Procedures Manual for Partners
Swedish Partnership Programme

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Introduction

The Swedish Partnership Programme Procedures Manual, the Swedish Partnership Programme Guide and the Application and Reporting Templates are the documents that all organisations need to read before applying to the programme. While the Programme Guide explains the Swedish Partnership Programme’s principles and approach, this manual outlines the practical details your organisation must know to apply, implement, and report your initiative.

Please note that this manual is continuously updated. You should always read the manual online on ForumCiv’s website to ensure that you have the latest information. Do not download or copy the manual, neither fully nor partly to avoid missing updates. The date on the front page indicates the date of the latest update. Significant updates or changes to the programme are always communicated via email to the Swedish organisation’s assigned contact person for ongoing initiatives.

Info on ForumCiv’s website

You will find basic information about the Swedish Partnership Programme on ForumCiv’s website Swedish Partnership Programme | ForumCiv. This is where you will find information on upcoming application windows and important updates and news about the programme. Significant updates or changes to the programme are always communicated via email to organisations’ assigned contact persons for ongoing initiatives.

Forms and templates

You will find the latest updated agreement documents, forms and templates on ForumCiv’s website Forms and templates | ForumCiv. Always visit the website to ensure that you are using the latest versions of the documents. Previous versions will not be accepted by ForumCiv.

The Organisation portal

ForumCiv’s Organisation Portal ForumCiv | Organisation Portal | Start is where you start to apply for Membership and the Eligibility to apply to ForumCiv. If approved, this is where you manage your applications, initiatives and reports and submit all relevant documents. The portal is also where you handle your organisation’s profile, contact persons etc. and upload your latest organisation documents. Note that you must create an account to use to the Organisation portal. Details of how to do this are available on the webpage.

Contact

For any issues, you should contact your Programme Officer. If you do not have a Programme Officer, contact sokabidrag@forumciv.org. For technical support regarding the portal, contact portalsupport@forumciv.org.

Complaints

Grant decisions cannot be appealed. An applicant organisation may, however, lodge a complaint about how its application has been handled. Together with overall feedback, complaints should be directed to feedback@forumciv.org which is ForumCiv’s complaint and response system.

Whistleblowing

If you encounter or suspect misconduct you are encouraged to use ForumCiv’s whistleblowing. If you wish to report to an external body, outside ForumCiv, you can use Sida’s Whistleblowing.
Please consider the programme cycle when planning your initiative. The different boxes above show the deadlines for when to submit an application for an initiative and when you can expect a decision; the periods you can expect funds to be paid out to your organisation from ForumCiv; and lastly when you need to submit annual and final reports. Note that submitting reports is a condition for receiving future payments and for applications to be approved.
Before applying for an initiative

Before you apply for funding to SPP, please look through the requirement areas below.

1. Are you eligible to apply for funds?

The Swedish organisation must pass ForumCiv’s eligibility assessment to apply for funds. This assessment has the purpose of ensuring that your organisation fulfils the basic requirements to apply for funds from SPP.

An eligibility assessment is needed:

- if you are applying for initiatives for the first time.
- if more than three years has passed since your latest eligibility assessment.
- If more than three years has passed since the end date of your last implemented SPP initiative.

**Eligibility requirements**

The organisation:

- Have existed for at least two financial years for which the annual reports have been presented and the board have been given discharge.
- Is active as an organisation in Sweden with an adequate member base.
- Have a rights-based approach which is demonstrated in their partnerships, activities and outreach.
- Have an existing partnership with a local partner organisation in the country where the initiative will take place.
- Have the necessary financial stability and capacity to implement and report an SPP initiative without risking the independence or sustainability of the organisation.
- Does not have any significant compliance issues from previous projects.
- Is not a Sida Strategic Partner Organisation.
- Is not a member of or receive grant from another Sida Strategic Partner Organisation.
- Is not an economic association or a company.

You can apply for eligibility at any time during the year by submitting the form “Membership/eligibility application for Swedish organizations” via the Organisation Portal: [ForumCiv | Organisation Portal](#). If applicable, you can apply for membership to ForumCiv in the same application. Note that you need to first create an account.

It takes up to 3 months to get a response on an application if it is complete. Be sure to send in the required documents in due time before the application window you plan to apply for.

Contact sokabidrag@forumciv.org for any questions about this process.

2. Are you a member of ForumCiv?

Organisations that are funded by SPP must be a member of ForumCiv. That means that organisations can submit an application before being a member. If the application is granted, the organisation must be accepted as a member in ForumCiv before a grant agreement can be signed.
It is important that an organisation understand whether it can fulfil the requirements for ForumCiv membership and stand behind ForumCiv’s statutes and policy platform.

Membership requirements

The organisation:

- Is a registered non-profit organisation (ideell förening) or a foundation (stiftelse) in Sweden.
- Is based in Sweden.
- Is non-governmental.
- Is democratically governed, follow proper organisational practice and gives all members the ability to influence the organisation.
- Have non-profit goals.
- Promote democratic development and human rights.
- Stand behind ForumCiv’s statutes and policy platform.
- Have existed for at least one financial year for which the annual reports have been presented and the board have been given discharge.

Please note that a membership is not a guarantee for receiving funding.

You can apply for eligibility at any time during the year by submitting the form “Membership/eligibility application for Swedish organizations” via the Organisation Portal: [ForumCiv | Organisation Portal | Start](#). If applicable, you can apply for membership to ForumCiv in the same application. Note that you need to first create an account.

It takes up to 3 months to get a response on an application if it is complete. Be sure to send in the required documents in due time before the application window you plan to apply for.

Contact sokabidrag@forumciv.org for any questions about this process.

3. Is your initiative relevant for the Swedish Partnership Programme?

SPP grants funds that strengthen partnerships between Swedish and local civil society organisations abroad (in a DAC country) who organise to demand democracy, accountability, equality, and human rights for all.

For your initiative to meet SPP’s formal relevance requirements it should:

- Be aligned with SPP’s Theory of Change and principles (see SPP Programme Guide).
- Contribute to the Swedish Government’s strategy for support via Swedish civil society.
- Have a Rights-Based Approach.
- Be planned and implemented by a partnership between a Swedish and local organisation(s).
- Be implemented in an Official Development Assistance recipient country.

Service delivery and Rights Based Approach

Achieving structural change requires engaging in awareness-raising, mobilisation, and advocacy. However, in some context it may also be necessary to initially provide certain services to strengthen people’s collective capacity. Taking the rights-based approach into account, it is possible to receive a
limited amount of funds for service delivery. Such initiative will be assessed on a case-by-case basis where the relevance of information asked for depend on the context, partnership, and initiative. If you consider applying for funding to service delivery, consider the following questions:

- Is the overall approach in the partnership and this initiative rights-based and connected to SPP’s theory of change?
- Is the service delivery a means to contribute to the rights-based partnership and initiative? Is it sustainable?
- Is the service delivery addressing an immediate need? Is meeting this need necessary for collective action to be possible?
- Can the service delivery be funded by a local public entity instead?
- Is there a plan for how to systematically manage the service delivery?
- Is there a risk that the service delivery cause harm? Is there a risk that it creates or exacerbate tensions between groups taking part of the service, and those that do not?
- Is there a clear, strategic, and realistic plan for how to phase-out the service delivery?

4. Is your partnership relevant for the Swedish Partnership Programme?

Local organisation

Together with Swedish partners, SPP aims to support independent and democratically governed local organisations that stand behind ForumCiv’s values. For this purpose, the local organisation must fulfil these basic requirements:

- The governance and management are local and independent from the Swedish organisation (any organisational support from must happen outside of the governing structure).
- The organisation is not created by the Swedish organisation.
- The organisation can manage its capacity and financing operations without support from the Swedish organisation.
- The organisation stands behind ForumCiv’s values.
- The organisation does not advocate violence in any way or form.

