

PARTECIPAZIONE

AZIONI PER LA PROTEZIONE
E LA PARTECIPAZIONE DEI RIFUGIATI

PartecipAzione

Actions for the protection and participation of refugees

PartecipAzione 2025 Guidelines

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1. GENERAL INFORMATION

1.1 Description of the program and objectives

PartecipAzione is a UNHCR and INTERSOS' program aimed at strengthening the capacities and empowerment of associations led by refugee (*Refugee-Led organizations, RLOs*¹).

The program pursues three main goals:

1. **Strengthen the capacities of associations formed and managed by refugees in Italy** and support women empowerment, to strengthen initiatives which aim to improve the protection of refugees and asylum seekers, with particular attention to people with specific needs and survivors of gender violence.
2. **To promote the social cohesion with the host community**, foster solidarity, promote measures to combat discrimination and xenophobia, and support lasting solutions.
3. **Strengthen opportunities of integration** for refugees, asylum seekers and host communities through the implementation of community projects.

Specifically, the program offers at the associations selected:

- **A training course**, divided into 4 mandatory modules, which will take place from April to December 2025:
 - **Module 1:** Management of an APS/SB: Administrative and management aspects;
 - **Module 2:** Communication strategies and techniques;
 - **Module 3:** Search for tenders and fundraising;
 - **Module 4:** Protection of asylum seekers and refugees.At the end of the course, a certificate of participation will be issued.
- **A micro-financing** for the realization of the selected projects. 5 financial contributions will be paid, the amount of which may vary depending on the project proposal and the specific capabilities of the proposing association.

¹ For Organization drive from refugees (RLO) Yes means an organization or group of people with direct experience of forced migration with a primary leadership role and who have group objectives and activities focused on responding to the needs of people who are refugees, asylum seekers, stateless persons or/and related communities.

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- **Individualized support** in the writing, implementation and reporting of projects.
- **Opportunity of networking with the other associations of PartecipAzione**, by participating in networking events and activities to exchange practices, projects and to stimulate collaborations with other associations.

The 2025 edition of PartecipAzione will be open to the entire national territory and to associations operating in all regions of Italy.

1.2 Who we are

INTERSOS

INTERSOS is an Italian humanitarian organization on the front line in emergencies, to bring help to people involved in wars, violence, natural disasters and situations of exclusion extreme. Funded in the 1992, the organization is currently present in 23 Countries with medical care projects, access to water and hygiene, distribution of basic needs, education and protection of the most vulnerable people. From 2011 INTERSOS manages projects also in Italy: in Rome, it has opened a center for unaccompanied minors in transit, INTERSOS24, a structure that carries out activities for the protection of women and girls. Other projects have also started in recent years in Sicily, Calabria and Puglia with teams of doctors and mobile units that carry out medicine of proximity to assist people in rural and urban areas, and in informal settlements.

UNHCR

Established in 1950 by the United Nations General Assembly, the Nations High Commission United for the Refugees (UNHCR) guides and coordinates at global level all the actions to guarantee the protection of refugees and other people who fall within its mandate, committing itself to identifying lasting solutions. The Agency's fundamental task is to support States in seeking lasting solutions that help refugee people rebuild their lives in conditions of safety and dignity, through the return in the Countries of origin, or through integration in the Country of asylum or through resettlement in a third country. UNHCR operates worldwide – directly or through partners – in protection programs. In beyond 70 years of activity, the agency has helped more of 80 millions of people to rebuild their lives. For this it was awarded two Nobel Peace Prizes, in 1954 and 1981. With a staff of over 11,000 people working in 130 countries, UNHCR is one of the leading humanitarian agencies in the world.

2. GUIDELINES FOR THE APPLICATION

2.1 Eligible associations

Support is granted only to **non-profit associations** legally registered and operating in Italy, without limits of geographical origin ². To be eligible, they must:

- Have a bank account in the name of the organization or of the legal representative. The account can also be opened after the selection process, but it is a necessary requirement to receive the financing;
- Have the last annual financial balance not exceeding the total of 200,000.00 (two hundred thousand) euros;
- Have a non-profit mandate, which must be explicitly included in the approved statutory (*Statuto*); not have commercial purposes; be independent from local, regional and central government, public bodies, political parties and commercial and religious organisations. Religious institutions and political parties will not be considered non-profit associations;
- Have their legal site and being operational in Italy;
- Develop a proposal consistent with the PartecipAzione program and its objectives.

