

The FutureLab programme launch

Join as a partner to foster social acceptance and inclusion for LGBTI people across Central Europe and the Western Balkans.

Apply with a statement of interest by 3 February 2025, 10:00 CET/ Brussels time.

[News](#), [Inclusion and Equality](#), [Funding](#)

Important update

We accept Statements of Interest until 3 February, 10 am CET, but partner selection is on hold.

Regrettably, the partner selection and funding decisions in the FutureLab programme are temporarily on hold due to the suspension of the U.S. foreign assistance globally.

Our **priority remains to resume the programme** if, and as soon as, the funding is released. The current suspension puts the programme on hold **until the end of April**.

As many organisations have already put time into developing their proposals, we took the decision to still **accept Statements of Interest** by the original **deadline of 3 February, 10:00 CET**. This will support a smooth restart of the selection process if conditions allow. Please note the updated timeline in the sections below.

We recognise the uncertainty this situation creates, along with other impacts of the U.S. funding suspension on many in the movement.

All organisations that decide to go ahead with submitting Statements of Interest despite the uncertainty will receive short **status updates about the FutureLab** as new information comes in.

- Apply with a Statement of Interest by: 3 February 2025, 10:00 CET/ Brussels time
- Please note that partner selection and funding commitments are currently on hold until the end of April due to the global suspension of U.S. foreign assistance, operationalised as a “stop work” order.
- Programme and selection process will be resumed if, and as soon as, the funding is released.
- All organisations that decide to submit Statements of Interest will receive updates about the status of the programme as new information comes in.
- The programme and funding period are expected to last 24 months from the launch of the partner grants.
- Partner profile: LGBTI organisations in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Hungary, Kosovo, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Poland, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, and Slovenia

Purpose and scope

The FutureLab is a transformative programme aimed at fostering social acceptance and inclusion for LGBTI people and at building knowledge and skills in our movement to be strategic and impactful in this work.

The programme is grounded in the idea that LGBTI equality is not just about changes in laws and state policies – it is about reshaping how communities, sectors, institutions, and overall societies perceive, embrace and embed diversity into their systems and practices. We only create lasting societal change by changing the underlying societal attitudes, practices and structures that perpetuate exclusion and polarisation.

At the heart of the programme will be a **two-year partnership with 22 LGBTI organisations across 14 countries in Central Europe and the Western Balkans**: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Hungary, Kosovo, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Poland, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, and Slovenia.

Through **funding, convenings, and learning and capacity strengthening opportunities**, the programme will resource, strengthen and amplify diverse local strategies of LGBTI organisations to create deeply rooted social acceptance and inclusion.

Building on our collective learning and implementation journey with partners in the programme, we will consolidate and offer to the wider movement the **knowledge and skills in support of strong and impactful strategies for social acceptance and inclusion**.

Programme highlights

The FutureLab is designed as a partnership that combines funding, learning, strategizing and networking activities and relies on partners' interest in and commitment to the collective.

As a partner, you will get:

- **Funding for your vision:** Up to 60,000 euro over two years towards a focused strategy on a relevant aspect of social acceptance and inclusion, rooted in your socio-political reality; funds are awarded in two consecutive annual grants of up to 30,000 euro each;
- **A learning community:** You will be part of a group of 22 partner organisations working on diverse social acceptance and inclusion projects, and we will learn alongside each other at online and in-person learning and strategic events;
- **Support to your strategy:** Throughout the programme, you can work with consultants to refine specific aspects of your strategy and its implementation when necessary;
- **Amplification and networking opportunities:** Share your lessons and successes at the ILGA-Europe Annual Conference and other movement convenings and contribute to collective learning across the LGBTI movement. The programme will offer partner scholarships to support attendance.

The FutureLab seeks partners ready to drive impactful, localised work that advances social acceptance and inclusion for LGBTI people.

What we fund

The FutureLab will fund **16 organisations in Central Europe** and **6 organisations in the Western Balkans** that:

- **Advance meaningful and lasting social acceptance and inclusion** for LGBTI people;
- **Focus on a specific aspect of acceptance and inclusion** that addresses critical needs and opportunities

within their national context;

- **Propose concrete and well-defined initiatives** aimed at achieving tangible and measurable change;
- **Build on the organisation's past and current work**, leveraging existing expertise, relationships, and insights.

This funding is intended to support initiatives that are both strategic and actionable, contributing to sustained progress within their local contexts.

Proposals can focus on one or both aspects of the programme:

- **Strategic approaches to fostering social acceptance**

Initiatives that aim to shift societal attitudes and behaviors by developing strong collaborations and relationships with relevant stakeholders. These initiatives should promote genuine understanding through, among others, direct outreach, dialogue, and partnership; and empowering and equipping public opinion leaders with the knowledge and tools to be active allies within their domains and beyond. Awareness-raising campaigns, general narrative development and similar work will not be prioritised in this programme.

- **Social inclusion initiatives**

Initiatives that embed inclusive practices and systems within specific public and private institutions and spaces, such as education, healthcare, employment, business, sports, and cultural sectors. These initiatives should build partnerships with key actors in the relevant sectors and may involve joint efforts between LGBTI organisations and other social justice organisations to create broad-based support for inclusion.

Who can apply

The FutureLab invites applications from LGBTI organisations that:

- **Are rooted and actively working in** one of the 14 target countries in Central Europe and the Western Balkans (see the list at the top);
- **Propose focused, context-aware projects** on social acceptance and inclusion: your project should define a clear and tangible goal that aligns with your organisation's ongoing work, builds on past achievements or conclusions, and responds to the unique socio-political realities in your country;
- **Are interested in and committed to learning** alongside other partners and contributing to the movement with their experience: participation in programme activities is expected;
- **Demonstrate capacity to manage funding**: applicants should have recent experience handling grants of a similar size and scope, with established systems to manage a 2-year funding cycle effectively;
- **Have other funding sources**: organisations must show confirmed funding for 2025 that exceeds the annual grant amount provided by this programme (30,000 euros).

Joint applications of LGBTI organisations are welcome but do not automatically increase chances of your success. Organisations applying jointly can apply for up to 60,000 euro per year/ 120,000 for the duration of the programme.

How to apply

- To apply, submit a Statement of Interest using this template by 10:00 am CET/ Brussels time on 3 February 2025 to Seka Topal, Programmes Officer, seka@ilga-europe.org.
- All applicants will be notified of the receipt of their submission via email in the week of 3 February.
- Partner selection and funding commitments are currently on hold until the end of April due to the global suspension of U.S. foreign assistance, operationalised as a "stop work" order.

- Programme and selection process will be resumed if, and as soon as, the funding is released.
- All organisations that decide to submit Statements of Interest will receive updates about the status of the programme as new information comes in, throughout February-April.
- The programme and funding period are expected to last 24 months from the launch of the partner grants.
- If, and once the funding is released and the programme is resumed, successful applicants will be offered a month to submit a full proposal (narrative and budget).
- Projects are expected to last 24 months, with a renewal after the first year.

Questions?

- Reach out with questions to ILGA-Europe's Programmes Officer, Seka Topal, at seka@ilga-europe.org.

Documents

[The FutureLab – Launch and Call for PartnersDownload](#)

[The FutureLab – Template for Statement of InterestDownload](#)