This also applies to umbrella organisations that you might cooperate with.

Please note that a local organisation must be legal entities to be formal parties to the agreement with the Swedish organisation. Whether this requires the local organisation to be formally registered will differ depend on the country of operation.

**Local organisation receiving support from several Swedish organisations or donors**

ForumCiv is restrictive in assessing applications that implies that the local organisation will receive funding from several Swedish organisations or donors. In these cases, the Swedish and local organisations should contact ForumCiv before applying and motivate the need and added value of the partnership set-up and describe how the support will be coordinated and harmonised (incl. an analysis of the administrative burden for the local partner organisation).

If ForumCiv assess that that the added value and/or coordination and harmonisation is not relevant or effective, a joint application may still be submitted that involve the Swedish organisations wanting to support the same local organisation. Such an application requires that one of the Swedish organisations is the main responsible party.
Partnership

SPP seeks to support a diverse range of civil society organisations that vary in size, capacity, and thematic focus. However, while considering this diversity, the following criteria need to be fulfilled for your partnership:

- The development work is led by civil society actors, with a strong local ownership.
- The development work contributes to the long-term goals/strategy of the local organisation.
- The development work strengthens the civil society in one or more ways.
- The development work strengthens human rights.
- The development work has long-term goals for structural change.
- The development work engages in awareness-raising, mobilisation, and advocacy.
- The development work within a partnership continuously progresses, evolves and builds on results and learnings to better achieve structural change, with consideration to the opportunities and limitations of the context.

Informal actors (social movements, networks, human rights activists etc.)

In SPP, informal actors are defined from other civil society actors based on their more loosely organised characteristics and non-legal/registered status. The latter often excludes such actors from entering into agreements, owning assets and from holding legal protection and liabilities. This distinction is important to emphasise as it stops informal actors from managing ForumCiv grants themselves.

Support to informal actors is possible in SPP. For them to be operational and leverage their status as informal, a local partner organisation must take formal responsibility for managing the funds and meeting the agreement requirements. This includes both taking charge of the bookkeeping, monitoring, coordinating the reporting process, etc.

Although informal actors take responsibility of implementing activities, they are inherently not official agreement partner due to the reasons above. Still, actors and organisations should sign an MOU to clarify the roles and responsibilities in their partnership and set down potential ground rules.

Applying for an initiative

If the Swedish and local organisation(s) meets the requirement areas above, you are welcome to apply to SPP. An important step to start is looking at what funding modality that is suitable for your partnership and your goals of the initiative.

Funding modalities

The SPP has three different funding modalities. The basic conditions and requirements are outlined below. You can read more about the modalities in the Swedish Partnership Programme Guide.

There is no funding ladder within the programme where organisations automatically can apply for higher funding after a completed initiative. Instead, the amount recommended or granted is closely connected to the capacity of the Swedish organisation and previously implemented initiatives. This
implies that the recommended or granted amount can remain the same across several implemented initiatives.

**Partnership Pilot Funding (PPF)**

The main purposes of the Partnership Pilot Funding are to strengthen the strategic work of the local organisation, to set strategic goals for the partnership, and to plan for a joint development initiative.

To be able to apply for this modality, the applying partners must already have an established partnership. The minimum requirement is that there has been a form of previous collaboration, from which the partners have gotten to know each other well and have established a relationship of trust and transparency. As with all funding modalities, applying partners have a responsibility to assess the level of risk in entering into an agreement together.

**Conditions for Partnership Pilot Funding:**

- Max 300,000 SEK per Swedish organisation.
- Implementation period is maximum 18 months and depend on application window and alignment with following window.
- The applying organisations must have an existing partnership.
- The Swedish organisation’s budget can exceed the 25%-limit (see “Application guidelines”).
- Audit as per ForumCiv’s instructions is required.

**Medium Partnership Funding (MPF)**

Medium Partnership Funding is recommended for organisations that have conducted a Partnership Pilot Funding, a previous SPP pre-study or initiative, or first-time applicants that have carried out development initiatives with local organisations.

MPF’s main aim is to support the local organisation’s long-term goal and provide as much flexibility as possible for partners. This is done by:

- Adjusting the level of details in the agreement budget and the operational plan to increase the organisations ability to making changes during implementation without ForumCiv’s approval. The level of detail is based on ForumCiv’s assessment of the application, the organisations’ respective systems and routines and any prior experience of the partners.
- Adapting broader application and reporting guidelines with focus on areas of interest instead of strict requirements will hopefully give partners increased possibility to use or adapt already existing material and reports.

Flexibility will hopefully allow local organisations to pursue their own set of priorities and plans, and to implement the strategies and approaches they themselves have defined according to their vision and mission. This also provides conditions to strengthen organisational systems, processes, and internal legitimacy and when applied correctly, to reduce administrative workload according to different donor requirements. This transition requires strengthened systems, increased transparency, and trust between partners, and between partners and ForumCiv. This will also provide an opportunity to make a shift in the dialogue between the partner organisations and ForumCiv from more detailed discussions on agreement level to discussions and collaboration on a more overall, strategic level.

**Conditions for Medium Partnership Funding**

- Max 3 MSEK/year per Swedish organisation, including any parallel PPF.
- Max 3 years implementation period.
• A Swedish organisation can only have one ongoing MPF at a time.
• Several local organisations can be included in one MPF.
  o Note that Swedish organisations that have not previously worked with multiple local organisations but want to include several partnerships will be assessed accordingly by ForumCiv and should be ready to demonstrate capacity in that regard.
  o New partnerships may be included in an ongoing MPF after dialogue and approval from ForumCiv. Note that this does not change the granted amount for the MPF.
• ForumCiv will assess the local organisation(s) in the application.
• The flexibility should be extended to the local organisation as much as possible. The premise should be that the funding is as flexible as possible, based on the nature of the local organisation’s work and its organisational capacity. ForumCiv assess and determines the maximum level of flexibility.
• The amount to apply for should be based on your self-assessment of your organisations’ capacities and the following criteria:
  o Swedish organisations that have completed an initiative up to 500,000 SEK total can apply for maximum 500,000 SEK/year.
  o Swedish organisations that have been granted more than 500,000 SEK total by ForumCiv should apply for the same annual amount as their current or latest granted initiative.
  o Please note that the above recommended amounts are based on SPP’s assessment of organisations’ capacity. Applications for increased amounts need to be strongly motivated and may be approved in exceptional cases (for example, proven capacity to manage parallel initiatives during the same year, meaning that the amount can be based on the total annual amount of the parallel initiatives up to 3 MSEK/year).
  Applications for increased amounts could be adjusted or rejected if SPP assesses that the capacity of your organisation does not correspond to the applied amount.
• Swedish organisations that have not applied to SPP previously are recommended to look through the SPP Programme Guide and the contents of this manual before applying. For questions please contact sokabidrag@forumciv.org.
• In the agreement, flexibility is determined by the level of detail in the budget and operational plan.
• Audit as per ForumCiv’s instructions is required.

Large Partnership Funding (LPF)

Please note that this modality is not open for applicants during 2023-2027.

The process for granting LPF started in May 2021 where organisations were invited to submit concept notes. A selection process was made based on the organisation’s capacities and relevance for the SPP programme and those organisations were in turn invited to submit pre-applications.

Pre-applications were assessed according to Programme standards and prioritisations in the fall of 2021. Decisions on which organisations could submit full applications were made by the General Secretary, Deputy Secretary General and Programme Manager.

For approved LPF applicants:

Specific LPF application instruction and agreement instructions apply. Please contact your Programme Officer for questions.
The Large Partnership Funding is the most flexible modality and is aimed for Swedish organisations with multiple partnerships. This funding modality is granted to organisations that are assessed to have high capacity to conduct rights-based partnerships, development work, and communication; that share SPP’s theory of change; and which have high institutional capacity in financial and administrative management, internal steering and control, democratic governance, and in managing development programmes overall.

