Concept Note Template

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| Working Title | **WeAct 4 EU Rights** |
| Funding body | EU |
| Funding Programme | CERV |
| Duration | 24 months |
| Deadline | *TBC* |
| Budget | *500,000 TBC* |
| Strategic objective(s) addressed | *WeAct* |
| Funder strategic objective(s) addressed | * Strengthening the application of the Charter in the Member States, in particular through awareness raising and capacity building initiatives. |
| Policies and key words mentioned | * Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union * Strategy to strengthen the application of the Charter of Fundamental Rights * topics of the 2022 annual report on the application of the Charter on A thriving civic space for upholding fundamental rights in the EU * combating hate speech and hate crime * The COVID pandemic and the war in Ukraine have contributed to further polarisation and the spread of racist, xenophobic and intolerant speech and conspiracy theories * Protecting, promoting and raising awareness of rights by providing financial support to civil society organisations which are active at local, regional, national and transnational level in promoting and cultivating those rights, thereby also strengthening the protection and promotion of Union values and respect for the rule of law and contributing to the construction of a more democratic Union, democratic dialogue, transparency and good governance. This call for proposals will support several EU policy initiatives, including: European democracy action plan, Communication on ‘A more inclusive and protective Europe: extending the list of EU crimes to hate speech and hate crime’, Commission Communication on Strengthening whistleblower protection at EU level, Rule of law report, Strategy to strengthen the application of the Charter of Fundamental Rights in the EU, the Annual reports on the application of the EU Charter of fundamental rights, Commission Recommendation on protecting journalists and human rights defenders who engage in public participation from manifestly unfounded or abusive court proceedings (‘Strategic lawsuits against public participation’). * Strengthening the application of the Charter in the Member States, in particular through awareness raising and capacity building initiatives. |
| Partners/stakeholders | WeAct + steering group  European Civic Forum  Social Economy Europe  Media Literacy Ireland |
| Target groups | Civil society Groups for capacity building  Awareness raising for the general public |
| Summary | **Problem:**  People are not aware enough of the fundamental role that civil society plays in protecting, promoting and upholding our fundamental rights as European Citizens, nor do they understand or appreciate the work that CSOs do. In an increasingly digital and globalised society, civil society is not connecting with the general public enough to combat the overwhelming wave of disinformation, hate speech and polarising rhetoric in the online world. In Ireland, we’re seeing the impact this has on a sector that has been increasingly hit with crisis after crisis (recession, refugee crisis, COVID, the war on Ukraine, the cost of living, etc.). There has been no respite, and increasingly the general public is unaware, apathetic and even suspicious of the vital work they do. The sector in facing an alarming level of burnout and low morale, and it reports not having the skills to keep up with our changing society. This is also evident across Europe, and is especially alarming in the a shrinking civic space.  **Solution:**  WeAct focuses on solving this issue through campaigning and capacity building. We campaign to the public about the vital work that CSOs do, and we build CSOs capacity to tell their own story.  In WeAct 4 EU Rights, we will accelerate the work that we have been doing in this space, and root it firmly in how the sector delivers on the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights.  It will comprise three main elements:   1. Capacity Building: A series of storytelling, digital campaigning and media literacy training with CSO groups to help them communicate their work more effectively and counteract online disinformation, hate speech, and polarisation. The content of this training will be rooted in the European context with the goal of helping sector representatives to feel part of a wider European context, foster EU solidarity, and encourage more participation in EU policy and funding programmes to support their work. 2. Campaigning: We have an ambitious campaigning strategy in this project which will include social media, video, media, and other channels. The goal is to instil a sense of connection to EU fundamental rights and the key role that CSOs play in fostering that for each and every EU citizen. The video and social media aspect of the campaign will focus on the 6 chapters of the charter, e.g. #WeAct4Dignity, #WeAct4Freedoms, #WeAct4Equality etc. We will create a series of 24 videos highlighting three sector stories connected to three articles under each of chapters. For example, a video on various women’s rights organisations such as the National Women’s Council, Women’s Aid, and Women for Election for “Article 23: Equality between men and women – this does not prevent positive measures for to give advantages to the under-represented gender (in a workplace for example).”   We’ll also encourage sector organisations (especially those trained in the capacity building phase of the project) to tell their stories and connect with the chapter or article of the EU Charter that best relates to their work so that they can also spread the word.   1. Europeanisation: WeAct had huge potential to spread throughout Europe and to be replicated elsewhere in order to promote, celebrate and protect EU Civic Space. We will work closely with our pan EU partners throughout the project to (a) help embed the EU perspective throughout the capacity building and awareness raising phases of the project, (b) bring the campaign and stories told to that EU level by disseminating via their extensive networks, and (c) work together on a number of outputs that would bring WeAct to the EU level including  * A Policy Paper on the Role of CSOs in protecting the EU Charter of Fundamental rights, with a number of recommended measures to support that. This will be presented to EU decision makers at a final conference bringing together those decision makers and CSO representatives in Month 23 of the project. * A “Campaign in a Box” which that can be dissemination through the networks of our pan EU partners for replication throughout the member states. This will include extensive campaigning guidelines, videos, templates, and other materials to allow other groups throughout Europe to follow this campaign. This will be translated into French, Italian and German so that, along with English, it can cover the four most spoken languages in Europe to enable better transferability throughout Europe. Together with our pan-EU partners, we will bring the campaign to EU level and pave the way for a future project that would build even further to a stronger EU campaign. |
| Key outputs/activities/events of this project: | *Activity 1: Project Initiation (months 1 – 3)*   * Initial meetings and planning * Updating of websites and public announcements * Securing contractors such as video makers * Mapping potential organisations to feature in campaign   *Activity 2: Content preparation (months 4 – 9)*   * Preparing content for training in consultation with experts including Media Literacy Ireland * Preparing 24 videos for campaign * Preparing readymade social media posts, graphics, press releases, templates, etc. * Building “Campaign in a Box” Toolkit   *Activity 3: Capacity Building (months 9 – 12)*   * Training series on storytelling and aligning communications with the EU Charter – finding which #WeAct applies to your organisations (e.g. #WeAct4Equality, #WeAct4Freedoms). This includes training on digital storytelling, campaigning, media literacy, writing press releases, engaging with the press, connecting work to policy, advocacy, connecting with broader EU policy, engaging in EU programmes, etc. * Each organisation will be invited to participate in the campaign which launched in Month 13 * The “Campaign in a Box” Toolkit will be finalised based on feedback and ideas generated throughout delivery of the capacity building activity   *Activity 4: Awareness Raising (Months 13 – 20)*   * An ambitious campaign with the goal of * *X views on videos* * *X interactions on social media* * *X features in the media* * *???* * The national campaign will be filtered through our pan-EU partners’ networks to reach the wider EU audience and generate even more engagement, which will be closely monitored throughout so we can record, share and highlight WeAct making its way through Europe. This will also allow us to map future partners for a potential all Europe #WeAct * All aspects of the campaign will be positioned around how each of the stories related to the Charter of Fundamental Human Rights, the importance of CSOs’ role in enforcing them, and what the public can do to better understand and support this vital work * Polling?   *Activity 5: Finalisation and launch of public results (Months 30 – 24)*   * Compilation, analysis and publication of results * Development of the Policy Paper based on project learnings about the Role of CSOs in protecting the EU Charter of Fundamental rights, with a number of recommended measures to support that, along with our pan-EU partners. * A major EU Conference in Dublin with key EU and Irish Government decision makers and civil society representatives to launch the policy paper and celebrate the impact of the project. |