



DEMOCRACY COMMISSION SMALL GRANTS PROGRAM

Embassy of the United States of America
Baku, Azerbaijan

APPLICATION GUIDELINES

This document provides instructions on how to correctly complete and submit the Application Form for U.S. Embassy Baku Democracy Commission Small Grants Program. Applications that do not meet minimum requirements set forth in this document will not be considered.

Application form and application guidelines for Democracy Commission Small Grants Program may be downloaded from the website of U.S. Embassy Baku (<http://azeri.azerbaijan.usembassy.gov>) or by sending a request to BakuDemCom@state.gov

GENERAL Language and Formatting Requirement

- All proposals must be in English.
- When filling out this application electronically, you can add space as needed. However, please adhere to the indicated space limits in sections II (project summary), III (background of the applicant organization) and VI (project goal).
- Please do not make any modifications to the formatting (other than adding space as needed).
- Before saving the application form, please go to “page setup” and select “paper size: letter.”
- Then save the application form under the English version of your organization’s name (go to “save as,” put under “file name” the name of your organization in English and press “save”).
- **All budgets must be submitted in a separate Microsoft Excel Document.**
- Please name your budget excel document with the English version of your organization’s name (go to “save as,” put under “file name” the name of your organization in English and press “save”).

I. GENERAL INFORMATION

While the entire proposal must be in English, we require two pieces of information in English and in Azeri (written in the Azeri Latin alphabet): the name and the address of the (applicant) organization.

Carefully review your contact information (address including ZIP code, phone number, mobile number and email address). Please make sure that the e-mail address you have provided is correct and functional as you will be contacted primarily via e-mail by the

program's administrative staff.

II. PROJECT SUMMARY

In this section, we ask you to summarize the project idea, the project strategy and activities and the results and benchmarks using a maximum of three to four sentences for each point.

The project summary gives the Democracy Commission a first idea what your proposal is all about.

In later sections of this application, you will be able to lay out the project goal, the project strategy and activities and the expected results and benchmarks in more detail (sections VI, VII and VIII of the application).

Tip: Do the project summary last. Completing sections VI, VII and VIII first will make it easier for you to summarize your project well.

III. BACKGROUND OF APPLICANT ORGANIZATION

This section is about your organization's eligibility as well as its expertise and experience.

Eligible are Azerbaijani non-profit, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), non-profit community organizations and other non-profit associations. An organization or association does not need to be registered to be eligible for a Democracy Commission grant. However, if your organization is registered, please indicate the date of registration and attach a copy of the official registration papers.

On no more than one page, explain when and why the organization was founded, its mission and goals, its principle activities and achievements, its funding, its registration status and its staffing pattern. Please describe the role and positions of the permanent staff members and attach a CV, resume or personal history, no longer than a page, of each of the staff members who will be carrying out the proposed project.

IV. PREVIOUS/OTHER FUNDING

Answer all questions completely and truthfully. Any misrepresentation may result in the cancellation of an awarded grant.

V. OFFICE EQUIPMENT (IN ENGLISH):

Answer all questions completely and truthfully. Any misrepresentation may result in the cancellation of an awarded grant.

VI. PROJECT GOAL

While you might briefly explain the underlying problem (no more than three to four sentences), the main focus of this section is the project goal. What is it that the project will accomplish? Be specific, detailed and clear. Include who will benefit from the project and how. The description of the goal must justify spending money on this project.

Please limit this section of the application to no more than one page.

VII. PROJECT STRATEGY AND PROJECT ACTIVITIES

First, describe your overall strategy and how this strategy will accomplish the project goal described in section VI.

Second, give a step-by-step account of all activities that will take place during the project implementation. Who is going to carry out what kind of activities? When? Where? Who is going to participate? What is that going to cost? Be specific, detailed and clear.

Include a work plan that details on a week-by-week basis which activities will be implemented.

Include an itemized agenda for any training, seminars, meetings that you plan to hold.

Publications

Please note that funding for any kind of publications is limited and only publications with high quality content will be accepted. Instead of using grant funds to develop new brochures, pamphlets, leaflets or booklets you should do some research on publications already available that can be reproduced and used when implementing your project. Talk to other international and national NGOs that may have already produced similar materials. If you still want to produce your own materials for distribution, **you have to submit the full content of the publication along with your application.**

VIII. BENCHMARKS

How will you measure your project's achievements? Describe in detail, which benchmarks you will use during the project's implementation to assess your performance, that is, the extent to which the project achieves the goal described in section VI.

IX. PROJECT SUSTAINABILITY

Explain how the project is going to continue **and/or** how achieved results will be sustained after the grant is finished.

If no statement on sustainability is included, it will disqualify your proposal.

X. EXCEL BUDGET

ALL BUDGETS MUST BE SUBMITTED IN A SEPARATE MICROSOFT EXCEL DOCUMENT.

All expenses must be calculated in advance and be realistic. Although maximum grant amount is \$24,000 Democracy Commission usually selects for funding projects with much smaller budgets.

