 2023, the Award was known as the Digitalisation for Civil Society Award.



- have a good command of English.

Upon request of the organisers, the members of the shortlisted teams should provide the following documents:

1. a copy of the passport or national identity card as proof of citizenship and age, or any other valid document proving the nationality and age of the applicant;
2. examples of the team members' works (portfolios).

### 7.3 Eligibility of the ideas of civic tech solutions

As described in Section 3, the 2026 EaP Civic Tech Hackathon is **focused on developing new digital solutions** that address one or more of the following societal challenges in the EaP countries or faced by EaP citizens living abroad:

- Counteracting online disinformation & misinformation.
- Tackling society's polarisation.
- Advancing civil society resilience.
- Supporting refugees, internally displaced persons (IDPs) and asylum-seekers.

The proposed civic tech solutions **must target and be used by citizens of one or more EaP countries**.

On an indicative basis civic tech solutions proposed for the 2026 EaP Civic Tech Hackathon may include IT solutions that:

- enable citizens identify and/or act against online misinformation & disinformation;
- help citizens meaningfully engage in policy- and decision-making, including at the community level, by enabling access to or simplifying their digital participation, feedback and dialogue;
- foster collaboration between communities;
- improve CSOs' security and adaptability and/or organisational transparency by enhancing their communication, data protection, fundraising and management tools;
- support CSOs in providing services to citizens;
- capacitate communities and organisations to engage and motivate citizens, stakeholders and allies for a specific development need or cause.

The proposed solutions may cover any or several of the specific areas above. Examples of the solutions previously supported by the EaP Civil Society Facility project can be found at <https://eapcivilsociety.eu/hackathons/eap-civic-tech-award>.

Civic tech solutions participating in the EaP Civic Tech Hackathon shall foresee strong 'user-system' interaction. Technically, such solutions may be implemented as:

- web applications (blogs, websites, web-platforms, interactive maps, etc.);
- mobile applications;
- desktop application;
- plugins and widgets;
- SMS-based solutions.

The proposed digital solutions should be technically feasible, sustainable, and realistically implemented within 6 months and an expected average budget of EUR 10,000 (on an exceptional basis, up to EUR 12,000 may be awarded).





All digital solutions supported under the EaP Hackathon programme shall be designed and implemented in accordance with the 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/sexual orientation minorities, persons with disabilities, children or internally displaced persons, wherever these issues are of particular relevance.

All digital solutions supported under the EaP Hackathon programme should respect the principles of data privacy and data protection as detailed below. Supported solutions should under no circumstances and in no shape or form include any direct or indirect monetisation of personal data.

- Consent and transparency: Clear and transparent explanations should be provided on how user data will be used, shared, stored, and for what purposes.
- Purpose limitation: Data collected should only be used for the specific purposes communicated to users, and should not be repurposed without further consent.
- Data minimisation: Prototyped solutions should collect and process only the minimum amount of personal data necessary for achieving the defined goals. Any unnecessary collection or processing of personal data should be avoided.
- Anonymisation and pseudonymisation: Personal data should be anonymised or pseudonymised whenever possible to protect the privacy of individuals.
- Data security: Teams should implement appropriate and best-practice technical and organisational measures to safeguard the collected data against unauthorised access, loss, or theft. This may include encryption, secure storage, access controls, and regular security assessments.
- Data retention and deletion: Clear policies and timelines should be established for retaining personal data. Data should only be kept for as long as necessary and should be securely deleted or anonymised after the defined period expires.
- Third-party data sharing: Prototyped solutions should not share personal data with third parties without obtaining explicit consent, unless required by applicable laws. Data sharing agreements with third parties should be in place to ensure compliance with privacy standards.
- Compliance with applicable laws: Prototyped platforms should comply with relevant data protection and privacy laws and regulations, such as the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

### Ineligible digital solutions

The following types of digital solutions are ineligible:

- digital solutions that have already been developed and launched;
- pure information (news) websites and pages, with little or no 'user-system' interaction;
- pure for-profit (commercial) IT products, with little or no social value;
- the websites and platforms of individual organisations, institutions, communities, projects, groups, etc., and/or networks of such organisations;
- IT tools supporting political parties or candidates;
- IT tools aiming to proselytise (i.e., the attempt of any religion or religious individuals to convert people to their beliefs).

