



# Application Guidelines

How to apply for funding to implement a diaspora-led project

Diaspora Project Support (DiPS)  
Diaspora Programme

**July 2025**

The Danish Refugee Council's Diaspora Programme (DP) facilitates, supports and enhances the role of diaspora as agents of humanitarian assistance and development in their country of origin.

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# DIPS FUNDING MECHANISM - KEY UPDATES & TRANSITION STRATEGY (2025)

## Important Updates and Changes to the DiPS Funding Mechanism

### Conclusion of DiPS Engagement in Afghanistan

After 15 years of impactful collaboration, DiPS will conclude its support to Afghan diaspora-led initiatives.

This decision reflects a combination of factors:

- Heightened risks and restrictions on civil society by the de facto authorities
- Operational and financial barriers to fund transfers and project monitoring
- A decline in diaspora engagement

Although DiPS funding in Afghanistan is ending, continued engagement will be available through DRC's Afghan Diaspora Engagement (ADE) initiative, which fosters dialogue, networking, and transnational collaboration.

### Strategic Focus on Somali Diaspora

Going forward, DiPS will focus exclusively on Somali diaspora-led initiatives. Responsibility for the funding mechanism will be transferred to and led by DRC's Somalia Country Office. The Copenhagen-based Diaspora team will continue in a smaller, more focused role, providing support for diaspora capacity building and strategic engagement.

### 2025 as a Transition Year

In July 2025, DiPS will launch its final funding call led by the Copenhagen team. This call will allocate 1.2 million DKK to well-established Somali diaspora organisations based in Denmark.

From 2026 onwards, all funding calls will be managed by the DRC Somalia Country Office. In light of this shift, the governance structure for application selection from 2026 is currently under review.

### Important Dates - 2025 Call Timeline

- First Q&A "How to Apply": 3rd July
- Second Q&A "How to Apply": 21st August
- Application Deadline: 31st August

For partners selected for funding under the 2025 call, this transition means that the Somalia Country Office will lead follow-up and support throughout project implementation. Contracts will also be signed directly with the DRC Somalia Country Office, rather than with DRC HQ in Copenhagen. However, for the 2025 call, the Copenhagen-based team will continue to lead the assessment and project development phase.

# 1. THE DiPS FUND AND APPLICATION PROCESS

## Introduction

Diaspora Project Support (DiPS) grants funding and provides technical support to Somali diaspora in Denmark to implement rehabilitation and/or development projects in their countries of origin or heritage.

To apply for funding from DiPS, you (the diaspora in Denmark) will need to submit online concept note and budget and (in some cases) supporting documents. These documents together make up your application for DiPS funding. This guideline will give you the necessary information to prepare these documents and submit the application. The guideline provides an overview of (i) who can apply for funding; (ii) which activities can be funded and how much funding can be granted; (iii) how to apply for funding; (iv) how the applications are assessed; and (v) what happens if applications are selected for the project development phase.

## DiPS Application Deadline

**The application deadline for the 2025 call is 31<sup>st</sup> of August.**

After submission, your application will undergo a one-month assessment period. If your application is selected for the project development phase, you will have a chance to work closely with the DiPS staff to develop your concept note into a full project. Only after the development phase DiPS will make a final decision on whether your project will receive funding. See the last two chapters in this guideline for more information on how applications are assessed and selected and what the project development phase entails.

## DiPS Support

In the months before an application deadline, DiPS hosts Q&A sessions to support you in preparing your application.

## Types of Grants

The 2025 call targets experienced Somali diaspora organisations working in close collaboration with local partners in Somalia to implement impactful and sustainable projects.

For this call, one type of funding is available:

- **Partnerships between diaspora organisation(s) and local partner(s), with a maximum grant of 300,000 DKK.**

It is Important that you read these guidelines carefully prior to submitting your application.

