

## **ORTAK – German-Turkish Initiative to Promote Municipal Expert Dialogue**

Under the German-Turkish Initiative to Promote Municipal Expert Dialogue (ORTAK), German and Turkish municipalities (cities, municipalities and rural districts) can apply for a grant in 2024 to promote development-driven expert dialogue, networking and cooperation projects. This initiative by Engagement Global's Service Agency Communities in One World is financed by Stiftung Mercator.

The offer is geared to German municipalities that already have a formal municipal twinning arrangement, an informal city friendship or a project partnership with a municipality in Turkey or that are intending to set up a new project partnership.

The aim of the initiative is to promote municipal knowledge sharing and to set up and consolidate municipal project partnerships. The funding will give German and Turkish municipalities an opportunity to deepen their knowledge of local public service delivery and local coexistence across a range of mutually relevant thematic areas and also to exchange their views and experience with each other (see below for priority areas).

The Service Agency will advise municipalities interested in this offer, and the subsequent grant recipients, with respect to the submission of project proposals, project implementation and reporting. In this context, the Service Agency will also offer an educational support programme (e.g. courses in regional studies and intercultural communication, thematically relevant upgrading and exchange events on the SDGs as well as networking meetings) and will initiate exchanges with other dedicated municipalities. The results of projects implemented with resources from the Special Fund, and the extent to which they have achieved their objectives, will be discussed and analysed in an Evaluation Workshop. The Service Agency recommends that municipalities participate in these measures.

Applicants do not have any legal entitlement to the award of funding. Award decisions will be based on the requirements laid out in this Call for Proposals. There are no plans for follow-on funding.

### **Call for Proposals 2024**

Grants under the Special Project Fund can be **up to EUR 25,000 per project (partial funding of up to 90% of total eligible expenditure with a 10% own contribution) with a term of up to 10,5 months**. German municipalities can use the grant to launch, establish and or consolidate partnership-based cooperation structures or to plan and implement small-scale development-oriented projects within the partnership.

### **Project topics and content**

Within the scope of the Special Project Fund, Engagement Global supports cooperation projects with training, strategy development, professionalisation, outreach work, networking and dialogue as well as with identifying solutions to joint challenges. The earmarked objectives are: strengthen municipal services of general interest; foster citizen participation in municipal decision-making processes and development projects; and contribute to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG).

Engagement Global and Stiftung Mercator particularly welcome cooperation projects on the following key topics:

- **Sustainable urban development** with a focus on environmental protection and on raising awareness for necessary climate protection and adaptation processes at municipal level, e.g. reducing resource consumption and waste, and promoting waste management and green neighbourhood development
- **Local approaches for raising societal participation and cohesion:**
  - Mediation in cases of dispute and conflict in the neighbourhood, conflicts between young and old, neighbourhood and housing, co-existence of and dialogue between various cultures and religions, municipally backed mediation in schools
  - Rollout of municipal conflict management mechanisms within the municipality and on an honorary basis as part of successful integration management
  - Measures to overcome individual and social trauma and to promote resilience, e.g. in connection with conflicts and natural disasters.
- **Strategies for, and examples of, local economic development** to overcome the impacts of the pandemic, municipal support for projects geared to the common good.

In addition, municipalities can submit applications for projects that relate to other areas of local public service delivery, citizen participation or SDG realisation. Preference is however given to projects with a concrete bearing on the above key topics.

Engagement Global and Stiftung Mercator expressly support networking between relevant actors and civil society (e.g. migrant organisations) in both municipalities. Projects that involve civil society organisations, science or business, and that advocate women's participation and contribute to gender equality, are targeted and desirable and thus will also be first in line for support.

### **Accompanying offer**

Municipalities supported by the Special Project Fund will also have the opportunity to access consultancy from relevant experts at no extra cost. These experts can advise the municipalities on the development and ongoing curation of dialogue processes and/or on specific topics in the jointly identified thematic areas of the expert dialogues. On request, the Service Agency Communities in One World assists the municipalities to identify suitable experts.

## **Formal guidelines for submitting a proposal**

Please note the following when planning and subsequently implementing your project:

### **1. Eligible applicants**

German municipalities are eligible to apply. The city districts for the Land of Berlin and the city-state of Hamburg are eligible to apply in their own right. The project partner is a municipality or a similar municipal association in the partner country Turkey.

