

2025



Organisational Development Call for Proposals

Concept note and
guidelines for applicants

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FULL CONCEPT NOTE

Introduction

PeaceNexus' organisational development (OD) support targets organisations that have peacebuilding, social cohesion or conflict prevention at the core of their mandate. It is informed by our belief that if we help our partners strengthen core capacities related to strategic direction, governance, learning and adaptation, then they will achieve relevant, inclusive and sustainable contributions to the development of peaceful societies.

The majority of our OD partners are local, national or regional civil society organisation working towards peace in our focus regions of Central Asia, South East Asia, West Africa or the Western Balkans. With this 2025 International Partner Organisational Development Call, we wish to partner with a few international organisations and networks that have peacebuilding as their primary mandate and play an intermediary role to local actors in conflict-affected contexts, facilitating their access to international funding and policy forums as well as playing other enabling roles.

We are looking to support those that already have a track record of addressing the current transactional funding models to shift to more equitable, mutually accountable and adaptive partnerships with local peacebuilders. As the change required is systemic, we seek innovative leaders that can influence national or international policy and model locally-led peacebuilding, particularly in our focus regions.

Rationale

In an ever-more fragmented and polarised world, organisations working towards sustainable peace are more relevant than ever. At the same time, the growing expectations of donors, combined with the erosion of post-WWII norms, the resurgence of militarised security approaches, and shrinking civic space have made peacebuilding work more difficult, dangerous, and underfunded. Organisations with mandates rooted in social cohesion, conflict prevention, and transformative peacebuilding are being forced to adapt rapidly—often with limited human and financial resources—to remain effective and relevant.

Solidarity with local action and voices is at the core of most international peacebuilding organisations' mission. However, over time, many have been driven to prioritise donor agendas. This has led to a vertical, compliance-driven dynamic where local peacebuilders are too often reduced to implementers of externally designed programmes, rather than recognised as leaders and co-creators of peacebuilding strategies grounded in their lived realities. Funding modalities also mostly push international actors to compete, including for partnerships on the ground at the expense of local peacebuilders' agency.

The localisation agenda—anchored in the principle that those closest to conflict are best placed to lead its transformation—has gained broad support across the sector. Yet, despite growing recognition, structural barriers persist and progress is slow. While some donors are making strides to fund local organisations directly, most institutional donors continue to rely on intermediary organisations, especially in complex and fragile contexts. Unfortunately, few provide the enabling conditions—such as flexible funding modalities and governance frameworks—that allow intermediaries to build equitable, mutually accountable partnerships with local actors.

In this context, Peace Nexus' Organisational Development (OD) support is designed to support international organisations and networks in their efforts to play their intermediary role in a way that operationalises our long-standing beliefs that:

- It is those affected by conflict who are best placed to lead the way in building sustainable peace.
- In conflict-affected contexts, now increasingly restricted and dangerous for local activists, external actors can play a constructive role when role allocation is informed by joint analysis, mutual learning and on-going adaptation.

Concretely, this Call aims to help peacebuilding organisations that partner with local actors in at least five countries to **further adapt their organisational governance, processes and practices to build equitable partnerships** in dialogue with their partners, donors and other key stakeholders. The support can be requested either by an individual organisation or network (organisational development support), or by several organisations applying jointly so they collaborate rather than compete in the context(s) they share (operational collaboration support). We are looking to partner with those that are leading the way through innovative practice, so that others may follow and support.

We believe that these efforts to help reform and streamline the role of intermediaries are a necessary, if not sufficient, response to the changing context. They complement our organisational development support to local, national and regional peacebuilding actors in the regions we operate in, as well as our influencing efforts to have donors invest in peacebuilding and provide core and institutional strengthening, rather than project-based support.

What our support entails

We will provide selected partners with overall process accompaniment in the design, implementation and monitoring of their organisational change process and a small grant of up to 40,000 CHF to cover the external expertise and process-related costs, such as for meetings, travel and communication.

Please note that our grants do NOT cover operational costs nor salaries.