Please also see important dates p. 14

## 2. WHO CAN APPLY FOR FUNDING?

### The Diaspora Applicant

From 2025, only Somali diaspora organisations in Denmark are eligible to apply for funding through the DiPS fund. Applications may be submitted in collaboration with other Somali diaspora organisations or with representatives from other diaspora organisations. The application must clearly state which organisation is the lead. The lead diaspora applicant must meet the following eligibility criteria:

#### Eligibility Criteria - Lead Diaspora Applicant:

- **You must be an established Somali diaspora organisation. This means your organisation must:**
  - Have a board with at least three members (Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, and Treasurer);
  - Be governed by valid articles of association (statutes or vedtægter in Danish), clearly stating who is authorized to sign on behalf of the organisation (signatories);
  - Be diaspora-led, meaning that the majority of board members self-identify as diaspora;
  - Operate as a non-profit organisation;
  - Have a valid Danish CVR number.
- **Previous experience implementing projects and managing grants of 150,000 DKK or more (proof of previous experience must be submitted together with the application).**
- **Ability to commit to a minimum 10% cash own-contribution of the total project budget applied for (this contribution is not required at the application deadline but must be available during the project period).**
- **If the project is selected for the development phase, the organisation must ensure that at least two diaspora representatives are actively involved in the project's development and implementation. These individuals must be listed as the main contact persons for the project.**
- **Organisations are not eligible to apply if a contact person included in the application – or the diaspora organisation itself – has previously failed a final project assessment for a project funded by DiPS.**
- **A confirmed local partner in the country of implementation.**

If you submit an application in collaboration with other diaspora organisations or representatives from other diaspora organisation, only the lead applicant must have previous experience from implementing a grant of over 150,000 DKK.



## Local Partner

As a new requirement from 2025, all applicants must have a local partner to be eligible to apply for or implement a DiPS-funded project. While most DiPS-funded projects have already been implemented in collaboration with local partners, this is now a formal requirement.

This change follows the external evaluation of DiPS conducted in 2024, which examined how DiPS programming can better support localisation. To strengthen localisation and promote sustainability, all funded projects must be implemented in close partnership with local actors and involve strong participation from the local community.

Examples of local partners include:

- Non-governmental organisations (NGOs)
- Formal representative bodies of the community (e.g. Community Development Councils)
- Local branches of the diaspora organisation
- Local volunteer networks

The local partner must be a registered entity at the local, regional, or national level.

### Any local partner will need to meet the below criteria:

- Will not make profit through participating in the project
- Is willing to undergo DRC's due-diligence assessment and vetting procedure to ensure that the entity or individuals representing the entity have not been involved in criminal or unethical activities such as corruption or terrorism.

Local partners will also need to have the means to receive and manage funds transferred by the diaspora organisation or DRC. These requirements will be agreed upon during the project development phase and will depend on regulations of DRC, local partner structure, and the structure and status of banking systems in the country of implementation.

Please be aware that if funding is granted for the project, the relation with DRC will be governed by the contract signed between DRC and the diaspora organisation, and it is the contract-holding diaspora organisation's responsibility to uphold stipulations within that contract.

## 3. WHAT PROJECTS CAN BE FUNDED?

### Project objective and activities

The project must contribute to rehabilitation and/or development for people affected by conflict and displacement in Somalia.

#### Funding cannot be provided for:

- Emergency humanitarian response projects
- Projects that carry a political or religious message
- Projects that discriminate against individuals or groups within the target communities
- Projects intended to generate profit or provide financial benefit to individuals or organisations involved in the management or implementation of the project

### Duration

The project should have an implementation period of a maximum of 12 months.

### Target group, areas and project location

Project activities can only be supported if they target people affected by conflict and displacement in Somaliland, Puntland and South Central (Galmudug, Hirshabelle, South West, Jubaland and Banaadir).

Projects should target entire communities or sub-groups of communities. Projects targeting individuals, exclusive groups or individual families cannot be supported.



## 4. WHAT AMOUNT AND TYPE OF FUNDING CAN BE GRANTED?

### Amount

The maximum amount of funding that can be applied for is DKK 300,000. The requested funding must be directly aligned with the project's implementation needs.

### Overhead costs

Overhead costs of a maximum of 7% are calculated against the total budget amount before the overhead and excluding own contribution. Overheads are meant to cover costs that you or your local partner have that are not directly related to project implementation, e.g., internet access, website, and local salaries for support functions. Please indicate in your budget what costs your overhead is expected to cover.

### Own contribution

Own contributions to the project can include financial support or in-kind donations from your organisation, the wider diaspora, your local partner, the local community, or other relevant stakeholders. All contributions must be relevant to the implementation of the project.

A cash contribution of at least 10% of the total project budget is required from the diaspora. This contribution is not required at the time of application but must be available during the project period.

In-kind contributions and/or a higher percentage of cash contribution may positively influence the assessment of your application, as they are considered part of the diaspora's added value.

When submitting the budget template, you must include both the amount requested from DiPS and the expected own contribution.



