

# How we fund the movement: FAQ's

Here we try to answer all your questions about our re-granting. If you have any further questions don't hesitate to contact us, using our [contact form](#).

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## WHAT KINDS OF GRANTS DO WE AWARD?

*Most often, we provide project funding that helps grantees reach very specific objectives through specific activities.*

First and foremost, we ensure that the grants ILGA-Europe award are strategic for the region. We also strive to provide added value and enable capacity development. With that in mind, we prioritise certain types of re-granting

Most often, we provide project funding that helps grantees reach very specific objectives through specific activities. We strive to be flexible in terms of changing the content and budget of a project, too.

**NOTE:** We do not provide core funding. We know that the movement needs core funding, but our resources are too limited for that. To put it simply, ILGA-Europe is not in a position to offer longer term and more predictable funding to LGBTI groups and organisations, and we therefore do not want to create a reliance on our funding which we cannot sustain. However, ILGA-Europe aims to provide funding which is as flexible as possible. We do this while taking into account that:

- Flexible funding is provided for specific strategies or approaches organisations take to achieve specific long-term goals.
- Flexible funding is awarded to groups that do show how the funding contributes to their larger organisational development.
- Flexible funding may be allocated to any costs, both direct and indirect, in any way the grantee sees fit. The only caveats are that everything should be reasonably linked to the goals — and that costs need to be tracked.
- Flexible funding needs to be spent in its entirety or returned. It cannot be added to organisational reserves, because ILGA-Europe is accountable to report to its funders and auditors how the money we re-grant is used.

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## WHAT DON'T WE FUND?

ILGA-Europe does not fund mainstream groups that don't work with the LGBTI community as their primary target group. We believe that mainstream groups generally have access to various types of funding and that supporting

LGBTI movements leads to more sustainable change.

We do not prioritise funding organisations/groups/places that have access to significant resources locally (whether those resources are coming from governments, companies and/or local foundations).

In cases where ILGA-Europe doesn't need to play the role of an intermediary, we don't stand in the way of groups accessing funding directly from funders.

Organisations outside Europe and Central Asia.

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## **WHAT'S OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH GRANTEES?**

In our relationship with grantees, we value open, reciprocal and transparent communication.

At ILGA-Europe, we acknowledge that a funder-grantee relationship undeniably involves an unequal power relationship between the funder and grantee. As a funder, we decide what our funding focuses on, who we fund and how much we fund — and can decide to stop funding certain organisations.

To most organisations, we are also the European/Central-Asian LGBTI umbrella organisation of which they are members and in which they have voting rights. In practice, this means that many grantees are our members and have a direct say in our overall governance: they get to decide on the strategic direction of the organisation and have a say in who is on the board. However, members do not have a direct say in the daily operations of the organisation — so they cannot influence how grant-making decisions are made.

Besides being a funder and umbrella organisation, ILGA-Europe also works to strengthen the movement's overall capacities. We work to set standards and advocate alongside groups for LGBTI rights. In other words: our relationships with organisations are complex and often multi-layered.

When it comes to our grant-making, we know that being in an unequal power relationship brings about a responsibility to ensure that we fully respect organisations' autonomy. We trust grantees in what they are doing and this is why we fund them. We refer to organisations receiving money from us as grantees — to recognise the kind of relationship that we have with them as a funder.

In our relationship with grantees, we value open, reciprocal and transparent communication. From ILGA-Europe's side, we commit to being held accountable to the decisions we make. If we have to say no to a funding application, we explain why. When we have questions for grantees, we explain *why* we ask for something. If we ask for input or contributions to our own work, we explain the context — and show understanding if a grantee can't deliver. We commit to being mindful of grantees' time and capacity by not overloading them with requests for information. We offer understanding around the challenges that grantees are dealing with, and whenever possible, we offer to support them in addressing barriers. In our communication with grantees, we aim to support — not inquire.

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## **WE VALUE ACCOUNTABILITY. WHAT DOES THAT MEAN?**

A strong LGBTI movement needs to be trustworthy and reliable. Therefore, grantees are accountable to their funders — including ILGA-Europe.

Accountability in activists' work exists across many different levels. The first level is community. Whether an organisation is small or big, registered or not registered — we value initiatives that demonstrate clear principles, practices and decision-making that keep them accountable to the communities they serve. In other words: the projects we support need to serve the people on the ground.

The second level of accountability sits with administration: grantees must ensure legal compliance and good governance. They need to abide by national laws and policies — whether they have to do with fiscal regulations, regulations around how civil society functions and/or broader laws and policies.

We acknowledge that in some countries, organisations work in contexts where governments have designed laws and policies that effectively aim to undermine the work of LGBTI groups and wider civil society. In such cases, we actively work with groups on the ground to help them find ways to continue making an impact while staying within the boundaries of national laws.

A strong LGBTI movement needs to be trustworthy and reliable. Therefore, grantees are accountable to their funders — including ILGA-Europe. We require that grantees are accountable in terms of the work they set out to do in their grant applications. This means that we ask them to report how they spend money and implement their work. Part of the reason behind this is that ILGA-Europe is accountable to our own funders.