Two important differences between MPF and LPF should be noted:

- LPF provide funds to the Swedish organisation’s operations, which includes their rights-based work in Sweden and their partnerships abroad. SPP therefore mainly assess the Swedish organisation’s capacity.
- The Swedish organisations assess the kind of support they provide for the local organisations - a premise being that funding should be as flexible possible, based on the nature of the local organisation’s work and its organisational capacity.

**Conditions for Large Partnership Funding:**

- Over 3 MSEK/year per Swedish organisation.
- Max 5 years implementation period.
- Funding can be granted to the Swedish organisation’s operations, which includes rights-based work in Sweden and partnerships abroad.
- The Swedish organisation determines the level of flexibility and support to local organisation(s). The premise is that the funding is as flexible as possible.
- The Swedish organisation can include local organisations into LPF throughout implementation. ForumCiv will not assess these but needs to be informed before funds are transferred.
- In the agreement, flexibility is determined by the level of detail in the budget and operational plan.
- Audit as per ForumCiv’s instructions is required.

**SPP’s application windows**

ForumCiv has two kinds of application windows, each with its specific timeline:

**April window**

- For PPFs with intended start in June-July and final report date aligning with the October window the following year.
- Pre-registration window open 1/1-1/2.
- Application window is open 25/3-1/4.
- Approval decisions are shared mid-June. Rejection and dismissal decisions are shared continuously, but mid-June at the latest.
- Funds disbursed mid/late-June if available, otherwise August 31 at the earliest.

**October window**

- For PPFs and MPFs with intended start in January the coming financial year.
- Pre-registration window open 1/5-1/6.
- Application window open 24/9-1/10.
- Approval decisions usually shared mid-December. Rejection and dismissal decisions are shared continuously, but mid-December at the latest.
• Funds are disbursed in Jan-March.

When you can expect a decision

Approval decisions are usually shared mid-June for the April window and mid-December for the October window. Rejection and dismissal decisions are shared continuously, but mid-June/December at the latest.

Please note that the number of applications received during a window can affect the timelines.

When you can expect funds

The disbursement of funds to the Swedish organisation is dependent on when ForumCiv receives funds from Sida. This usually happens in January-March and August each year, but delays can occur.

For information on the exact dates of upcoming application windows and deadlines, check the programme page on ForumCiv’s website [Swedish Partnership Programme](https://www.forumciv.org/programmes/swedish-partnership-programme) | [ForumCiv](https://www.forumciv.org/).

Organisation documents

Organisation documents are very important for ForumCiv and SPP as they give insight and understanding of characteristics and capacity of an organisation. They are in fact so important that you are required to submit your latest organisational documents even before you apply to SPP (see the pre-registration process below). ForumCiv refers to the following as Organisation documents:

- Latest approved annual meeting minutes, signed according to general practice (commonly signed by two persons and adjusted by two persons).
- Extracts from minutes that show the organisation’s elected authorised signatories, signed according to general practice (commonly signed by two persons and adjusted by two persons).
- Latest approved activity report, signed by the departing board.
- Latest approved annual report including income statement and balance report, signed by the departing board.
- Latest auditors’ report, signed and dated by the auditor.

In turn, your application will not be assessed unless the latest organisation documents required by the modality are submitted. Organisation documents should be uploaded directly to the Swedish or local organisation’s profile on the portal. If you have signed an agreement with ForumCiv you are obligated to always provide the latest organisational documents within a month after they have been established.

Self-assessment of your organisations and partnership

ForumCiv expect all applying organisations to carry out a self-assessment of their respective organisations and of their partnership prior to applying. The assessments should include:

- Analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of the partnership and your respective organisations.
- Analysis of the power relations that exist in the partnership.
- Assessment of your organisations respective systems and routines for planning, monitoring and evaluation, and financial management and internal control.

This will help you ensure that the focus of the partnership is aligned with the local organisation’s strategy, long-term goals and organisational needs. The assessments will also allow you to investigate
what capacities your respective organisations have, and which ones need to be developed. The assessments will also help you build trust and transparency between your organisations and support you in planning the future of your partnership and how it will support the local organisation strategically.

The application process

The application process constitutes of three overall steps:

1) Pre-registration window.
2) Submitting the application.
3) Application assessment.

Pre-registration window

Note that you must have become a member of ForumCiv and been approved of eligibility to apply for funds before this step (see step 1 and 2 under “Before applying for an initiative).

Organisations who intend to apply in a forthcoming April or October window must submit the following documents via the Organisation Portal ForumCiv | Organisation Portal | Start a couple of months before the application window deadline:

- The Swedish organisation’s latest organisational documents.
- A statement of the local partner organisation(s)’s sources of income during the past bookkeeping (usually calendar) year.

The purpose of the pre-registration is to allow for an updated assessment of the Swedish organisation’s size and capacity and an overview of the local partner organisation(s), as well as to facilitate the planning of the application window. The assessment is based on criteria that connects to SPP’s prioritisation principles (see below).

In the Portal, you first select which window and funding modality you intend to apply for before uploading and submitting the required documents.

Please notice that ForumCiv does not accept pre-registrations or applications via email or hard copies. All pre-registrations and applications received outside of the set application windows are dismissed.

Organisations must complete this step to be able to apply for a forthcoming window.

Swedish Partnership Programme’s prioritisation principles

ForumCiv is sometimes not able to grant funds for all initiatives that are relevant for the programme. To be able to continue supporting a wide spectrum of Swedish organisations, ForumCiv assesses each application on its own, but there is also a need to prioritise among the organisations applying for funding. When that is necessary, ForumCiv prioritises on the following grounds:

**Rights-based perspective in international partnerships/cooperation**

To what degree does the organisation propagate for a rights-based perspective in its international partnerships/cooperation?
In international cooperation the emphasis to combat structural causes of poverty is highlighted and an organisation should as clearly as possible present an idea on underlying causes of poverty and the responsibility of duty bearers, usually the government/governmental agencies, to guarantee the rights of its citizens. A rights-based perspective should be visible in the organisation’s steering documents.

**A pluralistic and diverse international civil society**

How important would the support to the Swedish organisation be for local civil society actors? To what extent would support to the Swedish organisation mean that local civil society actors are given opportunities to act for change otherwise not given?

There has been a trend for many years that international funding is directed towards large and strong organisations with many employees, putting emphasis on compliance and thereby limiting the possibility for support to other civil society actors. ForumCiv support should ensure support to a diverse civil society, giving priority to Swedish organisations having partnerships with civil society actors otherwise lacking international support.

**Rights-based perspective in Sweden**

To what degree does the organisation lobby, advocate and spread information that contributes to a fair and sustainable world from a rights-based perspective in Sweden?

An organisation working with a holistic rights-based approach, with both international partnerships and towards members/stakeholders/public in Sweden should be prioritised over an organisation only focusing on international work.

**Added outreach and engagement in Sweden**

To what extent would financial support from ForumCiv contribute to adding to the outreach, engagement and understanding of causes of inequality and poverty in the organisation’s work in Sweden?

Support to connecting an organisation’s international and domestic operations is an effective way of working towards a global civil society. Special attention should be paid to issued-based organisations working towards large number of members/stakeholders/public in Sweden.

**Added value of the Swedish organisation**

What is the added value of the Swedish organisation?

The added value is defined as the increased possibility for rights-based changes to occur when funding is going to a partnership instead of directly to a local organisation. It could be understood as the difference in results between funding a partnership between a Swedish organisation and a local organisation, and the direct funding of the local organisation; if all funding theoretically would be transferred to the local organisation what negative consequences would it have for achieving changes?