## The type of costs DiPS can fund include:

- Staff costs for local staff employed to implement the project.
- Travel costs in relation to project implementation, including insurance.
- Per diem for qualified persons travelling from Denmark (approximately 574 DKK per day, including food and accommodation) for a maximum of 12 days.
- Per diem for local staff not located in the project/ target area approximately 160 DKK per day, including food and accommodation)
- Goods, services and materials for implementation of the project.
- Bank transfer fees.
- Project information-sharing and communication costs.
- Capacity building activities (such as training or workshop) for members of the diaspora organisation or local partner, when relevant to the project.
- Overhead costs of a maximum of 7%.

## Costs considered as own contribution in cash:

- Any costs that are eligible for coverage by the DiPS fund (excluding overhead, see above) can be considered as own contribution in cash.

## Costs considered as own contribution in-kind:

- Voluntary manpower\*; this includes all types of work and labor that are done voluntarily in relation to the project with the exception for project management by the diaspora organisation.
- Supplies donated for the purpose of the project. The financial value of such donations will be set at market value.

**\*In-kind volunteer manpower could for example include construction work donated by members of the local community, or technical expertise provided to the project for free by external volunteers or members of the diaspora organisation (such as legal advice, engineer advice, etc.). The exact rates for calculating the value of volunteer manpower as own contribution in-kind will be set together with DiPS if the project is selected for the develop phase.**

## What DiPS does not fund and what is not accepted as own contribution

- Salaries of diaspora members based in Denmark.
- Expatriate salaries.
- Running costs essential for the project's sustainability. In exceptional cases, these costs can be approved as part of the budget if a clear and appropriate strategy of how these costs will be covered once the project has been concluded is agreed on with DiPS.
- Purchase of land and buildings.

## 5. HOW TO APPLY FOR THE DiPS FUND



Before applying for the DiPS fund you should ensure that you have reviewed the full application guidelines and that your project idea meets all the criteria mentioned in this guidance.



To apply for DiPS funding, you must fill in the online application form and attach the budget (using the DiPS template) before the application deadline.



**You must submit the following:**

- Concept note in English (fill in the online application form [here](#) or the [DiPS website](#))
- Budget (use the template available on the DiPS website).
- Attach proof of previous experience implementing a grant of 150,000 DKK or more. The proof may consist of grant letters, final reports, financial reports or other relevant documentation.



**Support for applying for the DiPS fund**

DiPS organises Q&A sessions for diaspora interested in applying for funding from DiPS. Participation in these events is highly recommended.

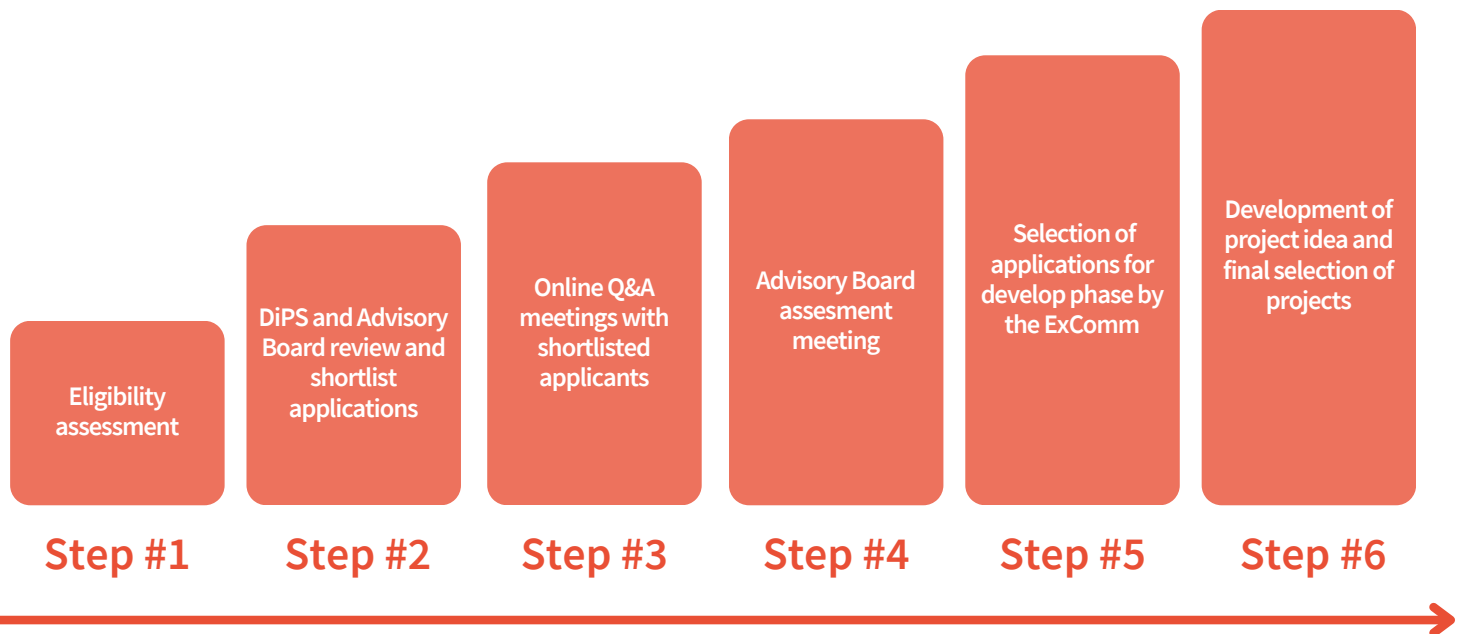
You are also encouraged to schedule a meeting with the DiPS team to discuss your project ideas before the application deadline.