If there's a dispute between grantees and ILGA-Europe, the Executive Board is responsible for dealing with the problem.

We understand that financial and administrative requirements can be burdensome for small organisations and groups. That is why we make small grants available in which we practise lower levels of scrutiny around financial and administrative management. In these cases, we work with grantees to clarify the minimum level of requirements that we put in place. Then, we coach grantees to ensure they comply with regulations and strengthen their financial and administrative capacities to implement grants.

With the above in mind, ILGA-Europe has developed extensive resource materials that can be found in our resource centre, [The Hub](#). We also provide training webinars for grantees and provide one-to-one coaching whenever we have the capacity.

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## **HOW DO WE HELP GRANTEES STRENGTHEN THEIR CAPACITIES?**

Our aim is to provide grantees with useful learning opportunities to support their work. That can look like coaching, making learning materials available or organising opportunities for peer-learning.

ILGA-Europe strives to document learning, as well — so that we can make it even more widely available to the movement. Sometimes, we'll ask grantees to share their learnings with us through interviews, peer-learning sessions or at a conference. That way, the learnings they get through their work can benefit others in the movement.

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## **HOW DO WE WORK WITH RISKS?**

We seek to be flexible in how we provide support, so that we can mitigate risk and create an environment that increases our collective capacity to support change in challenging environments.

Re-granting inevitably comes with trying out things that haven't been done before, learning from successes and mistakes and taking risks. In fact, part of our spirit at ILGA-Europe is to support creative approaches to change and to support grantees working in restrictive environments. It's logical, then, that risk-taking is a paramount to reaching success. We also know that in many places where we work, projects might fail due to external pressure or risk.

Being aware of these risks doesn't mean we can't or won't support projects. We also accept that not all of the projects we support will reach the outcomes we had all planned for. Instead, we value the learning that results from mistakes or failures and aim to leverage it to proactively inform future work. Moreover, we encourage open and

honest communication about learning with our grantees. While ILGA-Europe is ‘the funder’, we will never rebuke grantees for failing to meet their planned goals as long as they demonstrate a willingness to learn.

We seek to be flexible in how we provide support, so that we can mitigate risk and create an environment that increases our collective capacity to support change in challenging environments. What do we ask from grantees? To ensure that learning is deeply embedded in their everyday work — and that if risks are taken, it happens in an informed way. That way, activists know what to do when things go wrong.

Grant applications submitted to ILGA-Europe usually require the grantee to do some risk assessment. This includes mitigation strategies and a full risk assessment carried out by ILGA-Europe to outline external, internal and financial/administrative risks prior to final approval.

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## HOW DO WE MAKE DECISIONS IN OUR RE-GRANTING PROCESS?

Re-granting can be challenging in a field where resources are scarce — but a wide variety of populations, needs, geographies, realities, challenges and opportunities are present. When it comes to governing our re-granting work, ILGA-Europe is led by a few key principles. We want to be transparent and accountable about how we spend our money; we make funding decisions based on identified needs amongst the communities we serve and where it makes sense for us to invest strategically; and we aim to work in a cost-effective manner. We are accountable to our members and grantees, as well as to our funders. Whether these are institutions, foundations or individual givers — ILGA-Europe needs to be able to demonstrate that our money is well spent. This means that we need to be transparent about how decisions are taken.

To ensure accessibility and transparency – when possible – we re-grant based on open Calls for Proposals that clearly identify priorities and key selection criteria, as well as any other important principles. The only time that calls aren’t open publicly is when the security context of the region prevents us from communicating widely with the LGBTI movement. In such cases, we try as hard as possible to secure email communication.

ILGA-Europe also manages funding opportunities where you can apply on an ongoing basis. These programmes aim to support time-bound opportunities or address threats (for instance, around security issues or campaign opportunities). In some cases, ILGA-Europe preselects partners for proposals. For example, we do this when we make a deeper investment into building certain organisations’ capacities over a longer period of time. [Learn more about our current programmes here.](#)

In decision-making, we sometimes rely on input from external advisers and experts. They assist ILGA-Europe with assessing applications using their skill-based, thematic or regional expertise. Providing advice should not be confused with decision-making: ILGA-Europe always makes the final decision around a grant, based on input from advisors and a risk assessment. ILGA-Europe is legally and financially responsible for grants made; we also carry the reputational responsibility to implement the funds which we re-grant. However, each decision is motivated by a clear rationale to ensure transparency.

## See also





06.04.2022

## How we fund the movement

Re-granting means that ILGA-Europe acts as an intermediary — directing, administrating and distributing money we receive from larger funders to LGBTI organisations. Since we began this [...]

[read more](#)



04.02.2022

### **How we support the movement**

The LGBTI movement is the driving force behind creating sustainable change for LGBTI people. It consists of paid LGBTI activists, NGOs and community groups, volunteers [...]

[read more](#)





06.04.2022

## How we work with funders

That's why we work actively alongside funding institutions – governments, private foundations, individual donors – to raise awareness around the LGBTI movement's funding needs — [...]

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16.06.2022

## Our Current Programmes and Focus Areas

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## **Supporting the Movement**

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