**Submitting the application**

This step is where you actually submit your application. The responsible Programme Officer will open the pre-registration on the Portal so that you can include narrative and financial information. You will then be able to fill in the application and uploading all the required documents. Make sure to
read the instructions on the portal carefully so that your application is complete and filled in correctly.

The pre-registration step may have provided you with input and a recommended amount that should be considered when submitting the application.

On ForumCiv’s website you will find the specific application document you are required to upload [Forms and templates | ForumCiv]. Together with detailed instructions for how to complete the application. Which documents you should use depend on which modality you are applying for. Always make sure you have the latest applications instructions and templates. Application done according to old instructions and templates will not be accepted.

On the website you will also find reference documents that will be of support when planning your initiative. For example SPP’s Problem Analysis Framework, which provides support in identifying root causes to a problem, its impacts and what key actors to engage.

Note that all applications should be submitted in English. Other languages require prior approval from ForumCiv.

Your Programme Officer

Once you have submitted an application you will be assigned a Programme Officer. In addition to assessing your applications and reports, the Programme Officer is responsible for the overall communication with the Swedish organisation and should always be your first and main contact for questions and support.

**PLEASE REMEMBER!**

Before submitting the application, take an extra look to make sure that:

- The latest instructions and templates have been used
- All the necessary information and documents are included
- You select the correct application window and funding modality

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**SPECIAL ROUTINE: Confidential application and initiatives**

Sensitive information can have a major negative impact on the safety of your organisations. ForumCiv classify applications and initiatives as “Confidential” when including sensitive information that require a high level of protection. These cases can cause serious harm to the safety of individuals and organisations due to risks related to the sensitivity of the information and/or context would it be exposed. For example, information causing individuals and organisations to be persecuted, threatened, targeted by violence or forced to cease their activities.

Protecting information at a high level requires time and resources for setting-up and maintaining routines and systems. If not necessary, this is highly inefficient and will become a costly and tedious task. It is therefore very important to determine whether your application, and potential future initiative, should be treated as confidential. This requires that you analyse your need for confidentiality, and that you understand the differences in ForumCiv’s procedures between regular and confidential initiatives.
Differences in procedures between regular and confidential initiatives

The table below contains the procedures for information management and the differences between regular and confidential initiatives. Note that these only concern the procedures between your organisation and ForumCiv. It is the responsibility of your organisation to ensure that the procedures in your partnership are designed in an adequate way. If the confidential routines are not followed at all times there is a risk that sensitive information is exposed.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Procedure</th>
<th>Regular</th>
<th>Confidential</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Verbal communication</td>
<td>Open</td>
<td>Pre-cautionary measures so that sensitive information cannot be overheard or recorded. Consider the sensitivity of call logs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Digital meetings</td>
<td>Open</td>
<td>Teams, Zoom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Written communication</td>
<td>Open</td>
<td>SecureMail, Signal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information management</td>
<td>Open in ForumCiv’s grant management system.</td>
<td>Name of the initiative, country of implementation, total budget amount, and name of Swedish organisation are open in ForumCiv’s grant management system. Securely in designated folder on ForumCiv’s cloud, SecureMail</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internal information sharing</td>
<td>Open within ForumCiv.</td>
<td>Limited to key persons in ForumCiv. Shared securely in ForumCiv’s system.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>External information sharing</td>
<td>Approved initiatives are shared on Sida’s CSO database</td>
<td>None.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please note that if there are specific aspects of an initiative that you consider confidential, the initiative can be managed according to the regular procedure as long as sensitive information is never shared with ForumCiv. This requires that ForumCiv will be able to assess and manage the overall initiative without the sensitive information.

Before you apply

If you believe that your application, and potential future initiative, need to be treated as confidential, you send an email to ForumCiv via sokabidrag@forumciv.org minimum five weeks before the deadline to submit applications. Without disclosing any sensitive information you should provide an analysis of your need for confidentiality that answers the following questions:

- What makes it necessary to treat the initiative as confidential?
- How have you established this? (Did you do a risk-assessment?)
- What are you and the local organisation doing to keep information about the initiative confidential?
ForumCiv will then contact you for a discussion of your analysis; the differences in procedures between regular and confidential initiatives; and how information is handled by ForumCiv.

At this point, you may decide that the application, and potential future initiative, does not need to be treated as confidential. If so, the application can be submitted as usual.

If it is assessed as necessary after the discussion, you will be asked to provide a thorough risk assessment and any other complementary information needed. Note that if the risk assessment and complementary information is sent to ForumCiv through open communication (i.e. not through SecureMail) it cannot include any sensitive information.

If ForumCiv determines that your application, and potential future initiative, should be treated as confidential, your organisations must start to follow the procedures for confidential initiatives. This means that you must submit the application via SecureMail directly to the Programme Officer provided by ForumCiv. Please note that your organisation must get a SecureMail account, ForumCiv is not able to provide this.

### Classification of ongoing initiatives

Contact your Programme Officer if you have an ongoing initiative and consider that its classification needs to be changed from open to confidential or from confidential to open.

Remember that continuous action and attention are required, everyone must keep classification in mind when developing and/or saving documents. Personal responsibility is key for maintaining an appropriate procedure over time. Remember that it is the owner of the information who is responsible for ensuring that the information is classified. The initial owner is usually the one who created the information, decided about it, or assumed responsibility of it.

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### Application assessment

The application assessment consists of three phases:

1. Your application is assessed by a Programme Officer. The assessment consists of an analysis of your application and the applying organisations, primarily the Swedish organisation.
2. When the Programme Officer has completed the assessment, it is discussed within the Grants Committee, comprising of key staff from ForumCiv. The composition of the Committee ensures programmatic and contextual knowledge as well as knowledge about internal and external compliance requirements established by ForumCiv and Sida.
3. The decision for approval is taken by the Head of the Grants Committee and the assessment is shared with the Swedish organisation. If the decision is to approve, an agreement is signed with ForumCiv before the funds are disbursed. If the decision is to reject, you are offered a meeting to discuss the decision.

In cases where an application is assessed as not fulfilling formal requirements for receiving grants or not possible to support based on SPP’s framework, a decision for dismissal may be taken by the Head of the Grants Committee. The organisation will then be informed and offered a meeting to discuss the decision.
The Swedish Partnership Programme’s Assessment Criteria

ForumCiv approves applications through an objective and competitive process. All applications are assessed using pre-determined criteria based on the Programme’s principles and Theory of Change.

SPP’s assessment criteria are closely tied to one another. The criteria therefore focus on key aspects of an initiative while assessing its potential as a whole. An application may therefore be rejected or approved though certain criteria are assessed as sufficient or in need of improvement.

### Relevance
The extent to which the objectives of an initiative are consistent with target groups’ requirements, country needs, global priorities and partners’ and donors’ policies.

### Organisation assessment
The extent to which an organisation(s) has the programmatic, administrative, and financial capacity to manage funds in a transparent way.

### Implementation strategy
(a) Effectiveness: the extent to which the set objectives of an initiative are likely to be achieved; and whether the implementation strategy is an appropriate way of achieving the objectives under the prevailing circumstances;

(b) Feasibility: the sum of several factors, such as economic, technical, time, human resources etc. that is needed to plan, implement, and monitor the project in a satisfactory way.

### Effective partnership
The extent to which partners demonstrate adequate capacity to maintain an effective, transparent, and equitable partnership.

The assessment process also includes reviewing the applying organisation based on its organisational documents and history within ForumCiv (e.g. applications, initiatives, reports, organisational assessments, evaluations, past conditions, recommendations and communication etc.). Second, applications are reviewed in two steps during the assessment process, first based on the criteria and second in comparison to other applications on the basis of SPP’s prioritisation principles. This is to ensure that the programme supports a diversity and representation of partnerships and does so in the most qualitative and efficient way possible.