You are always welcome to contact the DiPS team with any questions at [diaspora@drc.ngo](mailto:diaspora@drc.ngo) or +45 60 26 80 95.

## 6. ASSESSMENT AND SELECTION OF APPLICATIONS FOR DiPS FUNDING

### Assessment process

The Diaspora Project Support fund is a competitive fund. DiPS receives more applications for funding than resources available which means that funding is allocated through a competitive assessment and scoring process. Below is an overview of the steps for assessing and selecting your application:



### Step #1: Eligibility Assessment

Shortly after the application deadline, all submissions will be screened against the DiPS eligibility criteria to determine whether they qualify for further assessment. Only applications that meet all the eligibility requirements outlined in these guidelines will proceed to the assessment and scoring phase.

Applications will be deemed ineligible if:

- The application is submitted after the deadline
- The application is incomplete
- The application is submitted outside the online application form or in a format other than the official templates
- The application is not submitted in English
- The applicant does not meet the eligibility criteria (see p. 4)
- The project does not meet the requirements for projects eligible for DiPS funding (see p. 5)
- The proposed project duration exceeds 12 months
- The requested funding exceeds the maximum grant amount of DKK 300,000.

Applicants will be notified shortly after the deadline whether their application has been deemed eligible and will proceed to further assessment.

## Step #2: DiPS and Advisory Board review and shortlist applications

DiPS (HQ and Somalia Country Office) and the Somali Advisory Board will review all eligible submitted applications. DiPS is responsible for providing the initial scoring of concept notes. Based on this scoring and consultations with the Advisory Board and CISU (Civilsamfund i Udvikling), a shortlist of applicants will be identified.

\*Please note that the Somali Advisory Board and CISU serve in an advisory capacity only. They do not assign scores or make final decisions regarding the selection of applications

## Step #3: Online Q&A Meetings with Shortlisted Applicants

Shortlisted applicants will be invited to attend an online meeting with members of the Advisory Board, CISU, and DiPS. During the meeting, you will have the opportunity to respond to questions prepared by the Advisory Board and DiPS and further elaborate on your submitted application. Please see date p. 16.

## Step #4: Advisory Board Assessment Meeting

A joint meeting will be held between the Advisory Board, DiPS, and a representative from CISU. During this meeting, the Advisory Board and CISU will provide input on the strengths and weaknesses of each application based on the assessment criteria.

After the meeting, DiPS may revise scores based on the feedback received and the outcomes of the Q&A sessions. Final scoring reflects the combined input from the written application, the Q&A session, and the Advisory Board discussion. Draft scores and justifications are then shared with the DiPS Executive Committee (ExComm).

## Step #5: Selection of Applications for Development Phase

A meeting is held with DiPS staff and the Executive Committee (ExComm), which the Advisory Board is allowed to observe. The ExComm comprises the management of the Diaspora Programme and the Somalia Country Office. In the meeting, the scores for each application are reviewed by ExComm and are revised or approved. Based on the final scores of the applications, the ExComm will make a decision on which projects are selected to continue to the project development phase.

## Step #6: Development of Project Idea and Final Selection of Projects

If your application is selected, you will be invited to collaborate with DiPS during a project development phase, where your idea will be further refined and turned into a concrete project plan.

