



INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR DEMOCRACY AND ELECTORAL ASSISTANCE

**OPEN CALL FOR SUBMISSION OF GRANT PROPOSALS FOR INCLUSIVE LESOTHO – PARTICIPATION
COMPONENT**

Call for Proposal Reference No: **2026-01-084**

Deadline for Submissions: Proposals must be submitted on or before **23:59 CET, March 6, 2026**. Late submissions will not be considered for evaluation.

Address for Submissions: E-mail: tendersubmissions@idea.int

This email address is set up with auto-response to acknowledge emails received. In the event that you did not receive an autoreply, please send a text message **prior to the deadline for submission** (NO CALLS, CALLS WILL NOT BE ANSWERED) to this number **+46725375735**. In your text message, please provide the following:

- Tender reference no. and title
- Email address you used for submission.
- Date and Time, you sent your submission (e.g., 01 February 2026, 12:00 CET).
- **Please also send the above information to tender@idea.int before the deadline for submission.**

Format for Submissions: Proposals must be submitted by email. Technical and Financial proposals must be submitted in separate files **using the templates provided on this call.**

The following text should be put in the subject field of the email:
Tender No:2026-01-084 Technical and Financial Proposals for Inclusive Lesotho – Participation Component – Do not open before 23:59 (CET), March 6, 2026

Email address for Clarifications: tender@idea.int

A question and answer (Q&A) session will be hosted via Microsoft Teams. [Click here to join the meeting](#) on the **February 19, 2026 at 10 am Lesotho time (Meeting ID: 337 275 653 230 23 and Passcode: Wt6vg7YW)**. Recording of the session will be saved and shared on our website. Further clarifications may be requested via e-mail no later than **February 26, 2026** at the above email address.

Note: response to requests for clarifications will be issued to all tenderers on our website <http://www.idea.int/>. Therefore, tenderers are advised to check the website regularly during the process.

Note *there are two different email addresses as outlined above, one to be used for Submission of your final proposal and the second one to be used for clarifications and other related correspondence.*

INVITATION TO SUBMIT PROPOSALS

Section 1. General Information

1.1 The International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (International IDEA) is an intergovernmental organization established in 1995, with member states across all continents, which aims to support sustainable democracy world-wide and assist in the development of institutions and the culture of democracy.

Overview Of Inclusive Lesotho Project

International IDEA, in partnership with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in Lesotho, has commenced implementation of a four-year European Union funded Action (2025–2029). The Project is designed to enhance participation and inclusion within Lesotho’s political system and to strengthen the administration of elections. Its strategic approaches focus on expanding citizens’ participation— particularly for women, youth, persons with disabilities, LGBTIQ+ communities, and other vulnerable groups—and improving awareness of transparency in political financing. The following are the expected results of the action:

1.1.1 Overall objective of the Inclusive Lesotho – Participation Component Project: To enhance participation and inclusion in the political system in Lesotho and to strengthen the administration of elections.

1.1.2 Specific Objective/Outcome: Strengthen citizens’ participation and inclusion (especially women, persons with disabilities, youth and other vulnerable groups) in democratic and electoral processes, and their awareness on political financing transparency.

1.1.3 Expected outputs of the Inclusive Lesotho – Participation Component:

- i. **Output 1:** Increased participation and inclusion of youth, women, persons with disabilities, LGBTIQ+ and other vulnerable groups in democratic and election processes.
- ii. **Output 2:** Enhanced transparency of elections through CSO and media monitoring and reporting of elections.
- iii. **Output 3:** Enhanced awareness of internal democracy, inclusiveness and gender equality within political parties and transparency in their financing.

1.2 International IDEA now invites proposals from qualified Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) with presence in Lesotho. Interested organisations must demonstrate commitment and capacity to work at different levels to scale up current and prospective programme interventions in support of output 1. Please refer to section 1.2.1 below, for details of the output.

The objectives of the call are:

- i. To strengthen the capacity and participation of CSOs in actions that increase inclusion of marginalized groups in electoral processes

- ii. To enhance collaboration between strategic partners such as the Independent Electoral Commission (IEC) and CSOs involved in civic and voter education initiatives in Lesotho

Available outputs (result areas) for this call:

1.2.1 Output 1 (Component 1) – Increased participation and inclusion of youth, women, persons with disabilities, LGBTIQ+ and other vulnerable groups in democratic and election processes:

This output seeks to strengthen the capacity of the IEC of Lesotho to foster a culture of participation and informed citizenship among all segments of the population. This includes promoting continuous civic and voter education that actively engages women, youth (including out-of-school youth), persons with disabilities, LGBTIQ+ individuals, ethnic minorities, diaspora communities, and other vulnerable groups. The aim is to create an inclusive environment that encourages informed citizenry and active participation in the democratic process. Specifically, the grant is expected to contribute to below main activity:

Activity 1.1.2.2: Provide technical support in the development of long-term civic and voter education plan.

