



★ NETWORKING EUROPEAN CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION

## **Participation Now! Citizenship Education and Democracy in Times of Change**

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Córdoba, Spain

### **EU Funding of exchange projects with North Africa**

## **Report**

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Introduction of the participants attending: 8 participants (countries and where they work)

#### *Who are your funders?*

The participants shared their funding experiences and where they receiving funding through: universities, government, donations, companies, philanthropist, income-generating activities, calls for projects from different institutions and embassies.

#### *Funding sources could be divided into:*

- EU institutions/EU Funding (Youth Programme, Council of Europe-European Youth Foundation/European Youth Forum/Life Long Learning)
- Foundations (Anna Lindh Foundation, Open Society Foundation, Friedrich Ebert, King Baudouin Foundation (BE), Bernard van Leer Foundation (NL), etc.)
- Corporate programmes providing funding through citizenship and corporate social responsibility programs and initiatives such as Nike Foundation, Johnson & Johnson, Soros Foundation, Sawiris Foundation, Fundació La Caixa (SP), Lottery foundations, British Council, and Westminster Foundation for Democracy.
- Embassies/Political parties
- Individual philanthropists – provides several tips on how to approach wealthy individuals.

#### *Funding you can obtain for your organization/project through:*

- Open calls for proposals
- Grants/prizes/sponsorship
- In-kind including: material/time/experiences/trainers/speakers/coaches or mentors/ volunteering/space
- Specific actions – once a year calls/thematic calls

#### *When identifying a funder what do you need to do? (general steps)*

- Research and study the funder.
- Identify their priorities and focus areas for the year or set of years.
- Type of activities they supports.
- Research winning projects or organizations that worked with them before (see if you know them or can collaborate with them).

- Learn about their financial/funding regulations and the possibilities for co-funding (are you eligible to apply for their funds? which entities can they fund and how, what requirements/conditions do they have).
- Set a meeting to present a project proposal 1-2 pages and introduce the organization
- Identify the risks in your project and what could go wrong
- What's the added value of your project and why it's different than what is already being done
- The sustainability of your project and how do you foresee to maintain it in the long run (will you always need to depend on external funding?!)
- Who is going to be involved in the project (stakeholders and other partners) – make it attractive for the funder to be part of the team.
- Keep your donor in the loop - Even if you don't get the funding - keep them informed on what has been going on and the progress of the project.

*Participants shared their personal experiences on funding and what were some of their challenges in getting funding:*

Donor fund is the bases for most of the organizations present, which unfortunately has many limitations and restrictions, and under the current financial crisis, these limitations are even more restrictive for new organizations and initiatives. This is also true when working with organizations in the MENA region where registration and tax regulations are different from those in Europe or the US making it harder for a group of young people who had recently started or created an organization to receive funding especially in the presence of some donor favourites/darlings (organizations that the donor prefers to work with), leading many these small initiatives to close down before they had a chance to actually work.

Another challenge, many of the organizations face, is the lack of funding for core-costs. Many donors refuse to include staff and/or office costs in their project budgets making it difficult for many organizations, especially youth led ones, to sustain its work. As an alternative people resort to finding part time or full time work elsewhere while working on the projects/NGO in their spare time.

Instability and uncertainty: This point has two levels on one side there is the instability of the organizational structures of some of the NGOs that are volunteer based, or project based. But there is also the instability in the region which makes funders less willing to give a large sum of money for a long period of time and would rather have short term investment in specific areas/sections/themes of a project than put their money in a long term project of 1-2 years when many countries in the region are instable and the project may be interrupted due to demonstrations, government changes or regulations, the concerns that were raised about foreign funding (especially in Egypt), and the high turnover in NGOs.

Other challenges that the participants mentioned were lack of time and resources to write a good application and develop a project, creativity in approach, the difficulties when combining co-funding as each donor has his own regulations, difficulties in promoting one off events and festivals, the high costs of getting external experts to guarantee a better performance levels in the project which can form a constrain on the budget, having the correct invoicing system for all the partners, book-keeping and financial regulations that are different for each funder, availability for quality/experienced volunteers all year around and not only during specific events, the importance in providing volunteers as a resource in the organization with the proper coaching and mentoring, and the difficulties in finding core funding to cover office rent/electricity/equipment, etc.



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***Biographical note:***

Maram Hassan Anbar is a consultant on Euro-Arab relations and cooperation projects, and intercultural and interreligious dialogue. She has a BA in comparative politics from the American University in Cairo and an M.Sc in Human Ecology from Vrije Universiteit Brussel. During the past 15 years she has worked as a project coordinator in the development and implementation of training and consultation programs with civil society organizations and European institutions in the framework of youth and capacity development programs. She has also training and facilitation experience in participatory dialogue, social inclusion, Non-Formal Learning (NFL), migration, Youth in Action Programme (YiA), human rights education (HRE), youth employment, global education, volunteering, e-learning, and training for trainers. In her capacities as a consultant and trainer Maram Hassan Anbar has collaborated with a number of organizations and networks such as: Council of Europe, the European Commission, European Youth Forum, League of Arab States, Anna Lindh Foundation, SALTO Inclusion, Open Society Foundation, Population Council, local municipalities, and international NGOs, and is a member of the SALTO-Youth trainers, Soliya coach, expert database of the European Commission and Council of Europe Partnership on Youth, League of Arab States pool of trainers, and European Youth Forum pool of trainers (between 2008-2011).