Please note: Selection for the development phase does not guarantee funding. Only projects that successfully complete this phase and meet all requirements will be considered for final approval and funding. For more details, see the section “If your application is selected for the project development phase” (pp. 14–15).

Assessment Criteria

Each of the assessment criteria listed on the following pages will be assessed and scored when reviewing the applications. The maximum number of points for each criteria is listed in the table below.

The criteria are adapted from the previous DiPS assessment framework, updated based on the findings of the 2024 external evaluation of DiPS, and aligned with the Core Humanitarian Standard (CHS). They are designed to strengthen collaborative, sustainable, and community-driven approaches, in line with the DiPS programme’s focus on localisation and trust-based funding.

Scoring method

1	Weak indication that supports the criteria
2	Some indication that supports the criteria
3	Indication that supports the criteria
4	Solid indication that supports the criteria
5	Comprehensive indication of implementation and/or indication of an established approach/system in supporting the criteria



## Description

## Weight

## 1. Collaborative Project Development

Assesses the strength and quality of the strategic partnership between the diaspora organisation and the local partner. Applicants should demonstrate equitable collaboration based on mutual goals and complementary capacities. The concept note should clearly show how the partners have jointly developed the project through shared needs assessments, inclusive planning, and co-design.

The partnership should reflect diaspora added value (e.g. knowledge transfer or technical expertise) alongside local added value (e.g. community embeddedness and trusted relations with local communities). Strong proposals will show how the diaspora and local actors interact in a trust-based and effective way, and how the collaboration enables greater impact than either actor could achieve alone.

Evidence of structured knowledge-sharing, joint decision-making, or long-term capacity strengthening between the partners is encouraged.

15%

## 2. Community Engagement and Accountability

Evaluates how the project ensures meaningful engagement of the target community throughout the project cycle — from identifying needs and setting priorities to implementation, monitoring, and follow-up. Strong proposals will demonstrate how community members, with particular focus on marginalized or underrepresented groups such as women, youth, persons with disabilities, or displaced populations, are not only consulted but actively involved in shaping the project.

Accountability refers to the project's ability to build trust, share decision-making, and maintain transparency with the people it aims to support. Proposals should clearly describe how the community will be informed about the project, how their feedback will be collected, and how this input will be used to make appropriate adjustments.

Accountability also includes a commitment to acting on complaints and concerns raised by community members. The project should establish or adapt mechanisms that are accessible, appropriate, and responsive to the local context. Linking with existing community-led initiatives or feedback structures is also encouraged.

15%

### 3. Relevance and Impact

Assesses the project's alignment with local priorities and community needs. Proposals should show how outcomes are relevant in the local context and respond to specific challenges. Proposals will explain how the project builds on, complements, or fills gaps in existing local or national initiatives, avoiding duplication of efforts and ensuring added value.

Diaspora organisations should clearly articulate how their specific technical expertise, networks, or knowledge contributes to shaping a more effective or innovative response. Rather than working in parallel to local efforts, projects should show how activities planned enhance relevance and create synergies with ongoing interventions.

20%

### 4. Sustainability

Assesses the project's potential for long-term benefits and local ownership. Strong proposals will include a realistic sustainability strategy beyond DiPS funding, address how the initiative will build local capacity (of both communities and partners), and integrate learning goals. Prior experience of the diaspora organisation or local partner in the community, or plans to build on existing infrastructure, will strengthen the proposal.

Partnerships between diaspora organisations and local partners that extend beyond one project cycle are positively assessed — where the diaspora organisation and local partner share long-term goals and a commitment to ongoing collaboration. Proposals should reflect not only how local ownership will be fostered during implementation, but also how the partnership plans to grow and adapt over time to address evolving community needs. Evidence of joint learning ambitions and skills transfer can further strengthen sustainability.

15%

### 5. Feasibility

Assesses the realism of the proposed activities in relation to the budget, timeline, and team capacity. Proposals should show awareness of the local implementation context and risks, including logistical barriers and operational constraints. The plan should demonstrate that the expected results can realistically be achieved.

15%

### 6. Do No Harm

Projects must demonstrate a clear understanding of safeguarding, gender sensitivity, and risk mitigation in fragile environments. Proposals must show how the project will avoid unintended harm to people or the environment and ensure protection from sexual exploitation, abuse, and harassment (PSEAH).