However, these associations cannot apply:

- who have already received grants from PartecipAzione;
- who represent/are linked to political parties, or religious organisations;
- with objectives deemed incompatible with the program.

²It is mandatory to be registered at the time of sending the application, or to have started the registration process, which may also be concluded after the conclusion of the selection process after signing a declaration of intent document.

2.2 Eligible expenses

The purpose of the PartecipAzione expression of interest is to support the associations by providing fundings to cover the expenses necessary to carry out the proposed project and thus fulfill their mission more effectively.

The full application form (Form 2) - which will be completed with the help of INTERSOS in the second phase of the selection process - shall report all costs incurred directly for the activities carried out during the project implementation period, which may include, but not limited to, the following items:

- Costs for staff, whether newly hired or for paid work of existing staff, provided that these costs are vital for the implementation and planning of the project and that they are intended for refugee people (up to a maximum of 10% of the overall funding for a single staff and up to a maximum of 20% for two or more staff). These costs are eligible in line with the association's internal regulations and in accordance with the democratic principle;
- Expenses for travel and accommodation, e.g. transfer costs, for food and accommodation, they must be congruent with the expenses policy adopted by the organization, if applicable;
- Promotion costs, such as the costs for communication and distribution of the relevant material or for any advertising on media platforms;
- Evaluation costs, including the collection, storage and analysis of data and the creation of evaluation reports, including assignments to external consultants;
- Contributions requested by professionals for the implementation of project activities, such as payments made to organizations or individuals for professional services;
- Overheads to support the growth and development of the association to ensure long-term sustainability;
- Costs related to legal obligations (e.g. registration of the association's statute);
- Equipment, if in line with the project;
- Accounting and bank commissions, up to a maximum of 5% of the total financing.

Funds will not be disbursed to retroactively cover expenses incurred before being selected by PartecipAzione and having received the loan; all financial contributions must be recorded as expenses by November 2024.

2.3 Objectives, expected results and activities of the projects

Specifically, the associations that apply to the program will have to carry out activities that meet at least one of the following objectives:

Objective 1 - Protect the rights of asylum seekers, beneficiaries of international, temporary protection and stateless people, with particular attention at people with specific needs (women, elderly people, people survivors to torture and gender-based violence, victims of trafficking, unaccompanied minors, people with disabilities, and others).

Results:

- Increased the protection of the refugees and asylum seekers, with particular attention to people with specific needs
- Increased the resilience of refugees asylum seekers
- Improved the well-being of the people involved

Examples of activities:

- Provision of services for refugees and or asylum seekers, including legal advice and support, with particular attention to people with specific needs and survivors of gender-based violence
- Informative help desks
- Trainings, laboratories and activities of psychosocial rehabilitation
- Support to survivors of gender-based violence and/or other people with specific needs

Objective 2 - Create and promote opportunities and activities to foster integration of beneficiaries of international or temporary protection, asylum seekers and stateless persons, strengthening their active participation in social, economic and cultural life.

Results:

- Strengthened and reinforced capacities of refugees and asylum seekers and stateless persons
- Major opportunity of integration for refugees and asylum seekers
- Active involvement of refugees and asylum seekers in the socio-economic life of the Country

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Examples of activities:

- Training for refugees and asylum seekers
- Promotion of volunteering initiatives to support the host community
- Educational activities
- Empowerment activities for youths

Objective 3 - To promote the social cohesion with the host community through initiatives aimed at solidarity and the promotion of measures to combat discrimination, racism and xenophobia.

Results:

- Increased awareness on rights of the refugees
- Reduction of xenophobia and discrimination
- *Empowerment* and mobilization from the community

Examples of activities:

- Campaigns on rights of refugees, asylum seekers and stateless persons
- Initiatives of awareness-raising in schools and universities (where relevant)
- Cultural and sport events (where feasible)
- Activity that contrasts the discrimination, racism and xenophobia
- Recovery of public spaces (so far as to advantage from the categories target of the plan)

Note that the list reported above is only indicative and not exhaustive.

