

Protection Grant – Application Guidelines

The purpose of the Protect Aid Workers mechanism is to provide assistance to humanitarian workers who have experienced incidents, are under immediate threat of harm, or have been arrested and/or are facing legal charges due to their work as a humanitarian. This assistance includes the allocation of grants to humanitarian organizations, to cover the cost of protection measures and post-incident support for staff. The aim is to protect staff from further harm, support their recovery and improve their well-being.

Protect Aid Workers has developed these guidelines outlining the eligibility criteria for its grant financing and modalities for submission of grant applications.

1. Eligible individuals and organizations

Aid workers are defined as the employees and associated personnel of not-for-profit aid agencies (both national and international) that provide material and technical assistance in humanitarian relief contexts. These agencies include: non-governmental organizations (NGOs), community-based organizations (CBOs) and the entities of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement. This does not include UN agencies, human rights organizations or governmental entities.

The fund can support any individual, regardless of their position or nationality, who is or has been under a formalised work arrangement with an eligible organization. This includes various contracted staff: employees, volunteers, daily workers or interns.

The following categories of persons can also be considered for the grant:

- Service providers, whether self-employed or employed by private companies, who collaborate with an eligible organization to support aid delivery (e.g. drivers, local consultants, etc.).
- Health workers who are financially supported by an eligible organization.

The protection grants are primarily geared towards national aid workers (i.e. those working in their own country) or refugee workers (working in their host country). However, expatriate staff are also eligible where there is a demonstrated need for support.

The immediate family of the aid worker can also be supported if:

- They were affected by the same incident as the humanitarian worker
- They were targeted due to his/her work as a humanitarian
- The aid worker was killed, arrested or abducted in line of duty

The project defines immediate family as the children, spouse, siblings or parents of a staff member.

2. Which organizations can be lead applicant?

Any eligible organization can apply for the protection grant.

The organizations that are certified by DG ECHO can directly apply.

The organizations that are not certified by DG ECHO (such as national NGOs or CBOs) need to obtain a letter of recommendation from a DG ECHO-certified partner to be eligible as the lead applicant. In addition, your organization needs to:



Update: 1 July 2024

- Be registered with a bank account.
- Have proven experience in managing grants from international aid agencies.
- Submit the grant application in English or French.

If your organization cannot become the lead applicant (for example due to lack of linguistic or administrative capacities, etc.), you are invited to call on another organization (preferably certified by DG ECHO) to partner and apply on your behalf. In case your organization faces difficulties in finding the lead applicant, please contact us at hotline@protectaidworkers.org to request our assistance for your research.

Protect Aid Workers encourages international NGOs to support their national implementing partners that would need support to access the grant.

While Protect Aid Workers aims at processing applications from organizations, in some cases, individuals can also be directly supported.

Protect Aid Workers reserves the right to refuse any organization the possibility to be the lead applicant after conducting due diligence process. The organization will consequently be requested to identify a partner organization that will become the lead applicant.

3. Eligible cases

The purpose of the mechanism is to assist aid workers who have experienced incidents, are under immediate threat of harm, or have been arrested and/or are facing legal charges due to their work as a humanitarian. In order for the case to be eligible for funding the applicant must demonstrate the linkage between the incident and the work as a humanitarian worker.

More precisely, Protect Aid Workers can support humanitarian workers that are victims of:

✓ Violence

Protect Aid Workers supports humanitarian aid workers victims of violence or under threat of violence because of or incurred in the course of their duty as a humanitarian worker. Violence is defined as any form of physical or psychological harm that affects the health and/or wellbeing of staff members. It can include beatings, stabbings, gunshot wounds, impact of artillery or bombings, rape or other forms of sexual assault or psychological violence. Protect Aid Workers can also support staff if they are injured in their homes due to general insecurity in the area where they live and work, in recognition that their continued presence in this area is a result of their humanitarian work.

✓ Arrest, detention, legal action

Protect Aid Workers supports humanitarian workers who were arrested, detained, or are/were subject to legal action due to his or her work as a humanitarian. This includes cases where a humanitarian worker is arrested on other charges, but there is a well-grounded suspicion or likelihood that these have been brought against the staff as a result of his/her work as a humanitarian.

Protect Aid Workers can also accept cases where an immediate family member of the humanitarian worker is the victim of persecution due to the humanitarian activity of a family member.

Update: 1 July 2024

✓ Kidnapping, hostage taking

If a humanitarian worker is kidnapped by a state or non-state actor, known or unknown, and is held against his or her will, Protect Aid Workers can issue a grant and provide support to the family. Requests may be made on his/her behalf through the organization that employs him/her or any other eligible entity that decides to represent him/her towards Protect Aid Workers.

✓ Threats

If a humanitarian worker received threat to their life or wellbeing, or the life or wellbeing of their family due to their role as humanitarian workers, Protect Aid Workers can support means such as temporary relocation.

✓ Other cases

Protect Aid Workers will consider for funding any cases when adverse occurrences stemming from the role of a humanitarian worker led to damage to the physical or mental health of the humanitarian worker. These incidents include but are not limited to exposure to hazardous environments, traumatic experiences, stress-related illnesses, injuries, etc.