Please prepare a line-by-line list of expenses and complement it with some budget narrative. Each line must be sufficiently detailed as to enable a reviewer to understand how a number was determined. The budget narrative puts the numbers into context.

E.g.,

Transportation:

	Number of persons	Direction	Cost for return trip	Number of weeks	Total Cost	Cost-sharing	Requested
Project Coordinator	1	Baku - Fizuli - Baku	\$ 8	6	\$48	\$5	\$43
Trainer	2	Baku - Fizuli - Baku	\$ 8	24	\$384	\$39	\$345
Sub-total					\$432	\$44	\$388

During the implementation of the trainings (six months), two trainers will travel from Baku to Fizuli at the beginning of each week and return from Fizuli to Baku at the end of the same week. The Project Coordinator will travel from Baku to Fizuli and back once a month.

Programming expenses

Programming expenses cover all costs for the programmatic activities. (E.g. In the case of a conference or training, this may include room rental, travel/per diem/lodging expenses, honoraria for specialists, costs for educational materials). Note: **Per diem/food expenses together can never exceed 10% of the total grant.**

Salaries

Salaries should be paid only to the people who are or will be in a contractual relationship and who will spend a majority of their time on the project. The salary should reflect the percentage of their time to be spent on the project. (E.g. If 80% of somebody's time is spent on the project, 80% of his or her salary should be paid for by the project.) Salary levels must be in line with local salaries for a comparable activity. Please show taxes separately.

Equipment

Equipment includes computers, copying machines, printers or other technical devices. If the proposal seeks funding to purchase equipment, the application must specify equipment. E.g. *One Pentium IV 2.26 GHz RAM 256 DDL266 CD-ROM 52xASUS*. Ideally, the proposal should include estimates from three different vendors. Any equipment requested must be necessary for the fulfillment of the project. E.g., *the purchase of a computer is not a justified expense to organize a conference.*

Administrative expenses

Administrative expenses can include communication expenses (E.g., phone, fax, e-mail, postage), copying and print services and office materials (E.g., paper, toner, envelopes).

Bank charges

Bank charges can not exceed 1% of the total grant. Please note that any interest earned on the grant sum must be returned to the U.S. Government.

Entertainment costs

Entertainment costs (E.g., alcoholic beverages, cocktail parties) are not allowable expenses.

“Miscellaneous expenses,” “unforeseen items,” “etc.”

A budget line item for “miscellaneous expenses,” “unforeseen items,” or “etc.” is not permissible.

XI. OTHER

This section gives you the opportunity to point out that you should be given credit for fulfilling one or more of the qualifiers listed in the solicitation.

XII. ASSISTANCE IN PROJECT PREPARATION

Be brief (a simple listing is sufficient) but answer the question truthfully. Any misrepresentation may result in the cancellation of an awarded grant.

XIII. NAME/SIGNATURE

Review your application carefully before typing your name. Remember that any misrepresentation in the application may result in cancellation of the awarded grant. If your project is selected you will need to provide a signature.

XIV. SUBMISSION

All proposals must be submitted by email. No hardcopies, please!

Send your email to: BakuDemCom@state.gov

Subject line of the email: Your organization’s Name – Democracy Commission Proposal

Body of the email: No text necessary. Just put for following information:

- The name of your organization,
- The name of the project coordinator and
- The project coordinator’s telephone number/cell phone number
- And most importantly, don’t forget the attachments!

Attachments of the email:

- The application form (Please name your application form with the English version of your organization’s name - go to “save as,” put under “file name” the name of your organization in English and press “save”) Please omit from the organizations name words that identify the type of organizations such as “Public Union”.
- The budget as **a separate Microsoft Excel Document** (Please name your budget excel document with the English version of your organization’s name - go to “save as,” put under “file name” the name of your organization in English and press “save”) and

- Other attachments:
 - ✓ Official registration papers of the applicant organization (if applicable, please name the document “registration papers”)
 - ✓ CVs, resumes or personal histories, no longer than a page, of each staff member who will be carrying out the proposed project (please name each document “CV of name)
 - ✓ A work plan that details activities on a week-by-week basis (please name the document “work plan”)
 - ✓ An agenda for any training, seminars, meetings that you plan to hold (please name the document “agenda”)
 - ✓ A specific distribution list for any publications (if applicable, please name the document “publication distribution list”)
 - ✓ The full content of the publication, if you seek funding for it.

How will you know that we have received your email successfully?

If your email was received successfully, you will receive an e-mail from the program staff once it has reviewed the proposal and determined that it meets the minimum criteria to be considered by the review committee.

MONITORING, REPORTING AND EVALUATION

If the Democracy Commission awards a grant to your organization, please be aware that the Embassy will monitor the project implementation and will visit your projects during implementation.

In addition, you will need to submit detailed interim and final financial and program reports. You will need to present materials documenting your work (e.g., photos, newspaper articles, signature lists of participants) as well as publications and, of course, detailed receipts for all expenses.