Call for pilot projects: Increasing Organizational Health on Diversity and Inclusion

Diversity and Inclusion has become a hot topic within civil society in recent years. Knowing there is no 'people power' without true principles of diversity and inclusion, many in the sector are taking a step back and evaluating how this core principle is being integrated into programmes and operations.

Recent scandals in civil society have posed troubling questions about how strongly we adhere to our values in practice.
- Our policies may not enable those who we work with to have a voice. We often fail to connect with the people we serve and understand their needs, particularly those who may not share our ways of seeing the world.
- We may have strong policies on paper on gender equality and whistleblowing, and claim to have strongly consultative decision-making processes, but leadership styles and organisational cultures may make it harder for people from excluded groups to make their voices heard and gain leadership roles.

Civil society must lead by example. We need to experiment and model workplace diversity and inclusion and change our leadership styles to do so. We need to learn from the horizontal leadership styles of contemporary social movements and feminist movements.

CIVICUS is testing out ways of increasing organisational health in terms of diversity and inclusion. A pilot group of organisations will be selected through an open call for applications to take part in a 6-9 month process to increase organisational health in relation to diversity and inclusion.

Diversity is about welcoming all of the dimensions that can be used to differentiate groups and people from one another, and **Inclusion** is the proactive and mindful steps we take to make sure diversity happens, creating an environment where all kinds of people can thrive and succeed.

Organizational Health refers to the strength of an organization through its policies and procedures and how effectively those policies and procedures meaningfully encourage diversity and inclusion. Through this method, a diagnosis of the current organizational framework will help provide steps to strengthen and improve an organization's overall health through the implementation of diverse and inclusive practices.

Who is this for? This programme is open to all members who are committed to creating more diverse and inclusive organisations. Both formal and informal civil society organisations are welcome to apply, regardless of region, operating model, size, or experience on the topic of diversity and inclusion. There must be a demonstrated capacity to implement this programme. Support for this programme can only be provided in English, French or Spanish. Pilot organisations should have enough access to internet to liaise with CIVICUS online.

CIVICUS

What are the objectives of this programme? The aim of this programme is to support the CIVICUS alliance in increasing its organisational capacities by addressing diversity and inclusion in its framework and practices. We aim to test out a model that could:

1. Identify the challenges of diversity and inclusion across a diverse group of civil society organisations. This will help identify which challenges are faced across the board and which challenges may be specific to a region or organisational size, etc.
2. Increase the diversity and inclusion capacities of the pilot organisations through a comprehensive response to a diversity & inclusion audit that includes additional resources for capacity strengthening trainings or programmes for the organisation.
3. Identify learnings (both opportunities and failures) that we can capture and share with the wider alliance on how to work towards making civil society organisations more diverse and inclusive.

How will this programme run? Selected organisations will be matched with a local external party to undergo a diversity and inclusion audit. The external consultant will evaluate current policies and practices in relation to diversity and inclusion and provide recommendations to address the organisation's unique challenges in achieving diversity and inclusion. From the audit recommendations, an organisational plan will be created, with the support of CIVICUS, to define the commitments that the organisation will adopt and how they plan to achieve their set standards and overall culture shifts.

The areas of focus are:
● Policies around sexual harassment
● Accountability to organization's constituents (employees, members, communities)
● Organisation power structure
● Organisational Culture
● Language and communications
● Recruitment and benefits process
● Accessible and safe physical spaces

After this plan is adopted, the pilot organisations will identify areas which require further resources to address gaps. The next phase will focus on capacity strengthening of certain areas through trainings or alternative methods of increasing institutional capacity.

What are the available funding and support mechanisms? CIVICUS will provide funding for the full audit process including the services of the consultant and towards some of the first initial steps in addressing the recommendations. CIVICUS will provide additional funds to go towards capacity strengthening (resources and trainings) to achieve longer term steps of the audit recommendations. CIVICUS will also provide a coordinator to oversee the progress of the programme and to provide additional insight and information along the way.

Pilot Programme Timeline:

Deadline for Applications	July 29th 2019
Selection of Successful Applicants	August 2019
Diversity and Inclusion Audit by external party	September 2019
Creating an organisation plan to begin implementing	October 2019
Implementing organisational plan	November 2019
Face to face meeting of pilot organisations to go over challenges, obstacles and successes	December 2019
Identification of audit recommendations that require further resources	January 2020
Begin capacity strengthening as identified	February 2020
Continue to implement audit recommendations	March 2020
Face to face meeting of pilot organisations to go over challenges, obstacles and successes	April 2020

If you are interested in applying for this programme please note that you must have a point of contact in your organisation to liaise with the programme coordinator and take responsibility for implementing the programme. Please note that you must also have sign off by the head of your organisation to commit to creating change! Pilot organisations should be willing to share their experiences with the rest of the alliance after the programme has been completed.

If you are interested in being one of the 6 pilot organisations please fill out the application form here. **The deadline is July 29th 2019.**

If you have any questions about this programme please email suhani.bhushan@civicus.org. Questions will be accepted until July 24th and all answers will be displayed on this document for all applicants to access.