### **Further information on the role of the applicant and the actors involved**

- The project being proposed must be planned and implemented jointly and on equal terms. Both municipalities/associations must expressly endorse the projects with their political goodwill. It must be guaranteed that the two sides will manage both the content and also financial aspects of the project. They will actively bring their municipal knowledge and experience to bear in the project.
- The German municipality maintains a partnership or friendship-based relationship with a municipality in Turkey. At the request of the German municipality, initial contacts with a municipality or a municipal association in Turkey can also be promoted.
- Project implementation allows equally for cooperation by German municipalities and their partner municipalities in Germany and abroad and for cooperation with the city partners of Turkish municipalities. In both scenarios, a German municipality acts as the applicant and grant recipient for the project. Project activities should mostly be implemented in Turkey and Germany.
- Within the scope of project activities, it is possible to cooperate with specialised and civil society organisations, e.g. local initiatives and groups, universities and academic institutions, chambers, and associations of businesses in Germany and Turkey. These are considered to be further project actors and will support the applicant and partner municipality in implementing the project. They also have specific project-related competences and, wherever possible, a local link to the applicant or the project partner. Responsibility for overall project steering and accountability is always entirely in the hands of the municipality submitting the proposal.
- The entire project is to be in compliance with local and national development plans. The project supports the goal of gender mainstreaming and is to be implemented in a conflict-sensitive manner.
- Special attention is to be given to the project's environmental, social and economic sustainability.

### **2. Activities eligible for funding**

Only projects that involve municipal development cooperation are eligible. The term 'municipal development cooperation' encompasses all the development funds employed and the measures taken by German municipalities both in Germany and in partner countries. Its purpose is to promote sustainable global development aligned with the common good, and help improve economic and social development in the Global South.

### Measures eligible for support in this context might be:

- Exchange of professional knowledge and experience, e.g.:
  - Trips dedicated to initiation and planning for a maximum of up to ten people per partner municipality: for the purpose of identifying and clarifying shared objectives and interests and for planning joint projects and further steps.
  - Dialogue and delegation trips for the purpose of implementing the cooperation project: Support only covers trips involving a maximum of up to 10 people per partner municipality who can prove their pro-active engagement in the project being promoted. Only those periods of travel that are proven to be fully dedicated to the respective dialogue activities are eligible for support.
  - Working meetings/project planning workshops forming part of the professional exchange in the German or partner municipality.
  - Specialist seminars and workshops in the German or partner municipality.
  - Expert assignments up to EUR 5,000 to support, strengthen and qualify the dialogue processes or to deliver thematically specific consultancy in the areas jointly identified in the expert dialogue.
  - Joined-up action: Support for networking, exchanges and cooperation by partner municipalities and by other stakeholders involved in the exchanges.
  - Work shadowing by staff from the partner municipality.
  
- **Training and other measures**
  - Materials in support of expert dialogue and to implement small pilot measures, e.g.
    - Development of technical/scientific studies along with concept and strategy design
    - Training and train-the-trainer formats
  - Smaller activities and measures relating to the key topics, e.g.
    - Piloting smaller-scale measures, e.g. to reduce garbage and waste and for municipally backed mediation in schools
    - Rollout of design measures for green neighbourhoods and district development
    - Establishment of municipal structures for improving local business development
    - Initiation and coordination of neighbourhood help schemes for risk groups
    - Initiation of intercultural offers
    - Establishment or further development of offers of help for dispute mediation and resolution
  - Awareness-raising measures and outreach work on the key topics in the partner municipalities, e.g.:
    - Measures and campaigns to sensitise the local population about the necessary environmental and climate protection processes
    - PR and education work concerning cooperation and its objectives, as well as the partner municipality/region
    - Cultural activities and events designed to raise awareness

N.B.: All of the above measures are eligible for support in an analogous and virtual format.

### Formal requirements

**Term:** Projects may not exceed a maximum term of 10,5 months. All projects submitted under this announcement must be completed by 15 November 2024. **Grant size:** Grants are between EUR 5,000 and a maximum of EUR 25,000.

### **Partial financing:**

- Support takes the form of partial financing, i.e. Engagement Global supports project activities by funding up to 90 percent of total eligible expenditure. The municipality submitting the application must make an own contribution of at least 10 percent of total expenditure. The own contribution can be made through own or third-party funding (e.g. own funding of partner municipality, project-related donations etc.). Non-cash inputs (ongoing expenditure, e.g. actual rental payments) only count towards the own contribution in individual duly substantiated cases.

### **Lump sum for administrative overheads:**

- A lump sum for administrative overheads (to cover the administrative costs incurred, e.g. a percentage for personnel, communication etc.) equivalent to a maximum of seven percent of total eligible expenditure (as shown in Engagement Global's form for the Cost and Financing Plan).

