



## Guidelines for LGBTQI+ emergency community response fund

### What is a community-based emergency fund?

It is a fund managed by representatives of the LGBTQI+ community meant to provide a first and rapid response to basic needs of LGBTQI+ people and activists/HRDs who are victims of violence, harassment and discrimination, to decrease the risk while allowing them time to seek mentoring and advice regarding more structured alternatives and programmes. Instead of relying on external experts or evaluation committees of donors and funding institutions, the Fund is intended to be managed directly by community members and CSOs based on their proximity to the victims which can allow them to better identify and gather help requests, validate the cases and provide support.

### Structure of the funding mechanism

#### *Who is eligible?*

- Only individuals self-identifying as LGBTQI+ people.
- Persons facing an emergency due to their sexual orientation and gender identity or their activism in the field of LGBTQI+ issues.
- Priority shall be given to community members in consideration of the difficulty for them to access other emergency funds dedicated to HRDs.
- The emergency must be relevant, current, coherent, consistent, and credible.
- The emergency must be documented and assessed, and the person should be able to provide details about the situation of risk that he/she is currently facing:
  - If member of the LGBTQI+ community, the credibility of this risk can be supported by witnesses, close relatives/friends/people informed of the facts, letters, other actual evidence.
  - If an LGBTQI+ HRD, the applicant should be able to provide some records or reports regarding the activity as LGBTI activist (reports or records can include newspaper articles, personal records of trials or contact with the police, pictures, etc).
- Persons not benefitting from other grants for the same expenses.
- Persons who do not have access to other personal income or financial/material resources during the emergency period (credibility assessment should also investigate the inaccessibility of these resources).

#### *How to apply?*

- Victims are referred or directed to a local LGBTQI+ CSO to ask for assistance.
- The CSO will assist in the preparation of the application (Application Form – Annex 1).
- Attention requests and/or applications can be collected by CSOs through different contact channels (web forms, email, face to face, SMS, WhatsApp).
- The CSO that has collected the application shall conduct a verification process (Verification Report – Annex 2) before submitting their verification report to the Crisis Task Team.



### ***Who evaluates the verified applications?***

- The CSO managing the fund shall identify a minimum of 3 and maximum of 5 experienced members of known activists or experts to become part of an independent Crisis Task Team for the evaluation of the applications. An additional member can be indicated as substitute member in case there is need for a substitute in conflict-of-interest situations.
- The criteria for the identification of the suitable CTT members will be being an LGBTQI+ community member/activist or ally; credibility; experience in protection; portfolio of contacts and relationships with services and institutions able to support victims.
- The participation to the CTT is on a voluntary basis. The members of the Crisis Task Team are entitled to receive only an allowance as travel/communication reimbursement for their participation in the evaluation and verification of cases; no stipend or salary is allowed.

### ***How is the evaluation process carried out?***

- The evaluation should be focused on the credibility of the risk and the emergency and never on pure self-identification as an LGBTQI+ person.
- The members of the Crisis Task Team will respect the privacy of victims and always maintain confidentiality and integrity.
- The CTT will be guided by a list of guidelines aimed at uniformly evaluating applications (Guidelines for CTT Evaluation – Annex 5).
- Applications should be approved unanimously but they can also be approved with up to 1/3 of members abstaining from any decision. If a member opposes approval, a conflict resolution mechanism requiring a mandatory interview of the applicant and a deliberative session of the CTT thereafter. If the disagreement persists, the application will be rejected.
- If a member of the CTT is in any kind of conflict situation that can represent bias towards the applicant or impair a free and independent evaluation, the concerned member must declare it and abstain from participating in the evaluation session.
- In case of multiple applications submitted at the same time by members of the community and activists, those coming from members of the community will be screened and evaluated as first. In case of an eventual scarcity of funds, priority shall be given to applications submitted by members of the community.
- The Crisis Task Team will prepare an Evaluation Report to be submitted to the CSO that is managing the grant and, for information, also to the CSO that has submitted the case, if different (Evaluation Report – Annex 6). The CSO that is managing the fund will then inform the applicant and take further steps accordingly.

### ***How will the Crisis Task Team work?***

- An email address will be opened with access to the Crisis Task Team members that must be checked on daily basis.
- The email address will be circulated to all the LGBTQI+ CSOs in the country.
- A helpline may be used to reach LGBTQI+ people who are not connected to any CSOs. In this case the hotline shall be managed and hosted by a LGBTI CSO, that will be in charge of collecting the applications or directing the person to the closest group or organisation.