### Number of applications per applicant

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



## 8. How to Apply and the Procedures to Follow

To apply for the 2026 EaP Civic Tech Hackathon, the applicants need to:

1. Check the eligibility criteria.
2. Collect all necessary supporting documents as described above.
3. Fill in the online application form at <http://ict.eapcivilsociety.eu/> and submit it before 23.00 (CET) on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of March 2026.

In order to build long-term partnership and cooperation between civil society and IT communities in the EaP region, applicants for the 2026 EaP Civic Tech Hackathon are encouraged to apply in teams of 3 or more members that consist of a civil society activist (the author of the civic tech solution) and two or more developer and/or graphic designer responsible for the technical implementation of the proposed civic tech solution. In exceptional cases, if the author of the civic tech solution has the technical skills needed to work on the prototype, the team may have only 2 team members.

Applying with an idea of the civic tech solution for the 2026 EaP Civic Tech Hackathon, applicants need to describe the proposed solution in brief, indicating:

- the specific challenge(s) to be addressed and how the proposed IT solution will help solve it/them (proposed implementation mode);
- the main users of the proposed solution and how they will benefit from its launch;
- other IT products that tackle the same problem (if they exist) and the differences with the proposed solution;
- how the proposed IT solution will be maintained and updated in the future;
- team to work on the prototype of the civic tech solution during the Hackathon.

The author shall be in a position to start the development of the proposed digital solution no later than the 1<sup>st</sup> of July 2026, in case of being awarded the EaP Civic Tech Award.

Applications must be submitted in English in accordance with the instructions in the Hackathon application forms and the Guidelines for Hackathon Applicants. The organisers may provide interested applicants with the sample application upon request, 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 any supporting documents, if needed. For applicants who face difficulty making an online submission or are worried that this might put them at risk, please request an alternative submission mechanism by emailing [ict@eapcivilsociety.eu](mailto:ict@eapcivilsociety.eu) or [eapcivilsociety@protonmail.com](mailto:eapcivilsociety@protonmail.com).

Questions and requests may be sent by e-mail no later than two working days before the deadline for the submission of applications to [ict@eapcivilsociety.eu](mailto:ict@eapcivilsociety.eu) or [eapcivilsociety@protonmail.com](mailto:eapcivilsociety@protonmail.com).

To ensure the equal treatment of applicants, the Selection Committee cannot give a prior opinion on the eligibility of applicants or proposed digital solutions.

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



## 9. Evaluation and Selection of Applications

Applications will be examined and evaluated by the Hackathon Selection Committee with the possible assistance of external assessors. Once the Selection Committee has completed its work, the list of applicants to be invited to the 2026 EaP Civic Tech Hackathon is submitted for approval to the European Union (European Commission).

All applications will be assessed according to the following steps and criteria.

### 9.1 Administrative checks of the submitted applications

The following will be verified:

- Compliance with the submission deadline. If the deadline has not been met, the application will automatically be rejected.
- Compliance with the eligibility criteria. If the applicant and/or the proposed idea for a digital solution do not meet the eligibility criteria stated in Section 7, the application will be rejected on this sole basis.
- All requested information and supporting documents (if relevant) 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 further evaluated.

### 9.2 Evaluation of the applications with the ideas of civic tech solutions

The quality of the applications, including the proposed IT solution and the capacity of the applicant, will be evaluated using the evaluation criteria in the evaluation grid below.

The Evaluation Committee will assess the applicants' (authors') motivation as well as their 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 digital solution;
- have management capacity and professional competencies to develop the proposed digital solution and maintain it throughout the proposed action, if needed.

Applicants can proceed to the next stage of the evaluation only if they fulfil the requirements above.

