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## Social Impact Fund (SIF)

### Criteria & Guideline

#### Introduction

The Cook Islands Social Impact Fund (SIF) is a contestable grant fund administered by the Ministry of Internal Affairs. The SIF is designed to contribute to the achievement of the national sustainable development plan goals through national social policies developed by the Ministry.

The SIF is fully funded by the Cook Islands Government to support Registered Civil Society Organizations (CSO), Civil Society groups, Sports and Faith based organizations and Community groups. Calls for proposals to access the SIF are made at least once a year for Project Funding and once every three years for Programme Funding.

#### Purpose

The SIF provides for the delivery of quality services by Civil Society Organizations to meet the needs of those most vulnerable and is focused on priority areas.

- Gender Equality;
- Children and Youth;
- The Elderly;
- Disabilities;
- Domestic Violence; and
- Mental Health;

Cross cutting - for proposals that meet the needs of more than one of the above priorities may be considered provided that clear links can be shown to benefit those areas.

#### These areas are primarily aligned to:

- Goal 9: Accelerate gender equality, empower all women and girls and advance the rights of Youth, the elderly and disabled
- Goal 7: Improve health and promote healthy lifestyles

Proposals that meet the needs of one or more of the above priorities may be considered, provided that clear links can be shown.

## Civil Society Partnership Policy

National Social Policies (Administer by the Ministry of Internal Affairs) Social Impact Fund Administration processes and Documents Training and support to Cook Islands CSO's

Priority Areas	Outcomes
<b>Gender Equality</b>	Participation of women and girls, men and boys, transgender in economic development. Equitable participation of women, men and transgender in decision making, governance and political representation.
<b>Children and Youth</b>	Improved living conditions, health and welfare of children The care and protection of children and young people at risk. Participation of youth in economic, education & lifelong opportunities Strengthening strong family values, cultural and support systems.
<b>Disabilities</b>	Participation of people with disabilities in economic and employment, education, cultural, spiritual and recreation at all levels of family, community, island and national life. Provision and support services to improve living conditions, health and welfare to all persons with disabilities and their families.
<b>The Elderly</b>	Participation of older persons in economic and employment, education, cultural, spiritual, and recreation at all levels of family, community, island and national life. Provision and support services to improve living conditions, health and welfare of older persons.
<b>Domestic Violence</b>	Elimination of violence against women and children Provision of support services to survivors, perpetrators and families of domestic violence
<b>Mental Health</b>	Participation of people with mental disorders in all levels of family, community, island and national life Provision of social care services in community based such as Suicide, NCD's and Respite care.
<b>Cross Cutting</b>	For the proposals that meet the needs of more than one of the above priorities may be considered provided that clear links can be shown to benefit those areas.

## **Project Funding**

This is for small scale initiatives that can be completed within one year for proposals between **\$5,000 to \$20,000.**

## **Fund Conditions**

Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) applying for funds must:

- Be a Cook Islands registered CSO and operate in the Cook Islands;
- Have a local bank account in the name of the CSO, with a minimum of two signatories;
- Maintain high standards of governance, conduct, and meet their reporting and accountability obligations;
- Obtain Island Government endorsement and ensure alignment with the Island Development Plan, if they operate in the Pa Enua;
- Liaise with the Revenue Management Division, of the Ministry of Finance and Economic Management (MFEM) regarding tax obligations for employees/staff such as Pay as You Earn (PAYE) Tax, including Valued Added Tax (VAT) reimbursement and exemptions as a registered CSO; and
- Liaise with the Cook Islands National Superannuation Fund (CINSF) Office regarding superannuation obligations for employees.

## **SIF does not support the following activities and costs:**

- Prizes, Gifts and Awards;
- Cash Awards or Prizes including Donations;
- Micro credit loans;
- Construction – other than assisting with resourcing the inside to provide a service and other improvements (case by case);
- Social functions catering – other than workshops, conferences, awareness and meetings (purchase of alcohol is prohibited);
- Scholarships and internships;
- Political activities – other than education and voter awareness programmes;
- Government Projects;
- Humanitarian aid (e.g. food and relief supplies after cyclones);
- Beauty Pageants;
- Projects which benefit only individuals or individual families;
- Purchase of motor vehicles as defined in the Cook Islands Government Financial Policies & Procedures Manual;
- Agricultural chemicals; and
- Religious/evangelical activities:
  - ✓ designed to promote a particular religious' belief e.g. production or distribution of religious material, establishment of churches;
  - ✓ projects which require beneficiaries/communities to follow a particular set of beliefs in order to be involved in the project;

- ✓ projects which have multiple objectives, need to be specific;
- ✓ projects where the beneficiary is a religious institution as distinct from the local community; and
- ✓ church groups will be required to open their services to other church groups and the community.

**Payment, Activity & Training**

All activities and payments for goods and services are to be made only in the Cook Islands. Considerations on a case by case basis will be made where products are not available locally. SIFs will be allocated in an equitable and contestable process, consistent with the Cook Islands Government standards of accountability and transparency as per Part C, section 8 of the Cook Islands Government Financial Policies and Procedures Manual.

Support and training will be provided in results-based planning, delivery and reporting on funded projects and programmes to enable organisations to account for outcomes. In recognition of the value of multiyear funding, long term partnerships will be sought with CSO