20%

## 7. IF YOUR APPLICATION IS SELECTED FOR THE PROJECT DEVELOPMENT PHASE

### What is the project development phase?

If your application is selected to move forward to the project development phase, you will work closely with DiPS to further develop the idea submitted in your concept note into a full project plan eligible for DiPS funding. Together with the DiPS team, you will plan and design your project, define its objectives - including those related to capacity development of your and partner organisations - and meet the administrative and programmatic requirements necessary to qualify for funding.

### The project development phase will last approximately six weeks

In 2025, this phase will be shorter than in previous years, reflecting the fact that selected partners are expected to be experienced and therefore require less training. It will, however, be a busy period for your project team. The aim is to ensure that all projects receiving funding are of high quality and ready for implementation. Please pay attention to important dates in the development phase p. 16.

### The final funding decision will be made during this phase:

- If the project is successfully developed in line with the agreements made with DiPS, you will receive a contract to implement your project with DiPS funding and can begin your activities.
- The contract will be signed between the lead diaspora organisation and the DRC Country Office in Somalia, which will also lead partner support and follow-up during implementation.
- If, by the end of the development phase, DiPS has serious concerns that the project cannot be implemented as planned, the ExCom will be consulted and may decide not to approve funding.

## Activities and requirements during the project development phase

If your project is selected to move forward to the project development phase, you will participate in a half-day hybrid workshop and refresher covering key topics such as the Logical Framework Approach (LFA), budgeting, reporting, compliance requirements, and the use of SharePoint. The hybrid format will enable both diaspora organisations and local partners to attend. Please see date p. 16.

Following the workshop, you will engage in individual meetings with the DiPS team to finalise your project documents and agree on how to collaborate during the development phase. While your project team will work independently on parts of the project, you will also receive tailored support from a dedicated DiPS focal point and, where relevant, other DRC staff or technical experts.

Together with DiPS, you will define what is needed to ensure the project is ready for implementation. Some requirements will be shaped in dialogue with your team, based on your organisation's experience and vision, while others will follow standard guidelines set by DiPS.

## Finalize the design and plan for implementing your project, including:

**1**

- Establish project team and plan for collaboration within the team. It will be a requirement to have at least two members from your diaspora organisation involved in the project team
- Prepare a LFA and Monitoring Evaluation Accountability and Learning (MEAL) plan
- Finalise budget
- Prepare a workplan
- Prepare a risk assessment and mitigation plan

**2**

- Have the means to receive and manage funds granted by DiPS (in most cases this will mean having diaspora organisation and local partner bank accounts to receive funds)
- Complete vetting and due diligence for diaspora organisation and local partner

**3**

- Participate in a capacity assessment of your diaspora organisation and agree on a capacity development plan for you and your partners in collaboration with DiPS.

## The DiPS Timeline and Phases

DESIGN	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Diaspora applicants prepare project ideas and applications to receive funding from DiPS (concept note and budget)</li> <li>Applicants attend Q&amp;As and receive support from DiPS</li> </ul>	2 months
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Deadline for submission of applications</li> </ul>	August 31 <sup>st</sup>
ASSESSMENT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Applications are assessed by the Somali Advisory Boards and DiPS (HQ/Field)</li> <li>Shortlisted Diaspora applicants are invited for an online meeting</li> </ul>	1 month
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The DiPS Executive Committee decides which applications are selected for the development phase</li> </ul>	
DEVELOPMENT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Selected diaspora applicants collaborate with DiPS to develop their idea into a full project plan</li> <li>Applicants participate in mandatory and optional trainings</li> <li>A final decision is taken about whether or not the project will receive DiPS funding and the funding agreement is signed.</li> </ul>	1.5 months
IMPLEMENTATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Diaspora organisations implement project activities, monitor, and report</li> </ul>	Up to 12 months

### Important dates

#### Design phase:

- First Q&A “How to Apply”: 3<sup>rd</sup> July
- Second Q&A “How to Apply”: 21<sup>st</sup> August
- Application Deadline: 31<sup>st</sup> August

#### Assessment phase:

- Online Meetings with shortlisted applicants: 14<sup>th</sup> September. Save the date. Shortlisted applicants will be notified a couple of days ahead of the meeting.

#### Development phase:

- Hybrid workshop with applicants selected for the development phase: 28<sup>th</sup> September
- Individual meetings with selected applicants on project documents 29<sup>th</sup> September - 24<sup>th</sup> October
- Signing of funding agreements expected by 1<sup>st</sup> November.





The Danish Refugee Council's Diaspora Programme (DP) facilitates, supports and enhances the role of diaspora as agents of humanitarian assistance and development in their country of origin.

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