### Completions during the assessment
Please note that after you have submitted the application, your Programme Officer may request completions during the assessment process. This is quite common and done to help understand aspects of the application that may be unclear due to missing or vague information.

Requests will be sent to the email of the assigned contact person of the Swedish organisation together with a deadline. Check the email frequently as not miss any completions and deadlines.
When your initiative is granted

Once ForumCiv has approved your initiative you will receive the decision memo on which the approval is based. It is important that you read through the decision memo carefully as this document will form part of the agreement with ForumCiv and may contain feedback to your organisations and conditions that must be fulfilled. ForumCiv expects that the decision memo is shared amongst all partner organisations involved in the granted initiative.

When receiving an approval, the Swedish organisation will be asked to share the names and email-addresses of two authorised signatories that will sign the agreement. It must be possible to verify these persons with your latest organisation documents. As the agreement is sent digitally, they should also have a Swedish Bank-ID. ForumCiv will not be able to prepare and send the agreement until this information has been shared with your Programme Officer.

Signing the agreement

The agreement will be sent for digital signing via Bank-ID to two authorised signatories.

The agreement consists of the following documents:

- The agreement template.
- The decision-memo.
- The approved operational plan.
- The approved budget.
- SPP’s General conditions for Sida grants.
- ForumCiv’s audit instructions for SPP.
- ForumCiv’s principles for purchase and procurement.

The agreement is sent together with an accompanying letter and appendices that must be filled in before you can receive the first disbursement (see below).

It is critical that you read through and understand all the information before signing. Once you have signed the agreement your organisation has accepted the responsibilities and conditions for fulfilling the agreement as well as in the case it is not fulfilled. Contact your Programme Officer before signing the agreement in case you have any questions or concerns.

Please note that the grant is defaulted if ForumCiv has not received a signed agreement within six (6) months of sending the decision memo.

Failure to comply with the agreement may result in repayment of the grant.

The agreement documents

Below follow a brief description of the documents making up the agreement together with some important points to consider in each. These can be found on ForumCiv's Forms and templates.

Cooperation agreement

The Cooperation agreement include the basic conditions for grants in the Swedish Partnership Programme and for the implementation of the initiative. Note that the full agreement contains this document and all annexes. All references to the “Agreement” thus include more than just this document. ForumCiv would like to emphasise the following points in the Cooperation agreement:
• Transferring funds to partner in subsequent step – It is the responsibility of the Swedish organisation to ensure that partners in subsequent step comply with the agreement. This means that all annexes apply in all subsequent steps. Project description and Budget must be annexed to the agreement between a Swedish organisation and a partner in subsequent step. A signed copy of the agreement is to be sent to ForumCiv within one month after it is signed.

• Administration fee – All grants exceeding 1,000,000 SEK per year must pay administration fee that will be used as a risk buffer by ForumCiv, e.g. in case Sida makes a repayment claim. The conditions for the administration fee, what amount you potentially must pay and when is stated in paragraph 2.6 and 2.7. For more information on the use of the administration fee, see Frequently Asked Questions.

• Changes and deviations – Under paragraph 13 you will find what deviations and changes that require prior written approval from ForumCiv. Always contact your responsible officer if you are unsure of what you can and cannot change in the initiative.

• Disbursements – Under paragraph 3 you will find the conditions that apply for disbursements as well as a preliminary disbursement plan, i.e. when you can expect funding from ForumCiv. As of the second disbursement, you must provide a simplified financial report according to the agreement. On ForumCiv’s website you will find a template that you can use. It is important to know that you must request granted funds during the current year, otherwise you risk losing these funds. Also important to know is that ForumCiv has the right to withhold funds in cases where the agreement conditions are not fulfilled.

• Special provisions – If ForumCiv have approved exceptions or amendments to your agreement, these are stated under paragraph 12.

• References to other annexes – The Cooperation agreement does not contain all conditions that apply but makes references to other annexes in some cases. Contact your responsible officer if you are unsure of what annexes apply during.

Project description (Decision-memo and Operational plan, if applicable)

The Decision-memo includes ForumCiv’s assessment of your application and the motivation for why it is approved within the Swedish Partnership Programme. The Decision-memo also includes any conditions and limitations to the decision.

The Operational plan is the plan submitted together with the application, approved after potential updates and completions. The document contains information about what ForumCiv have approved in terms of the initiative’s structure, specifically the goals, how these will be achieved, how the implementation will be followed-up and evaluated, participants/target groups etc. The level of detail in the operational plan decides the level of flexibility that you have when it comes to making changes in the initiative’s structure.

Budget

The budget clarifies the sums for the grant approved by ForumCiv and the own contribution that must be included. The budget also contains the budget posts and the costs that have been approved. The details of the budget, in the form of number of budget posts and their respective sums, decides the level of flexibility that you have when it comes to making changes to the budget.
ForumCiv’s General conditions for Sida grants

The General conditions can be understood as a complementary part when it comes to the basic conditions within most that concern implementation and reporting. These conditions are based on Sida’s general conditions and are essential to ensure compliance in the management of Sida funds. ForumCiv would like to emphasize the following points in the General conditions.

- Eligible and non-eligible costs – Article 7 includes a detailed overview of what kind of costs are eligible or not. Although the information is rather detailed, it is not necessarily all-encompassing. Therefore, do not hesitate to contact your responsible officer if you are unsure of what is considered an eligible cost.

- Transferring funds to partner in subsequent step – Article 8 clarifies a bit more in detail of what furthering the conditions of the agreement in all subsequent steps entails.

- Breach of the agreement – What is considered a breach of the agreement, what happens and what responsibility you and ForumCiv have in such cases are stated in Article 15. Important to know is that the agreement applies as long as the Swedish organisation has not fulfilled its responsibilities when it comes to reporting, auditing and repayment obligations, which applies both when the initiative is reported according to plan or, for some reason, is terminated or cancelled.

- Amendments to the agreement – Article 20 clarifies what applies when it comes to making changes in the agreement, including ForumCiv’s obligations if changes are required because of external factors, such as Sida making changes, new legislation or similar.

ForumCiv’s audit instructions for SPP

These instructions apply for all funds in all steps without exceptions. It is very important that you understand the audit instructions to be able to determine whether a correct and complete audit has been done. Although an authorised auditor is hired for the assignment, it is the Swedish organisation that has the overall responsibility for ensuring that the whole grant has gone through a complete audit according to the instructions.

ForumCiv’s principles for purchase and procurement

These principles specify the conditions for procurement and purchase and applies to all partners and actors that take part of the grant. Important to know is that a written price comparison of at least three suppliers must be done for procurement of all goods and services that exceed a value of 50,000 SEK exclusive of VAT.

Outside of Sweden, the threshold amounts shall be adopted to the context and relevant currency, though not in ways that increases the threshold amounts, i.e. lowering the requirements.

Signing the agreement with the local organisation

The terms and conditions of the agreement applies to all ForumCiv funds transferred in subsequent steps. As mentioned, the agreement consists of the following documents:

- The agreement template.
- The decision-memo.
- The approved operational plan.
• The approved budget.
• SPP’s General Conditions.
• ForumCiv’s Audit Instructions.
• ForumCiv’s Procurement Principles.

After signing the agreement with ForumCiv, the Swedish organisation is required to sign an agreement with the local organisation. **On ForumCiv’s website you will find an agreement template that you can use.** Note that Project description and Budget must always be annexed to the agreement with the partner organisation.

The agreement between the Swedish and local organisation **must be signed by both parties before the first transfer of funds. A copy of the signed agreement should be sent via email to your Programme Officer within one (1) month after signing**, and at the latest six months after entering into agreement with ForumCiv. For LPF, copies should be provided upon ForumCiv’s request instead.