The Selection Committee will use the following criteria for assessing the proposed ideas of civic tech solutions:

- the proposed solution addresses one or more of the challenges as described in Section 3 and has a well-defined focus;
- the proposed solution is relevant to the needs and priorities of the targeted society / community;
- the proposed solution is likely to achieve the expected impact;
- the proposed solution is technically implementable and sustainable;



- the proposed solution is relevant for more than one country of the EaP region (multiplication effect).

The applications will receive an overall score out of 55 using the breakdown in the evaluation grid below. The evaluation will also check compliance with the instructions on the Civic Tech Solution Proposal, which can be found in Section 7 of the Guidelines.

The evaluation criteria are divided into headings and subheadings. Except for subheading 1.4, each subheading will be given a score between 0 and 5 as follows: 0 = no valid response / no relevance; 1 = very poor; 2 = poor; 3 = adequate; 4 = good; 5 = very good.

Subheading	Scores	
<b>1. Relevance of the digital solution</b>	<b>Sub-score</b>	<b>25</b>
1.1 How relevant is the proposed solution to the objectives and priorities of the Call?	5*2	
1.2 How relevant is the proposed solution to the needs of the targeted society / community?	5*2	
1.3 How clearly defined and strategically chosen are the specific needs / problems to be addressed?	5	
<b>2. Effectiveness and feasibility of the digital solution</b>	<b>Sub-score</b>	<b>20</b>
2.1 Is the proposed solution consistent with the objectives and expected results?	5*2	
2.2 Is the proposed solution implementable in technical terms?	5*2	
<b>3. Sustainability of the digital solution</b>	<b>Sub-score</b>	<b>10</b>
3.1 Is the proposed solution likely to have multiplier effects? (including scope for further development, expansion and replication)	5	
3.2 Is the proposed solution sustainable? (1) Financially (How will it be financed / maintained after the funding ends?) (2) Institutionally (Will structures allowing the IT product to function be in place after the initial launch? Will there be local 'ownership' of the developed IT product?) (3) At policy level (Is there a legislative framework in place to ensure the effective utilisation of the proposed solution, etc.?)	5	
TOTAL SCORE		55

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

The Selection Committee will shortlist around 15 best-scoring applications, striving for the representation of at least 3 ideas of digital solutions from each EaP country, and for gender balance. The shortlisted participants will be informed by email of the evaluation results and invited to join the Online Incubation Programme.

## 10. Implementation of the Winning Civic Tech Solution(s)

Authors of the civic tech solutions nominated for the 2026 EaP Civic Tech Award (2026 Hackathon finalists) will be invited to submit full applications, including the proposed budget, for the development and launch of the proposed IT products. Based on the applications received, an independent Selection Committee will select one or more winning digital solution(s) – recipient(s) of the Award.

The winner(s) will receive support from the EU through its EaP Civil Society Facility project for the full-fledged development of the proposed civic tech solution until the launch of the developed IT product.



The expected average amount of support for a winner is EUR 10,000; on an exceptional basis, up to EUR 12,000 may be awarded.

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

- **Engagement of additional technical expertise** for those who lack the relevant capacities and human resources to fully implement the IT solution. The support will help to cover the expenses relevant to the full implementation and launch of the winning IT product. It may include hiring IT specialists, obtaining additional software, paying for a domain name and hosting for at least one year, getting access to the state registers and/or visual databases, etc.

or

- **Recruiting the services of an IT agency/company.** The winning team will be requested to collect at least three proposals from IT companies (quotes and agencies' experience in developing similar solutions) and submit them to the EaP Civil Society Facility project for final approval.

Financial support to the winner(s) will be provided in line with the conditions specified in a standard award agreement. Next to the financial support, the EaP Civil Society Facility team will provide each Award recipient with supervision, administrative support and assistance in promoting the developed digital solution.

The EaP Civil Society Facility team will monitor the development and launch of the winning solution(s).

After completion, each Award recipient must submit a final report (narrative and financial) to demonstrate the results of the developed digital solution. An outline of the report is presented in Annex C.

