"Building Knowledge for CSO Cooperation in the Black Sea Region" Articles Series

The Romanian NGDO Platform – FOND, as the main coordinator of the Black Sea NGO Forum, is launching a **Call for Abstracts** for the **Articles Series "Building Knowledge for CSO Cooperation in the Black Sea Region"** that will include 10 articles dedicated to topics related to **consolidating regional cooperation, CSO leadership and CSO resilience in the Black Sea Region during crisis times.**

Background information

The Articles Series **"Building Knowledge for CSO Cooperation in the Black Sea Region"** is organised by FOND, in the context of the project **"Building CSO Capacity for Regional Cooperation within the Black Sea Region"**, funded by the Black Sea Trust for Regional Cooperation (BST), a project of the German Marshall Fund.

The project's goal is to **increase stability and prosperity in the Black Sea Region** by **strengthening regional cooperation among civil society organizations (CSOs) in the region** in the context of sustainable development and societal resilience.

In this sense, the project's specific objective is to transform the Black Sea NGO Forum into a mechanism of support for CSOs by providing capacity building opportunities for CSOs in the region and support for the creation of joint partnerships, projects, networks and initiatives of CSOs in this area.

The Black Sea NGO Forum is an annual regional event launched in 2008 and organized by the Romanian NGDO Platform - FOND, in the framework of the Black Sea Synergy Policy.

The goal of the Black Sea NGO Forum is to create an open space for debate, mutual knowledge and understanding, communication and cooperation among civil society representatives, governments, international organizations and donors active in the wider Black Sea region, with a focus on sharing good practices in various domains and success stories of regional cooperation.

Since its first edition, the Forum has been a driver of change in the region, reuniting more than 1200 participants with various backgrounds from 11 countries: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Bulgaria, Georgia, Greece, the Republic of Moldova, Turkey, Ukraine, Romania and Russia. Over the years, the Forum has explored together with its participants a diversity of themes of regional interest (democracy & human rights; local development; youth; children rights; environment; citizen participation etc.), encouraged multi-stakeholder dialogue, sharing of best practices and creation partnerships, supported fellowships in the region, organised study visits for CSOs and offered awards to CSOs for excellence in promoting regional cooperation.

All these activities contributed to building trust and confidence, identifying common challenges and opportunities and addressing them together.

Objective

The Articles Series **"Building Knowledge for CSO Cooperation in the Black Sea Region"** aims at addressing topics related to the status of the civil society sector in times of crisis and how increasing regional cooperation, leadership, and CSO resilience can bring about positive transformation and sustainable development in the Region.

The Articles Series brings together opinions and comparative reflections from civil society experts from the Black Sea Region, advancing at the same time policy recommendations for decision-making actors, active in the Region.

Format

- Articles must be drafted under the form of: policy briefs and policy recommendations;
- The size of the article must be between 3 – 5 pages (1.500 – 2.500 words).

Target audience

Both specialised and non-specialised readers, meaning: other civil society representatives, civil society activists, experts, academics, scholars, researcher analysts, government officials, policy-makers, and donor representatives, active in the Black Sea Region.

The content of the article should be constructed in such a way to be understood by the general public.

Languages

- English only.

Topics

The topics should be addressing issues related to consolidating **regional cooperation, CSO leadership**, and **CSO resilience in the Black Sea Region during crisis times** and identify concrete recommendations and/ or policy actions pointing to solutions and ways of working forward.

Some examples of topics could be (but not limited to):

- *New ways of working: Strengthening multi-stakeholder partnerships in difficult times in the Black Sea Region;*
- *Monitoring CSO enabling environment during COVID-19 pandemic in the Black Sea Region;*
- *Consolidating CSO resilience during crisis situations in the Republic of Moldova;*
- *Supporting the role of young leaders in national crisis management processes in Bulgaria;*
- *International donors' approach and support to the civil society sector from the Black Sea Region in January - October 2020;*
- *Sharing best practices in the implementation of the Black Sea Synergy in challenging contexts; etc.*

Topics that also relate to the **Black Sea NGO Forum,** as well as the **thematic cooperation areas of the** [2019 Strategic Framework for Civil Society Cooperation in the Black Sea Region](#) **are strongly encouraged.**

The chosen topic should be focused on the EU - Black Sea Region. Topics that relate to the implementation of European Union's policies in the Black Sea Region (such as the **Black Sea Synergy**, the **Common Maritime Agenda for the Black Sea**, or the **European Black Sea Strategic Research Innovation Agenda**) are encouraged.