For the agreement to be signed correctly it must fulfil the following:

• Digital and non-digital signatures cannot be mixed for signing the same agreement. Use only one format.
• For digital signing without Swedish Bank-ID, copies of identification cards of signatories should be attached to the agreement. Digital signing services usually have a “request attachment”-function that can be used.
• For non-digital signing, the signatories must sign the agreement, and in addition each page of the agreement (including all the agreement documents) must also be signed with the initials of the signatories. Digital signing services usually replace this with a verification stamp or similar on each page.

**Responsibility of the Swedish organisation**

It is important to underline that it is the Swedish organisation’s responsibility to ensure that the agreement (which includes all the attached documents mentioned above) is upheld and complied with by all parties in subsequent steps in all stages of the initiative.

The agreement specifies the minimum requirements that must be included in initiatives funded by SPP. You can add terms and make amendments to the agreement based on your specific needs if it does not lower or alter the requirements of the agreement, omit and/or delete original sections in the agreement, or violate the agreement; you can always make the agreement stricter if it does not contradict and leave out parts of the agreement with ForumCiv. Additional terms and annexes can be added under paragraph 12 in SPP’s agreement template.

**Contracting auditors**

Some organisations consider contracting auditors and reviewing audit reports as difficult due to, for example, expensive audit costs, difficulties in finding an audit firm, audit firms not completely understanding the assignment, or audits not being conducted as per instructions.

To support organisations and protect them from audit firms that have not complied with the instructions, **organisations must inform their Programme Officer of which audit firm they intend to contract when submitting the first requisition.** If there are evidence of past
compliance issues with the suggested audit firm, ForumCiv will inform the organisation and strongly recommend contracting another one.

**ForumCiv strongly recommends that you contact an audit firm as soon as your intervention is approved.** Communicating with the auditor early on during the implementation can give important support and ensure that the audit process will be effective.

### Requisition your funds

The following documents are required to be signed and submitted to ForumCiv before funds can be requisitioned:

- **Requisition form** – sent via email to your Programme Officer for every requisition.
- **Simplified financial report** – sent via email to your Programme Officer for every requisition.
- **Composition of the board form** – the latest version with your current board (max one year old) is uploaded in the Organisation Portal under the “DOCUMENTS”-tab under “Our organisation”.
- **Plusgiro/Bankgiro form** – the latest version with your current account number and authorised persons for the account (max three years old) is uploaded in the Organisation Portal under the “DOCUMENTS”-tab under “Our organisation”.

The requisition documents can be found on [Forms and templates | ForumCiv](https://www.forumciv.org/forms-templates).

**Filling in the Simplified financial report**

With every requisition (except the very first) you are required to submit a Simplified financial report. When preparing the report, you should check your bookkeeping, reconcile your accounts and make a realistic prognosis of future payments. The report requires you to fill in the following:

- The total sums for operational costs and Admin in Sweden in the latest approved budget. This includes the own contribution, as it is according to the latest approved budget.
- The Swedish organisation’s income for the ongoing year (in terms of carry-overs and received funds from ForumCiv).
- Payments made by the Swedish organisation (actual payments of the latest reconciled month), incl. how much was financed by own contribution and how much by the ForumCiv grant.
- The Swedish organisation’s balances + explanation for them.
- Payments planned until next requisition, incl. how much is to be financed by own contribution and how much by the ForumCiv grant.
- The local organisation’s balances + explanation for them.

By filling in these amounts, the Simplified financial report template will automatically calculate your funding need until the next requisition and the amount to be requested. The amount to be requested is calculated based on the sum of Payments made and planned as financed by the grant minus the amount of ForumCiv funds received.

The template also indicates whether a budget update is required. If there is a difference in a positive sum between the latest approved budget and the payments made and planned by the second requisition each year, a budget change request should be submitted separately.
You will have to inform your Programme Officer of which audit firm you intend to contract when you submit the first requisition.

Please note that for the local organisation, the requirement for a Plusgiro or Bankgiro account is substituted by the condition that the bank account must be held in the name of the organisation and that written evidence of this must be presented.

You need to request the funds within the timeframe and amount stipulated in the agreement by using SPP’s requisition form. ForumCiv’s principles is to make two payments per year, the first at the beginning of the year, and the second by August 31 at the earliest, as long as all conditions are fulfilled. Note that only one payment is made for PPFs. A preliminary disbursement plan is included in the Cooperation agreement.

### General disbursement plan:

- **First requisition year 1:**
  - 2/3 of the sum according to budget for the year (PPF – the whole budget sum).
  - Paid out at the beginning of the year.

- **Second requisition year 1:**
  - Remaining sum of the budget for the year, or approved sum according to funding needs.
  - Paid out by August 31 at the earliest.

- **First requisition remaining years:**
  - 2/3 of the sum according to budget for the year, or approved sum according to funding needs.
  - Paid out at the beginning of the year.

- **Second requisition remaining years:**
  - Remaining sum of the budget for the year, or approved sum according to funding needs.
  - Paid out by August 31 at the earliest.

Failure to requisition funds within the financial year they are granted can mean that the funds are defaulted.

ForumCiv will not make payments to the Swedish organisation if there are unresolved compliance issues in any previous or on-going initiatives. This includes delayed or incomplete reporting.

### Two authorised persons for the account

ForumCiv requires that the account where the funds will be held must be signed in unison by two authorised persons from the Swedish organisation.

This is stipulated in the agreement and in the Plusgiro/Bankgiro form. **Before signing, this requirement must be part of the Swedish organisation’s internal payment routines and set-up by the bank** (physically and digitally) for the account. Allowing only one person to make and authorise payments significantly increases the risk of mistakes and misuse of your funds.
Implementing your initiative

Changes in the initiative

During implementation of your initiative things may arise that you had not expected. If your initiative cannot be implemented as intended and/or require changes to be made that deviate from the operational plan and/or budget that form part of your agreement, you need to inform your Programme Officer as soon as possible.

Some changes are considered significant and require ForumCiv’s written approval beforehand. These are listed under the headings below. When requesting a significant change, you need to explain as detailed as possible:

- What changes you want to make.
- Why they are needed.
- How it impacts the goal fulfilment.

For ForumCiv to be able to consider a significant change request it must be motivated in a relevant way and cannot change the purpose of the initiative.

Remember to save ForumCiv’s approval of significant change as this may be required in audits and reports.

Budget changes

- Reallocations between budget lines that exceed 10 percent from the latest approved budget.
- All reallocations between budget lines "Expense resp. org." and "Expense. Impl.org”.
- All reallocations from one financial year to another (Carry-overs).
- New budget lines.

Significant budget changes require you to submit a signed budget change application, which you find on Forms and templates | ForumCiv. This must be done before a cost arises, funds are reallocated, or an activity is implemented. Note that you should present the whole budget in the budget change request regardless of how many budget lines are affected by the change. Given that further budget changes might happen, presenting the whole budget, as opposed to single budget lines, greatly supports follow-up later on.

Changes below 10 percent do not require written approval from ForumCiv but must be reported and explained in the annual or final report.

Changes to the initiative period and reporting dates

Request for significant changes to initiative period and reporting dates can be sent in an email to your Programme Officer. There are some important things to keep in mind before changing dates:

- The SPP programme cycle is based on the financial year running from January to December.
- Application windows, start and reporting dates are adapted to minimise gaps between potential future initiatives.
- Initiatives of 18 months or longer require an annual report to be submitted.
- Start dates does not require change, even if the initiative is delayed.
- Changing an end date does not require changing the final report date.
Consider the above when in your change to avoid missing a future application window or to help you plan for an additional annual report and audit.

**Alternative transfer method**

As per the agreement, you are required to transfer funds between bank accounts in the names of your respective organisations by using the international bank system. If this is not possible and you have thoroughly investigated other methods which could potentially fulfil the agreement requirement (e.g., changing bank) you can request an alternative transfer method. An alternative method should be seen as a secondary option as it generally involves more financial risk, costs, and administrative work. It also requires amending the agreement in all subsequent steps.