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- A WhatsApp group among the Crisis Task Team members will be created.
  - The Committee will nominate a chairperson to organise meetings. The Chairperson can rotate on a periodical basis.
  - The Committee will have fixed periodical meetings (monthly remote meetings and quarterly physical meetings) and emergency meetings when needed.
  - The CTT will refer and report to the CSO managing the fund.
  - The duration of the roles shall be determined in advance (e.g., for a period of 6 months).

#### ***What emergency situations and expenses do the support cover?***

Eligible expenses should be those specifically and typically connected to the very basic needs in emergency situations which requires immediate and short-term assistance, such as:

- Temporary relocation;
- Travelling;
- Administrative documents fees or taxes, including police and lawyers' fees for immediate action, related to the emergency;
- Passport renewal, visa and/or residence permit fees if the person has to flee;
- Communication and digital security enhancing mechanisms, systems or apparatus (including new hardware/software, phone cards, mobiles);
- Food and first aid/relief cash in case of homelessness and basic monetary support in case of critical financial insecurity (clothes, food);
- Costs connected to treatment including for long-term treatment of chronic diseases that cannot be suspended/interrupted because of the emergency;
- Unexpected urgent medical expenses during the emergency/relocation period;
- Psychological support and counselling, especially post trauma.

#### ***When and for how long can a person benefit from the fund?***

- The CSO must take charge of the request within 12 hours from receiving the application;
- The Crisis Task Team must take a decision within 48 hours of receiving the verified application from the CSO;
- The disbursement of funds must be done within 2 weeks from the approval, depending on the urgency of the situation indicated by the Crisis Task Team;
- The funds can be disbursed and used by the applicant up to a maximum of 3 months.

#### ***Restrictions to funding support***

- The fund does not cover families or groups.
- The fund is not intended as a grant dedicated for activism.
- The fund generally does not cover long-term or chronic situations of need, such as legal expenses for long-term legal actions, ordinary medical assistance not linked or needed in relation to the emergency.
- Trainings and meetings fees and related travels, financial/economic support to the family, advocacy missions abroad and conference attendance, income generating activities.

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- Restrictions should consider if other funding or support is available in the area to cover certain expenses.

#### *How will the funding be distributed?*

- After approval of the application by the Crisis Task Team, recommendation on costs needed and duration of the grant, the CSO managing the fund will be in charge of quantifying the support according to pre-defined and approved limits for each type of cost and fixed costs for standard needs (List of costs - annex 6).
- If the Crisis Task Team indicates in the evaluation report an item that is not listed in the table, the finance officer will quantify the cost and add it to the List of costs.
- The CSO managing the fund will then complete a check list with the quantity and frequency for each item entitled to the granted beneficiary, according to fixed costs per item or the best cost/benefit solution, possibly based on quotations, within fixed maximum amounts. The disbursement is made upon the validation of the Check list by a double signature in the CSO (Check list - annex 9).
- The Service Provider CSO can disburse the funds in periodic tranches/single payment depending on the situation. In the situation of the beneficiary needs several weeks of assistance the advance will have to be considered in several tranches (maximum monthly) to avoid the risk of not recovering the documentation or to adjust the grant to developments of the situation.
  - A reference person within the CSO managing the fund will be appointed to follow up with and take care of the victim and collecting the proper documentation. The reference person in the CSO managing the fund will do a follow-up report to the CTT if anything must be changed and a final report at conclusion of the case.
  - Payments done directly by the Service Provider CSO are highly recommended.
  - Payments done by the Partner CSO:
    - All sources of justification must be prepared, collected, and kept by the Service Provider CSO. The receipts, invoices, delivery notes and any other proof of payments/deliveries will be under the name of the CSO to protect the beneficiary.
  - Payments done by the beneficiary:
    - If direct payments by the CSO are impossible, an advance will be given to the applicant, against proof of reception. The applicant will have to collect and keep all sources of justification. In case for minimal expenditures without receipts, a declaration of honour explaining the missing receipts will be requested.
- Once the purchases are done, an acknowledgement of reception of the items/service will be signed by the beneficiary (Delivery Note – Annex 9).

#### *Follow-up*

- If there are developments in the case, a follow-up application form (with the same case number) will be completed by the Service Provider CSO and transmitted to the Crisis Task Team for approval, indicating the new needs and recommended assistance. The Team will compile and transmit back a new evaluation report with approval or dismissal of the assistance required.



- At conclusion of the case, a final report (annex 7) will be submitted by the CSO managing the fund to the Crisis Task Team for co-signature.
- The CSO managing the fund will need to keep records filed for each case number, comprising:
  - Application form (signed)
  - CSO Verification form (signed) and supporting docs
  - CTT Evaluation Report (signed)
  - Check List (signed)
  - Delivery note (signed)
  - Follow-up reports
  - Receipts/invoices for the amount disbursed
  - Final report (signed by CSOs and CTT Chairperson)