Geographic coverage can include regional, sub-regional or country specific issues. However, focus on cooperation approaches and regional comparisons are recommended.

Policy recommendations must derive directly from the analysis in the Article.

Contents

The use of the following template is encouraged:

Introduction:

- Executive Summary/ Purpose Statement: *One or two paragraphs overview of the brief that entices readers to go further, summarizing the context, analysis, overall findings and recommendations.*

Main body

- Background: *Addressing the importance of the topic, any existing controversy or debates, the objective of the research carried out (if any), methodology and overall findings;*
- Analysis: *Summarising the approach used, background context, main stakeholders and methods (with minimum details); providing and interpreting the main results (focused and to the point);*
- Policy options: *Discussing policy alternatives and their potential impact.*
- Recommendations: *Describing implications and recommendations, launching calls for actions (for stakeholders and other decision-making actors); recommendations must be feasible, operational and realistic.*

Conclusions

- Conclusions: *Brief summary of the analysis and recommendations advanced.*

Bibliography

- List of bibliographical sources, in alphabetical order.

Appendix (optional):

- *Relevant figures, maps, graphics etc.*

Other important information:

- *All articles will be written with Times New Roman font, 12 points, space 1.15 between lines.*
- *Keywords are encouraged to be included at the beginning of the article;*
- *Italics option will be used for emphasis of ideas;*
- *Automatic page numbering function will be used to number pages;*
- *Abbreviations must be defined at the beginning and used consistently thereafter;*
- *Footnotes can be used to give additional information, which may include citations of references included in the Bibliography;*

- *Recommended citation style for footnotes: Chicago style;*
- *Borders and margins: Word standard (2.54 cm all margins).*

Eligibility

This Call for Abstracts is open to **civil society experts** that meet the following **eligibility criteria:**

- *Be a legal entity, fiscally registered in one of the following Black Sea Synergy countries: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bulgaria, Georgia, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Ukraine, the Russian Federation. The applicant should be able to provide a proof of fiscal registration (certificate) and to issue invoices;*
- *Proven research and writing experience on the proposed topic and/or relevant working experience with civil society organisations in the Black Sea Region;*
- *Relevant educational background;*
- *Excellent English writing skills.*

The Article can be a submitted by one or more authors from the same legal entity, on the condition that they meet the above eligibility criteria.

Honorarium

Each Article will receive after its final draft submission an Honorarium of **$ 300 USD, VAT included,** regardless of the number of authors.

Once the abstract is accepted, a Service Provision Contract will be signed between FOND and the legal entity represented. The payment of the Honorarium will be made on the basis of the fiscal invoice issued by the legal entity.

The names of the author(s) will be publicly disclosed in the Article.

The views expressed will be those of the author(s) and will not represent the views of the Romanian NGDO Platform – FOND/ Black Sea NGO Forum and/or their members, partners or donor.

All economic rights of the assignment will be transferred to FOND. The rights that are transferred and that no longer need any other subsequent authorization include, but are not limited to the following: reproduce, distribute, lease, loan, public communication of, directly or indirectly, the assignment, as well as creating derived documentation.

Submission and Evaluation Process

The submission process consists of two stages:

I.   Submission of Abstract

Those interested must send an e-mail to **fond.romania@gmail.com** with the subject: "**Response to Call for Abstracts – [***Abstract Title***]**", containing the following application documents, in PDF format:

- **Short abstract** *of no more than 250 words, in English, summarizing the importance of the topic and objective of the Article;*
- **CV(s) of the author(s),** *in English;*

- ***Short bio of the author(s),*** *in English, that will appear in the Article, if selected, of no more than 150 words.*

The deadline for submitting Abstracts is the 15th of December 2020.

    II.   Submission of Article

In case of selection, final draft articles must be submitted in maximum 15 working days.

Articles will be published under the FOND/ Black Sea NGO Forum Articles Series **"Building Knowledge for CSO Cooperation in the Black Sea Region",** on main Black Sea NGO Forum online channels (official website, Facebook, Twitter), in chronological order, at a time interval set by FOND/ Black Sea NGO Forum.

The Articles may undergo editing and proof reading before publishing.