ForumCiv considers several variables when assessing your request and generally needs to initiate a dialogue before making any decision. Alternative transfer methods are adapted to your specific case, and ForumCiv needs to understand the details, reasons and relevance of the method.

When requesting an alternative transfer method, provide the following information in an email to your Programme Officer:

- What is the reason why you cannot transfer/receive funds through an international banking transfer to a bank account in the name of the organisation?
- Are there any contextual reasons, and do they imply direct threat to your organisations or any individual related to your organisations?
- Why have you chosen the specific alternative transfer method? What does that enable? Do you see any other potential method that could work as a complement?
- How will you keep track on transactions and expenses when using the specific transfer method? How can you verify this? What routines do you have in place for financial monitoring? How much funds will be transferred through the method? How will funds be received and reported upon throughout the chain and who will be involved?
- Does the alternative transfer method imply extra cost, e.g. administrative costs such as cost for administrative services, bank fees, transfer fees etc? How will these be covered?
- Will you be able to do an external audit according to ForumCiv’s audit instructions? If not, how will you ensure checks and controls of overall compliance requirements?
- Do you have routines and structure for duality of roles and responsibilities? Is there at least two authorised persons that have dual roles of checks and approval of expenses and money transfers? If not, how will you ensure transparent and traceable transactions?
- Does the alternative mean that the handling of cash will increase? If so, how will you work to restrict it?

What risks do your requested alternative imply and how will these be managed? Please use the risk matrix below for the relevant risks to consider.

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<th>What is the risk?</th>
<th>Severity</th>
<th>Probability</th>
<th>What actions already done to control the risk?</th>
<th>What actions need to be done to mitigate the risk?</th>
<th>Who needs to carry out the actions?</th>
<th>Deadline for actions to be completed</th>
<th>Follow up?</th>
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2. Insignificant – the consequences can be handled within the scope of the ongoing operations; 
   Minor – the consequences require actions at Cooperation Partner’s or ForumCiv side; 
   Major – the consequences require actions at Cooperation Partner’s and ForumCiv’s site; 
   Critical – the consequences require actions and control by ForumCiv.
3. Unlikely – the risk will occur is basically non-existent (0 – 1%); 
   Moderately likely – the risk will occur is very limited (1 – 20 %); 
   Likely – it is likely that the risk will occur (20 – 50 %); 
   Highly likely – it is highly likely that the risk will occur (50 – 100 %).
4. If actions necessary to review (in case of major and critical severity of risk).

Other changes

- Changes to goals, results, region, organisation capacity or context.
- Deviations from the agreement.
- Stopping your initiative.
- Classification from Open to Confidential, or Confidential to Open.

Request for significant changes under this heading can be sent in an email to your Programme Officer. Depending on what the change implies, there are different routines which might require more information or analysis from your side. Your Programme Officer will know what steps to take.

Deviations

The Swedish organisation has the responsibility to follow up and verify that all organisations in subsequent steps follow the terms and conditions in the agreement with ForumCiv. Deviations in relation to compliance with the agreement shall immediately be reported to your Programme Officer. ForumCiv in turn reports the deviation to Sida. If anonymity is required, please use ForumCiv’s whistleblowing. If you wish to report to an external body, outside ForumCiv, you can use Sida’s Whistleblowing.

Keep your organisation information updated

It is necessary that you keep the information on the Swedish organisation up to date. You can do this directly in the Organisation portal and inform your Programme Officer whenever you have made an update. The information is required due to agreement compliance and to give ForumCiv a clear overview of the organisation. Both aspects are highly important in the assessment of applications and reports and may support your transition to increased flexibility within SPP.

This is the information SPP requires of the Swedish organisation, including how and when it requires update:

- Organisational documents – Uploaded on the portal one month after they are established. 
  o Latest approved annual meeting minutes, signed according to general practice (commonly signed by two persons and adjusted by two persons).
  o Extracts from minutes that show the organisation’s elected authorised signatories, signed according to general practice (commonly signed by two persons and adjusted by two persons).
  o Latest approved activity report, signed by the departing board.
  o Latest approved annual report including income statement and balance report, signed by the departing board.
  o Latest auditors’ report, signed and dated by the auditor.
• Organisation profile and contact persons – Updated continuously on the portal.
• Plusgiro/Bankgiro account and the authorised persons for the account – Updated continuously by submitting the signed form to your Programme Officer.
• Updates to your organisation’s board and the authorised signatories - Updated continuously by submitting the signed form to your Programme Officer.

Reporting your initiative

Before you start the reporting process, check ForumCiv’s website Forms and templates | ForumCiv to make sure you have the latest reporting instructions and templates. Reporting done according to old instructions and templates will not be accepted. Be sure to read through the agreement to ensure complete reporting requirements.

SPP recommends that you give the reporting process plenty of time as it requires analysis, compiling results, completing the financial report, coordinating with auditors, getting signatures etc.

Note that after the report is submitted, any potential updates to the financial report requires new signatures from two authorised signatories and the auditor.

PLEASE REMEMBER!

Before submitting the report, take an extra look to make sure that:

• The latest instructions and templates have been used.
• All the necessary information and documents are included.
• Applicable agreement conditions have been considered.
• All documents have been signed correctly.

Annual monitoring

If your initiative period is 18 months or longer (i.e. not applicable for PPFs), you are required to do an annual monitoring. The annual monitoring consists of a dialogue meeting with your Programme Officer where you discuss progress and learnings/adaptions during the past year. You are also required to submit a few things in writing:

• A brief narrative results summary.
• A narrative financial report in writing.
• An external audit.
• The latest organisational documents of the Swedish organisation.

The annual monitoring deadline is 15/5 for submitting the written parts of the annual monitoring report. The monitoring meeting is held in close connection to the deadline. You can always see which exact period to report and when on the portal.

After the monitoring meeting has been carried out and the financial reporting has been approved, your Programme Officer may make a new assessment to support agreement changes for greater flexibility.
Final report

In the final report you should analyse the progress of the initiative, fulfilment of the intended goals, reflect on challenges and lessons learned and how these will be of use in the future. You should also submit a financial report that demonstrates the funds used over the last year, as well as an external audit to verify this.

Please note that the narrative part of the final report should always cover the whole initiative period. If no annual report has been submitted, the financial reporting and audit must cover the whole implementation period. If an annual report has been submitted, the financial reporting and audit should cover the last implementation year or the implementation period that was not covered in the latest annual report.

Final reports are submitted 15/5 for MPF and LPF (PPFs final report date is set 4 months after end date as standard but flexible as to align with a forthcoming October window). You can always see which exact period to report and when on the portal.

The report assessment process

Your Programme Officer can start to make the assessment once a complete report has been submitted. The time the assessments need can vary a lot depending on the initiative, whether it is an annual or final report, the quality of the report and when in it is submitted.

The report assessment process consists of three phases:

1. Your report is assessed by a Programme Officer. The assessment looks at your report and if relevant, applications and previous reports.
2. When the Programme Officer has completed the assessment, the report and the assessment is reviewed by a Quality and Compliance Officer controller and a Financial Controller. This to ensure independent assessment and quality control.
3. Lastly, a decision is taken by the Head of the SPP and the assessment is shared with the Swedish organisation.

You can expect a decision on your annual report within a shorter time than your final report. Decisions on annual reports are sent via email from your Programme Officer. For final reports you will receive a decision memo from your Programme Officer. It is important that you read through the decision memo carefully as it may include important feedback and conditions for your next step in SPP.

Approval of applications are always conditioned on an organisation’s management of already approved initiatives, of which reporting is an important part. The reporting of an ongoing or recently ended initiative might also be of relevance for a new application in terms evaluation, results, adjustments etc. Delays and incomplete reports can therefore impact the follow-up and sustainability of both your ongoing and, potential, future initiative. As long as it does not obstruct internal control, ForumCiv may be able to give an informal decision on your report in case further delay negatively impacts a pending application.