The duration of a support phase is approximately one year. In our experience, value-driven participatory organisational change requires sustained effort. We are committed to supporting our partners over time and therefore typically pursue our engagement through up to three phases of support. PeaceNexus' contribution is more than financial. As an engaged partner our support includes facilitating the initial assessment stage, which may unfold over several months, helping you set a vision for success and develop the roadmap to get there. We then assist you on implementation and monitoring as needed, notably in helping recruit and manage suitable external expertise. Please see details of our **Organisational Development** support here.

Our support may cover various dimensions, it is however meant to enable our partner play their intermediary role in a way that is more directly informed by their local partners' agency and realities. The organisational change process can have a strong internal focus on ensuring that the organisation's governance structures, policies and processes are aligned with its core values. It may also include a review of its partnership practices so as to have them better reflect its commitment to a mutually accountable and adaptive partnership model.

Our support for **Operational Collaboration** likewise includes a small grant and our accompaniment in issue analysis, participatory process design, joint roadmap development, implementation and monitoring. The focus will be to support the dialogue process, mapping it out to include the relevant stakeholders of the organisations involved in the most appropriate manner and providing facilitation support. It may include support to align respective practices and policies. See more details here.

For both types of support, the budget will be jointly developed with PeaceNexus to cover the costs directly associated with the change process such as external expertise or accompaniment and meeting costs. It cannot exceed 40,000 CHF per phase and care will be taken to ensure it remains a manageable process in terms of scope and workload for all parties involved.

Our partnership principles

- **Demand-led**, provided in response to our partner's request, and if selected, shaped by their needs and priorities with PeaceNexus playing an accompaniment role.
- **Participatory**, based on our partners' analysis of their challenges and vision for change, in a collectively owned process led by a cross-organisational committee.
- **Value-driven**, the change roadmap is to reflect our partners' core values, enabling them to better operationalise them in their governance, policies and practices.
- **Context-responsive**, the process is grounded in the realities of the context(s) in which our partners operate, aiming to have them be more adaptive and conflict-sensitive.
- **Transformational and flexible**, we facilitate regular reflection points to take stock of progress, adapt to new realities and move closer to desired change objectives.

Eligibility criteria

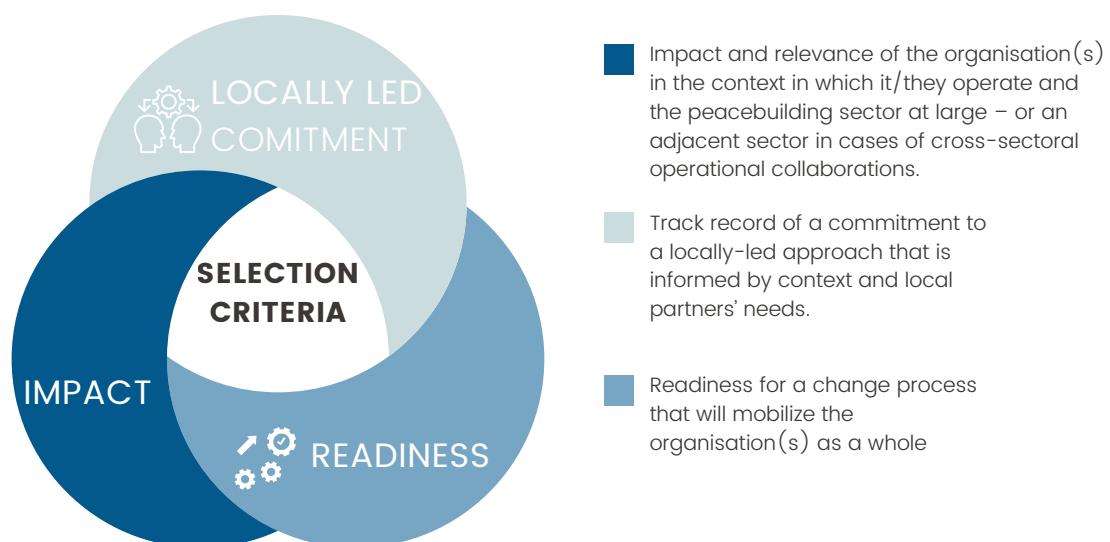
To be eligible for this Call, you need to have:

1. Peacebuilding, social cohesion or conflict prevention at the core of your mandate. We are not attached to language but look to support organisations that address the root causes of violent conflicts. If applying for operational collaboration support, at least one of the applicants must have a peacebuilding-centered mission.
2. International reach, defined as leading programmes in at least five different countries, preferably but not necessarily overlapping with our focus region of the Western Balkans, Central Asia, Myanmar/South East Asia and West Africa. If applying for operational collaboration support, the criteria must apply to the applicants' combined footprint.
3. Work in partnership with local actors in these countries, playing an intermediary role to facilitate their access to international funding and policy fora as well as other enabling roles.

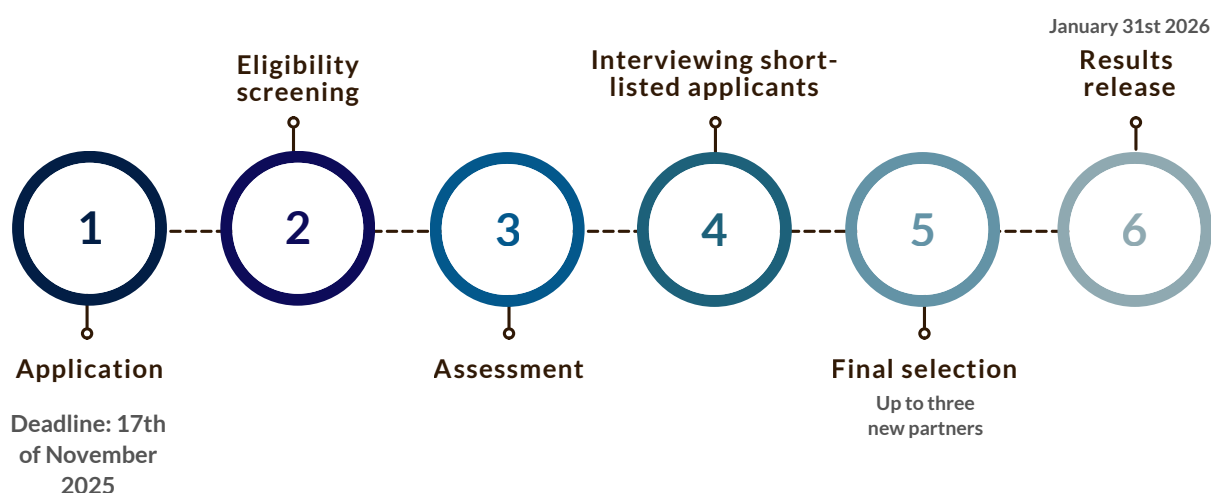
Additional criteria: due to legal constraints, we can only support activities that will not violate the USA PATRIOT Act (18 U. S. C. §2339B).

Selection criteria

All eligible applications will be assessed against the following selection criteria.



Selection steps



How to apply :

- Please download and fill the application form for either organisational development support or operational collaboration support– application to both is not accepted. While there will be an extensive consultation process as part of the kick-off, the application should reflect the views of the organisation(s) at large.
- Once your application is finalised, please :
 - 1.Fill in the general information webform - one per organisation in case you are applying for the Operational Collaboration support.
 - 2.Upload your application document at the end of the webform - for Operational Collaboration support, the answers to the second part of the applications will be the same for all applicants.
 - 3.Upload up to 5 background documents (for each applicant) that can help us better understand your organisation and the content of your application.
- You will be able to pause and come back to filling the online webform, via a link that will be sent to you. Once you confirm the submission of your application, you will receive an automated confirmation of reception.
- Please note that only complete applications can be considered. You may submit your application in English or French.
- The deadline for applications is Monday November 17. 2025 at noon (CET).

For any technical questions on the application process, please write to CH-trainee@peacenexus.org. For other information on the Call or our Organisational Development work more generally, please contact Carole Frampton, Organisational Development Lead at: carole.frampton@peacenexus.org