### 10.1 Intellectual property rights and liabilities

Authors of the winning ideas for digital solutions keep the intellectual property rights and subsequent liabilities with regard to the developed IT products, including the liability to observe international and national copyright laws.

The winner(s) is(are) obliged to support, maintain and update (if needed) the developed IT product for a period of not less than one year following its launch.

The Award recipients are obliged to provide free and unimpeded access to the developed IT products to all citizens – final users of the solutions, and to the source code of the IT products for civil society organisations from EaP countries, either by publishing it on an open-source platform, or by request.

### 10.2 Visibility

The Hackathon winners are expected to publicise the fact that the European Union has financed the development of the digital solution.

The winners must comply with the EU visibility rules (<https://international-partnerships.ec.europa.eu/knowledge-hub/communicating-and-raising-eu-visibility-guidance->



[external-actions\\_en](#)), as well as in any relevant country-specific communication and visibility guidelines (if applicable)<sup>8</sup>. They will receive support from the EaP Civil Society Facility project team in promoting their digital solutions.

### 10.3 Alumni network

The EaP Civil Society Facility team will invite the participants of the 2026 EaP Civic Tech Hackathon to join the informal EaP Hackathon Alumni network. The alumni will be encouraged to participate in the activities and events organised or supported by the project (for example, capacity building activities) and to contribute to a database of the alumni's ideas for civic tech solutions (<https://ideas.eapcivilsociety.eu/>). The winner(s) of the 2026 EaP Civic Tech Hackathon will also be invited to events organised by the EaP Civil Society Facility as participants and/or speakers.

## 11. Complaints

At any time during the process of applying for the EaP Civic Tech Hackathon, applicants may raise an issue or complaint. Complaints should be made in writing and submitted by email to the EaP Civil Society Facility team at [ict@eapcivilsociety.eu](mailto:ict@eapcivilsociety.eu) with the subject title 'complaint'. A response will be sent within 10 working days. If the complainant is not satisfied with the response, she/he may submit their complaint in letter form to the Selection Committee, which will discuss the matter with the representatives of the European Union and respond accordingly.

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<sup>8</sup> The reference to the relevant communication and visibility guidelines will be included in the award agreement.





## Annexes

### Annex A: Tentative Timetable of the 2026 EaP Civic Tech Hackathon

STEP	DATE	TIME
<b>Call for applications opens</b>	<b>9 February 2026</b>	-
Deadline to request clarifications on the Call	29 February 2026	18:00 CET
<b>Applications due</b>	<b>2 March 2026</b>	<b>23:00 CET</b>
Notification of shortlisted applicants	16 March 2026	
<b>Online Incubation Programme</b>	<b>19 March – 3 April 2026</b>	
<b>2026 EaP Civic Tech Hackathon</b>	<b>17-19 April 2026</b>	
Up to 5 top-scoring prototypes of civic tech solutions (Hackathon finalists) are nominated for the 2026 EaP Civic Tech Award	19 April 2026	-
<b>2026 EaP Civic Tech Award</b>	<b>May-June 2026</b>	
<b>Restricted Call for Applications among the Hackathon finalists opens</b>	<b>1 May 2026</b>	-
Deadline for requesting clarification	14 May 2026	18:00 CET
<b>Applications from the Hackathon finalists due</b>	<b>18 May 2026</b>	<b>18:00 CET</b>
Publication and notification of winners	By 15 June 2026	-
Successful applicant(s) signs the Award agreement	By 22 June 2026	-
<b>Development and launch of the winning civic tech solution(s) (IT product(s))</b>	July-December 2026	

*CET – Central European Time*

### Annex B: 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



## Annex C: Final Report Outline (submitted in English)

Agreement ID:

Award Recipient Name:

Action title:

Dates of Implementation:

Development studio (if applicable):

### Report Outline

- a) Executive Summary
- b) Objectives of the civic tech solution
- c) Major achievements, including the number of users of the developed civic tech solution and outreach
- d) Major challenges
- e) Follow-up & plans for further development and promotion of the civic tech solution among target users
- f) Recommendations and personal remarks.

Appendix: Financial report