If your report is delayed your Programme Officer will send a formal reminder with a deadline.

If your report is incomplete your Programme Officer will send a description of what needs to be completed and a deadline for when this needs to be submitted.
Failure to comply with deadlines can affect your future possibilities for funding at ForumCiv.

**Repayment**

At the end of an initiative, all unused funds and interest and non-approved exchange rate gains must be repaid to ForumCiv. Repayments of this kind is not needed if the total amount is less than 500 SEK.

**Repayments are made to ForumCiv’s bankgiro 5359-2218.**

In the message line, state the intervention number and the applicable amounts concerning repayment of funds, exchange rate gains and interest.

Failure to comply with the agreement can lead to repayment of the grant, in part or in full. In such cases, ForumCiv issues a formal repayment claim to the Swedish organisation’s contact person and the board of the organisation with the amount to repay and when. If you have other approved and/or ongoing interventions, no disbursements will be made to these until ForumCiv has received the repayment.

If the repayment is not received by the stated deadline, the Swedish organisation will be blocked by ForumCiv and the matter will be handed over to the Swedish Enforcement Authority (Kronofogdemyndigheten) or district court.

Non-compliance of repayment claims will also affect your possibilities for future funding in ForumCiv.

**Frequently Asked Questions**

This section aims to provide general guidance on frequent questions or issues that come up.

**Local organisations with funding from several Swedish partners or donors**

Please note that in line with the principles of aid effectiveness, SPP is restrictive with approving initiatives in which the local organisation receives funding from other Swedish partners or donors. The need and added value for an additional Swedish partner should be motivated in the application, and the applying organisation is invited to have a dialogue with ForumCiv before submitting an application. In such cases, the applying organisations will be encouraged to coordinate and harmonise their support to make it as efficient as possible.

If there is no significant added value of an additional partnership a joint proposal can still be submitted by the Swedish organisations wanting to support the same local organisation; in such submission one of the Swedish organisations should be the main responsible applicant.

**Use of ForumCiv’s logo**

Partners must state in printed and published material and in connection to activities that it is produced/implemented with funds from ForumCiv via Sida, but that ForumCiv and Sida are not responsibility for the content. This applies within reasonable limits when it comes to publishing on social media platforms and/or channels that are not specifically designated to the initiative.

The ForumCiv logo may only be used if ForumCiv’s role in the initiative is as a donor.
Digital Signatures

Between ForumCiv and Swedish organisations

ForumCiv approves digital signatures under the following conditions:

- Signatures are done using Bank-ID (www.bankid.com).
- ForumCiv can verify authenticity of the certificate and signatures*.
- Usual routines and requirements are followed, e.g. two authorised signatures must sign.

This applies for use of digital signatures on all documents sent to ForumCiv that require your signatures. If signed digitally, your organisational documents are excepted from the above, besides the documentation that confirms the organisation’s elected authorised signatories.

* Since there are several certificates for digital signatures, there must be a link with information from the authorised provider of the specific service used (e.g. https://www.verified.eu/en/#home). The information must outline the function of the certificate in sufficient detail and provide descriptions necessary for ForumCiv to verify the authenticity of the signatures.

Between Swedish and local organisations

Digital signatures between Swedish and local organisations need to:

- Fulfill the legal requirements in the country where the local organisation is based.
- The form of digital signature is agreed upon with the respective organisations’ auditor.

Please keep in mind that documents cannot be signed using different methods; either all parties involved sign digitally or all parties sign paper copies.

Extra allowances

Extra allowances for participating in meetings and workshops for participants that are already receiving salary is a prohibited cost. The reason for this is to avoid double financing and providing financial incentives for participation in activities.

Allowances for travel and overhead costs for invited speakers for example or covering travel costs for participants is still possible. In general, one should be very cautious in providing honorariums for government representatives, persons in position of power or influence etc.

Booking and reservation of costs

For concerns about reservation of costs that are paid after the end of the agreement period ForumCiv refers to the agreement and accounting standards. Note that ForumCiv cannot make decisions in individual cases.

According to the agreement with ForumCiv, the funding can only be used during the project period stated in the agreement.

According to accounting standards, incomes and costs should be booked during the period they appear. For costs the following applies - the period when the resource is used, (for staff and consultants - the period when the work is executed, irrespective of the payment being paid in advance or afterwards).
However, it is common to make reservations of costs for audits so that they are booked during the period that is subject to the audit, even if the audit is conducted during the next period. For other reservations, consult your auditor.

**The Administration fee - Using funds from the Administrative buffer**

**Background**

During the programme period 2023 - 2027, an administration fee of 0.8% of contractual contributions exceeding 1 mSEK per year will be charged to ForumCiv’s members for the Swedish Partnership Programme. The buffer is primarily to ensure that ForumCiv has the means to be able to make repayments in cases where Sida so requires, and when the member organisation no longer exists, or is unable to repay the amount to ForumCiv. In the latter case, ForumCiv normally has to turn to the enforcement agency to recover contributions. In this way, the buffer is primarily a collective insurance so that ForumCiv will have the opportunity to repay funds to Sida, thereby guaranteeing the continuation of the programme.

According to a decision by ForumCiv’s board, a member organisation also has the option of requesting that ForumCiv use the buffer to repay funds reclaimed by Sida. The board’s decision as of 13 December 2021:

"In the event that Sida reclaims contributions, the member organisation concerned can appropriate the payments made to the buffer. However, any refunds to members of paid fees are not relevant"

**Concretization of the decision**

The decision should not be seen as a general sharing of risk, but the possibility of using the buffer is dependent partly on funds being available, partly on conditions as set out below being met. A member organisation can never use more funds from the buffer than what was paid up to and including the end of the year in which the deviation was reported to ForumCiv. A member organisation that receives a deviation with a subsequent repayment claim due to Sida placing a repayment claim on ForumCiv can, subject to the following being fulfilled, request that funds from the administrative buffer be used:

1. The refund can be made for contributions paid during the programme period 2023 – 2027;
2. Reimbursement assumes that the Swedish organisation has followed the agreement with ForumCiv and the organisation’s own, documented routines for handling funds;
3. Reimbursement can take place with a maximum of the amount that the Swedish organisation has paid into the buffer or will pay up to and including the year in which the deviation is reported;
4. If the request for reimbursement applies in whole or in part to funds intended for a local partner organisation, reimbursement claims must first have been made on the partner organisation in the same way that ForumCiv makes reimbursement claims on its member organisation;
5. If there is reason to suspect improper handling of funds by the Swedish or local organisation, a police report must have been made, except if there are security risks linked to a report;
6. If the police report leads to legal measures, the outcome of these must be awaited.

Decisions on refunds are made on an ongoing basis by Head of SPPU, and repayments to Sida take place continuously during the year. Decisions on the total amount of the buffer to be used for repayments to the organisations that paid funds into the buffer and requested that these be used for
repayments to Sida are made by the board at the end of each business year. The buffer must primarily be used for repayments in cases where the member organisation no longer exists or when the organisation has not been able to repay following a demand from the enforcement agency.

**Use of buffer at the end of the contract period**

ForumCiv has an agreement with Sida for the period 2023 – 2027. The board has decided that the system with an administrative buffer must be evaluated at the end of the agreement period. Decisions on how any balance is to be used are made by ForumCiv's board after all deviation cases concerning funds paid out in 2023 – 2027 and which may mean that the buffer is to be used have been closed. In the event that an organisation has not been able to receive a full refund from the buffer during the program period because funds were not available at the time of decision, the organisation can receive additional reimbursement after the end of the program period, after all deviation cases have been closed by Sida.