Targeted initiatives for the review include:

- i. Development of civic and voter education materials for various demographics and communities especially the mentioned vulnerable groups.
- ii. Training community volunteers on dissemination of civic and voter education materials.
- iii. In collaboration with the IEC and other identified institutions, disseminate the developed civic and voter education materials to the districts.

Note: The proposal submitted for output 1 must ensure active collaboration and engagement with the IEC and other implementing partners of the project entitled 'Inclusive Lesotho – Participation Component'.

1.3. Implementation Area: The project will be implemented in any of the 10 districts of Lesotho.

1.4. Tentative timeframe: It is anticipated that the grant will commence on **01 May 2026**, and they will have to be completed by **31 December 2028**.

1.5. Estimated budget:

Grants of approximately M600, 000.00 per institution, will be awarded to two (2) individual institutions.

Section 2. Preparation of Proposals

Essential Requirements

2.1 Language: The official language for the proposal, contract, reports and any other documents in relation to the assignment is English.

2.2 Proposals must adequately align with outcome area mentioned above. **Specifically**, grant applications **must** respond to enhancing participation and inclusion of youth, women, persons with disabilities, LGBTIQ+ and other vulnerable groups in democratic and election processes:

2.3 Eligibility criteria

The CSO Grant Applicants must fulfil the following **eligibility criteria**:

- i. Must have physical presence in at least one of the districts applied for as well as wide national coverage and influence. Should be indicated using the narrative proposal template provided.
- ii. Must demonstrate commitment to civic and voter education initiatives and advancement of democracy. Should be indicated using the narrative proposal template provided.
- iii. Must be registered with the Lesotho Law Office as a legal, non-profit, non-governmental organization/Civil Society organization for at least 5 years with audited financial statements. Proof of legal registration certificate must be attached to the grant application.
- iv. Must have the proven capacity to plan, budget, implement, monitor and manage projects. Should be demonstrated in the narrative and budget proposal templates provided.
- v. Must have the proven capacity to manage and be accountable for project costs, providing timely quarterly narrative and financial reports, with functional internal control systems. Should be demonstrated in the narrative and budget proposal templates provided.
- vi. Must be financially sustainable, have robust financial controls and must demonstrate commitment to due diligence procedures. Should be demonstrated in the narrative and budget proposal templates provided.
- vii. Must have at least 2 most recent years audited financial statements ending 2022. A proof of two most recent audited report must be attached to the grant application.
- viii. Must have well demonstrated and verifiable financial management systems and reporting capacity. Should be demonstrated using the narrative proposal template provided.
- ix. Provide at least 2 letters of recommendation from past/present international donors of similar projects you have implemented (recommendation letter should include a minimum of; name of the funder, title of project implemented, email address and telephone number of contact person).
- x. Must demonstrate commitment to mainstreaming Gender and Social Inclusion and fundamental human rights, e.g., equality, non-discrimination, and human dignity. Should be demonstrated in the narrative proposal template provided.
- xi. **The following categories of entities are not eligible to receive grant funding:**
 - Individuals
 - Political parties
 - For-profit organizations
 - Government institutions
 - Faith-based organization whose objectives are discriminatory and/or whose main objective for the grant is of a religious nature.

2.4 The proposal documents.

i. Narrative Proposal.

The official language for submitting the proposal and any other supporting documents related to the application is English. The proposal should be provided using the attached proposal template following the detailed guideline within the template.

ii. Financial Proposal (Budget)

- Budget must be presented in Lesotho Loti.
- The price should be broken down using the attached template (showing description, quantities, unit rates and totals) in line with the narrative proposal.
- Presentation of the budget should be broken down into Direct costs and Indirect costs. Direct costs of the Financial Proposal must be divided into three (3) main headings:
 - 1.1 Staff Costs, not to exceed 35% of the total direct costs of the budget
 - 1.2 Office Costs, not to exceed 7% of the total direct costs of the budget
 - 1.3 Activities Costs, not to exceed 58% of the total direct costs of the budget

Declaration of Honour Form C

1.4 Please tick YES/NO as applicable. Please complete the form and submit it together with Technical and Financial Proposal.

1.5 In Section 3 of the Declaration and Honour Form, in the absence of conflict of interest, please mark this section Yes.