Particular attention will be given to associations and proposals that also include communication activities that give greater visibility to the project activities (such as, for example, the management of the social average, the development of communication material, photos, videos, other materials).

3. SUBMISSION OF THE APPLICATION AND SELECTION CRITERIA

3.1 Selection process

The application for the PartecipAzione 2025 program involves a two-stage process. In detail:

- The first phase involves the presentation of an **Expression of Interest** (Form 1) by the interested associations. Only expressions of interest submitted from 1st February to 2 March 2024 will be taken into consideration. **The deadline for submitting the expression of interest is March 2, 2025, at 11:00 pm CET.** To submit the expression of interest it is necessary to send the form 1 online, [in Italian or English, available on www.partecipazionerifugiati.org](http://www.partecipazionerifugiati.org);
- Any request for clarification can be sent via e-mail to info.partecipazione.italia@intersos.org by **February 28th, 2025**;
- Expressions of interest will be reviewed and submitted to a committee which includes experts from INTERSOS and UNHCR and will communicate the decision to candidates by **March 14th**;
- Second phase: pre-selected organizations will be invited to fill in the **full application form** (form 2) in collaboration with INTERSOS, to detail the project, budget and calendar of activities, by **March 26th**;
- Full proposals will be reviewed by the committee composed by INTERSOS and UNHCR which will award the associations by the **March 31th**;
- The agreements (MOU) will be finalized with the selected associations, and the funds will be made available by the first half of April 2024;
- From the **March 31th to the April 7th 2025**, upon request, clarifications on selection results may be provided;
- All the selection process is managed by INTERSOS and UNHCR. During the entire process we will keep you updated on the status of your application, and we will contact you if we need further information, it is therefore recommended to regularly check the email address indicated in Form 1 and make yourself available for in-depth meetings;
- You may be asked to submit additional documents, such as a financial statement of the association, letters of support, anti-mafia declaration, a self-certification of pending charges from the legal representative, and other material;
- The staff of the program will organize an online meeting to present Guidelines and Forms and to replay to your doubts and questions on **February 12th, 2025, at 6:00pm** on the Facebook page of INTERSOS, at this link:

<https://www.facebook.com/Intersos.org> or on the PartecipAzione website:
<https://www.partecipazionerifugiati.org/> ;

- The requests recurring (FAQ) they will be updated for clarify possible doubts on the program website <https://www.partecipazionerifugiati.org/> by **14th February 2025**.

3.2 Application documentation

To make the application valid, the associations interested will have to present the following documentation.

During the first phase, together with the **Expression of Interest** (Form 1) (from 1/02/2025 to 2/03/2025), you will be asked to upload to the online application:

1. Signature of legal representative (Annex 1);
2. Documents of the association (if present), such as:
 - In case of a regularly registered association, the constitutive act (*Atto Costitutivo*) and the statutory (*Statuto*), from which the non-profit mandate can be deduced;
 - The CV of the association and - if present - details of the past projects ran;
 - Only if already used and present: procedures or other policy documents such as financial management, human resources management, delegation of authority, purchase of goods and services, code of ethics, separation of functions, and so on.

In the second phase, once pre-selected the associations must, , submit together with the full application form (Form 2):

1. Budget (Attached 3);
2. Calendar of the project (Attached 4);
3. Data concerning the bank account of the association or, if not present, that of the legal representative.

3.3 Selection criteria

The evaluation parameters will be established by considering criteria and recommendations derived from an internal comparison of the proposing organizations, INTERSOS and UNHCR. They will include considerations such as:

Status of Refugee-Led organization, with particular attention to:

- Associations founded or managed by people with direct experience of forced

migration.

Structure and operation of the associations:

- Associations that have already distinguished themselves in their territories for having given voice to refugees, stateless people, asylum seekers or holders of temporary protection, through protection, integration and advocacy actions, among others;
- Associations that promote innovative approaches of inclusion and active participation in all phases, from planning, to implementation, to evaluation of activities;
- Associations or informal groups that have strong roots in the territory and that can make a difference for their communities.

Quality and thematic relevance of the project proposal:

- Relevance of the project proposal and convergence with the objectives specified in point 2.3;
- Specific and concrete expected results with a clear reference target;
- Direct involvement of refugees and asylum seekers in the activities envisaged in the project;
- Sustainability of the project, if relevant;
- Visibility and communication actions.