### **Use of funds:**

- Costs for accommodation, board and travel pursuant to the German Federal Travel Expenses Act (BRKG).
- Costs for external services, e.g. fees for experts, for small-scale studies, concepts and strategies, fees for translation and interpreter services during the trips and at workshops or fees for lecturing and moderator activities as part of the rollout of workshops and other events.
- Costs for materials and equipment, e.g. expenditure for print products (publications, information materials, flyers, posters etc.), consumer materials, office rent, hire charges, transport or technology
- Projects may not exceed a maximum term of 10,5 months.
- The funds should be used primarily in the partner country and/or in Germany. Please note that funding can also be used to support accompanying measures, such as networking and outreach work in Germany.
- Expenditure incurred in the course of results measurement is eligible in exceptional cases, provided that the results are forwarded to Engagement Global, and that the expenditure is duly proportionate to the total expenditure and is clearly justified. Engagement Global will decide whether these costs are eligible.
- Expenditure incurred for gender mainstreaming, e.g. gender analysis, is eligible.
- Human resources: It is not possible to finance HR positions in the municipality submitting the proposal. Fees paid to municipal staff members in Germany are also not eligible.
- Expenditure on local personnel in the partner country (including short-term training measures) is eligible, provided personnel is directly involved in project implementation. The personnel costs must be in line with local going rates, and be duly proportionate to total project expenditure.

### **Transfer of funds**

- The grant recipient may transfer funds onward to the project partner in the partner country in order to fulfil the purpose of the grant. In this case, a project agreement must be entered into in the form

of a civil law contract, in order to guarantee compliance with the requirements contractually agreed with Engagement Global. The grant recipient remains the responsible contractual partner of Engagement Global.

- Funds may be transferred on condition that the ultimate grant recipient operates in a public-benefit capacity or is a corporation under public law. Funds must be used for activities in the dedicated project whose implementation was agreed on in the onward funding agreement. The transferred funds are earmarked exclusively for operational activities. The above notwithstanding, responsibility for project steering always remains with the grant recipient. Local actors, i.e. initiatives and associations, cannot charge for their own services (personnel costs).
- The grant recipient may only forward funds to local actors participating in the project in Germany and in the partner country as ultimate grant recipients. More than one third of funding may only be forwarded if permission has been obtained from the funding agency.

### **Travel and safety**

- In the event of project-related travel, the grant recipient must ensure that, beforehand, the persons making the journeys obtain relevant information about the local laws and security situation, including any necessary health precautions, and that they take the necessary measures, such as vaccinations and the purchase of foreign travel insurance (health, accident and liability insurance). To ensure they are included in the German Embassy's crisis preparedness and response measures, the Service Agency Communities in One World recommends registering online at [ELEFAND Anmeldung \(diplo.de\)](https://www.diplo.de/EG/elefand) no later than 10 days prior to the outward journey.

### **Other requirements:**

- **Measuring success:** Only projects with a clearly defined and measurable project objective that can be achieved within the envisaged financial framework and timeframe are eligible for support. It must be possible to evaluate implementation results/measure success once the project is complete. At the end of the project, it is necessary to provide proof of the proper use of funds. Interim reports on the correct use of funding are required for projects that last for more than one year.
- Projects are to be as sustainable and climate-friendly as possible. Project sustainability beyond the dedicated project term must be guaranteed.
- Neither the grant recipient nor the project partners may directly or indirectly pursue or represent commercial interests of their own or of third parties as part of the measures (activities).

### **Application procedure**

Applications may be submitted **as of 01 January 2024 through to 15 September 2024 at the latest** in German or English using the appropriate forms. Please note that applications for the Special Fund should be submitted to EG at least **six weeks before the start of the planned measure** and the project duration should be completed by 15 November 2024 at the latest. The submitted proposal must be signed by the authorised signatory pursuant to your municipal code.

The proposals we receive will be evaluated in the order in which we receive them, on the basis of the requirements detailed in this Call for Proposals, using evaluation criteria and only supported if they have been found eligible.

To submit your proposal, please use the forms provided on Engagement Global's website.

We recommend benefitting of our counselling interview before submitting an application.

Please send your application documents by postal mail to:

Engagement Global gGmbH  
Service Agency Communities in One World  
Attn. ORTAK – German-Turkish Initiative to Promote Municipal Expert Dialogue  
Friedrich-Ebert-Allee 40  
53113 Bonn  
Germany

We also ask you to email them to [ortak.skew@engagement-global.de](mailto:ortak.skew@engagement-global.de).