(3) declares that the above-mentioned person has no unresolved conflict of interest that may cause the impartiality the process of awarding the contract to be questioned, except as disclosed		
SELECTION CRITERIA	YES	NO
(a) no person involved in the preparation of the bid is or was a Staff Member or Member of the Board of Advisers at International IDEA in the six months preceding the submission of the bid	☐	☐
(b) no person involved in the preparation of the bid is a family member of a Staff Member or Member of the Board of Advisers at International IDEA in the six months preceding the submission of the bid	☐	☐
(c) No Staff Member or Member of the Board of Advisers at International IDEA has a material financial interest in the bidder	☐	☐

Section 3. Submission of Proposals

- 3.1 Technical and Financial Proposals must be submitted in separate files and marked accordingly. The full details on how to submit proposals (deadline and address and format) are under Call for Proposals at the beginning of this document.
- 3.2 Proposals must remain valid for at least 90 days following the deadline for their submission stated under the call for proposals and should be flexible for extension should there be unforeseen delay in the pre-award process. During this period, organizations are expected to keep available the professional staff proposed for the assignment.

Section 4. Evaluation and Selection of Proposals

All applications will be assessed according to the following steps and criteria:

4.1 Step one (1): Opening and Administrative Check – verification of the eligibility of applicants (pre-selection)

During the opening and evaluation check, the following will be assessed:

- i. If the application deadline has been met. Otherwise, the applications are automatically rejected.
- ii. If the application satisfies all the criteria specified in the eligibility criteria and the guidelines specified for completing the narrative and budget templates. This also includes an assessment of eligibility of the proposed action. If any of the requested information is missing or incorrect, the application may be rejected on that **sole** basis and the application will not be evaluated further.

4.2 Step two (2): Evaluation of the full application and notification of outcome from pre-selection stage: Provided all eligibility criteria are met, the Proposals will be evaluated and scored against the following criteria with respective corresponding points as detailed on the table below:

Criteria	Maximum Points	Weighted Score in %
Technical		
Relevance of proposal	15	15%
Quality of result/ Sustainability	10	10%
Rationale of the proposed action	15	15%
Commitment to inclusion and participation	10	10%
Methodology and dissemination plan for CVE	10	10%
Relevant experience	10	10%
Project monitoring, impact, and evaluation/ timeframe and measurability of objectives	5	5%
Risk Mitigation Plan	5	5%
Financial		
Budget and Finance/Value for money	20	20%
Total	100	100%

- i. In line with the above and using the narrative proposal provided, kindly provide evidence in the relevant sections of the template, your specific knowledge and experience for the proposed actions. The maximum technical (narrative proposals) score is **80 points**.
- ii. The financial proposals (budgets) will be verified for consistency with the narrative proposals in terms of work input, if it is reasonable and realistic in the overall proposal, for arithmetical errors and the % of management cost proposed by the applicant. The maximum score is **20 points**.
- iii. Applicant must have a minimum passing score of 75% (i.e., a minimum score of 60 points) for Narrative Proposal to be considered for the Financial Proposal assessment.
- iv. Applicant must have a minimum passing score of 75% (i.e., a minimum score of 15 points) for the Financial Proposal to be considered for Capacity Assessment.

Consolidated Narrative Proposal and Budget Reasonability Score:

- v. Applicant must score a minimum passing technical score of 60 points and a minimum passing budget presentation/reasonableness score of 15 points giving a total of 75% (60+ 15/100) weighted score to be considered for the Capacity Assessment stage of the pre-award process.
- vi. International IDEA reserves the right to reject any or all proposals received and to repeat the invitation if the proposals received do not meet the minimum requirements.

4.3 Step three (3): Capacity Assessment

- i. A detailed capacity assessment for all selected grant applicants will be conducted. A standard assessment format will be used to assess the organizational structure, systems and processes of the applicants. If the applicant does not meet the capacity assessment criteria, or the assessment process reveals that the grant proposal contains erroneous information, the applicant may not be offered Inclusive Lesotho – Participation Component Grant.
- ii. If the proposal review and capacity assessment process are successful, the selected financial proposals will be verified in detail and, if necessary, adjustments will be made to the budget and or the narrative proposal during negotiations to ensure consistency with the approved technical proposals in terms of work input and to eliminate arithmetical errors. If negotiations are successful, the selected applicants will be awarded the grant. International IDEA reserves the right during the negotiation stage to suggest variations in the number of activities, the scope of action and the budget.

Section 5 Final Considerations

- 5.1. International IDEA will not be bound to select any of the proposals.
- 5.2 The following documents are enclosed with this Call for Proposals:
 - i. Annex A: General Terms and conditions
 - ii. Annex B: Narrative Proposal Template
 - iii. Annex C: Financial Proposal Template
 - iv. Annex D: Declaration on honour on exclusion criteria and selection criteria
 - v. Annex E: Frequently asked questions around call for proposal.
- 5.3 Further information on International IDEA may be found on our website <http://www.idea.int/>
- 5.4 Both the successful and unsuccessful applicants will be notified in writing following the completion of the evaluation and contract award process.

Complaints regarding any aspect of the tender process should be addressed in writing to both the Internal Auditor and the Executive Director at International IDEA. The address is tender.complaints@idea.int