TIMELINE:

<i>Opening of the Expression of interest</i>	31/01/2025
<i>Closing of the Expression of interest</i>	2/03/2025 11.00 pm
<i>Evaluation of applications</i>	01/03/2025 - 14/03/2025
<i>Notification of the outcome of the Expression of Interest - Opening of the Full Application</i>	14/03/2025
<i>Closing for Full Applications</i>	26/03/2025
<i>Evaluation of proposals</i>	27/03/2025 - 28/03/2025
<i>Notification of the outcome of the proposal</i>	31/03/2025
<i>Public announcement of the results</i>	31/03/2025

Completion of contracts (MoU) and disbursement of funds	01/04/2025-11/04/2025
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4. FINANCING AND REPORTING

4.1 Financing and Memorandum of Understanding

Each association can present only one project in line with the objectives mentioned in paragraph 2.3. The financing may represent an incentive to support the association to start new activities - that will preferably continue even after the end of the proposal-, or for activities that are part of an initiative which is already ongoing, or about to start.

The request for each proposal can reach up to a maximum of **5,000.00 (five thousand) euros**. The total amount includes VAT. The funds shall be spent exclusively for project's activities. The projects will have to finish **by the 31st of October 2025**. In case of selection, the overall amount of the financing presented in the expression of interest may be modified in accordance with the proposed activities and related budget, during the phase 2 of the process (definition of the full proposal – Form 2).

After the approval, INTERSOS will sign a Memorandum of Understanding - MOU) with each selected association.

The associations select commit to guarantee their mandatory presence to the *capacity building* program (through the participation of at least 2 people, to be indicated at the time of signing the MOU), and to adhere to the INTERSOS-UNHCR guidelines for the visibility and external communication of the project.

The funds can only be used after signing the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the association and INTERSOS. Therefore, the expenses are eligible starting from the date of signature of the Memorandum and must be incurred and paid by **October 2025**.

It is obligation and responsibility of the legal representative of the association to which the financing has been provided to obtain, archive and produce, upon request of INTERSOS and/or UNHCR, the original financial documents (including any receipts and contracts).

All expenses must be documented by invoices or other legally valid expense documents certifying the supply of goods or services, and proof of related payment (for example, the

relevant receipt).

The receipts will have to include:

- Date
- Reason of payment
- Amount in euro
- Cover containing the association's stamp (if available) and the signature of the legal representative.

4.2 Disbursement of the funds

The funds will be disbursed to the association in a single transfer at the start of the project (by April 2025) to the bank account of the association/legal representative, as it will be specified in the Memorandum of Understanding.

The spending schedule of the allocated amount will be developed after the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding.

4.3 Reporting

The final report will have to be sent by the association within and not beyond the **15th of November 2025** and will cover the whole period of realization of the project, from the date of start of the project, to **October 31st 2025**.

The report will include a narrative part and an analytical financial report done in order to verify the use of the financial resources for the activities, in compliance with the budget of the project presented in phase 2.

Halfway through the project, during the month of July, the associations will be involved in a reporting exercise, which will cover the period between the start of the project and **15th of July 2025**. It will include both a narrative description of the activities carried out and the results expected, and a report of all the expenses incurred; this will be compiled with the support of INTERSOS staff.

In case of unspent budget, this must be sent to INTERSOS within and not beyond November 2025.

4.4 Technical support

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The staff of INTERSOS will provide technical support throughout the whole application procedure and will supervise the implementation of the project through a monitoring plan. Monitoring modalities will be agreed with each association, having in mind the following objectives:

- To support the development of an operational work plan, if necessary;
- To support the implementation of the project through follow-up meetings on progress, expenses and achievement of the objectives set out in the workplan;
- Support associations to strengthen their organisational, management, fundraising, protection and communication skills through a training and coaching program;
- Organize, where possible, individual tutoring sessions at the request of the beneficiary associations and *ad hoc events*.

Regular support visits will be carried out by INTERSOS, also in collaboration with UNHCR. At the end of the implementation of the projects, INTERSOS will carry out, together with the association, a check of all the expenses incurred.