If your incident does not fit in the above categories, and you are not sure whether it might or might not be covered, please do not hesitate to reach out to us through our dedicated email: hotline@protectaidworkers.org. We can make exceptions to the above listed criteria for exceptional cases, where there is a significant, justifiable, and urgent need.

✓ What the project does not cover

The following situations are not covered by the mechanism:

- Traffic accidents, petty theft or sickness.
- Cases where the arrest or charges against the humanitarian worker are a direct result of obvious criminal activity of the humanitarian worker in question.
- If the case is a result of flagrant violation of the organization's security policy.
- If it is clearly and obviously not in any way linked to his/her work as a humanitarian.

The Protect Aid Workers mechanism as such is not a replacement of insurance. It is strongly recommended that organizations assure an appropriate insurance coverage for their national and international staff, covering health, accidents, and where possible, the damages resulting from violence or kidnapping.

The Protect Aid Workers mechanism, unlike insurance, does not offer guaranteed coverage or provide the right to any predefined type of support. The support is punctual and only provided for as long as there are resources available in the fund. The length of support is limited to X months and the provision of funds is at the discretion of the project team.

Update: 1 July 2024

4. Grant budget and eligible costs

Grants are provided for a maximum amount of 10,000 EUR per staff member. In case of incidents involving more than one staff member a higher amount can be disbursed, the grant will represent the multiplication of the individual sum.

If an incident affects a staff member and their family, the grant can cover costs related to both the staff and his/her immediate family – up to a maximum of 10,000 EUR in total.

Direct administrative costs of the grant management can be covered up to 5% of the requested grant amount. The costs need to be strictly related to the request and duly specified in the budget lines of the application form.

The list of activities eligible for emergency financial support can include costs of (list not exhaustive):

- Medical support
- Mental health support
- Legal assistance (lawyer & legal fees)
- Urgent relocation
- Replacement of assets damaged or stolen during the incident
- Coverage of the aid worker's salary (or daily allowances for the volunteers) in case of detention or abduction or recovery, up to a maximum of 6 months or €5,000 at most, whichever is lower.
- Financial compensation for the benefit of the family in case of death of the aid worker, based on his/her salary (or daily allowances for the volunteers), up to a maximum of 6 months or €5,000 at most, whichever is lower.
- Funeral costs

Other costs can be covered as long as they are justified to provide an appropriate response and cover expenses related to the protection of the aid worker from further harm.

5. Eligibility period

Protect Aid Workers' primary objective is to provide financial support in the immediate aftermath of an incident or threat. The fund can also support staff for the longer-term impact of incidents as long as the applicant can demonstrate that the needs are still a direct result of the incident.

The project can also re-fund organizations, if they choose to pre-finance or go ahead with a payment, in advance of hearing back from the fund, for instance, if urgent medical care is needed. The start date for the eligibility of costs under the grant will usually be the date of the incident, even if the grant is signed later. However, until you have confirmation in writing from the project, (re)funding is not guaranteed.

Refunding is also possible for expenditures related to the incident response already implemented by the organization. All costs presented to the fund must be incurred within one year before the application submission date.

Update: 1 July 2024

Protect Aid Workers can only cover one grant per person per year. Grants will in principle need to be spent within 6 months' time, though exceptions are possible for up to 12 months.

6. Grant application process

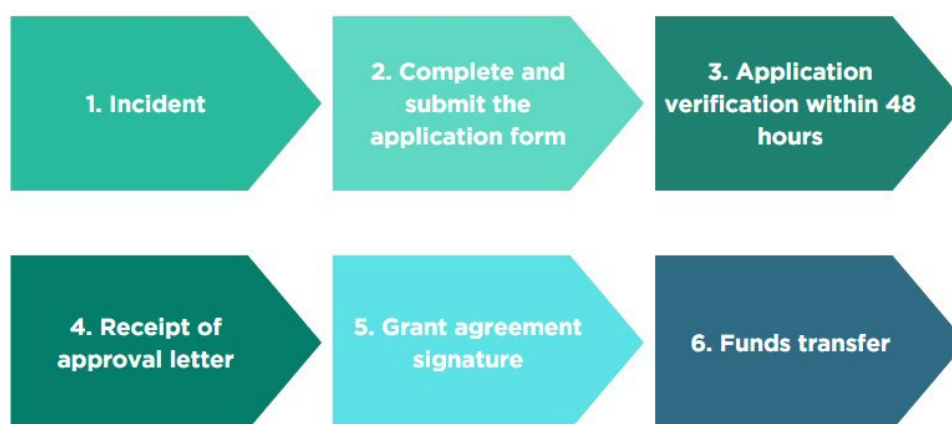
You are requested to complete the grant application form on our website www.protectaidworkers.org (or by sending it at hotline@protectaidworkers.org), ideally as soon as possible after the incident. You are encouraged to share any documents that justify your request such as the incident report from your organisation. This will enable the secretariat to process your application faster.

In the case of applications submitted by an international organization on behalf of a local partner, the lead applicant is expected to do their own verification and vetting of the cases presented to the fund. Nonetheless, upon suspicion of fraud, abuse of the resources of the fund, or false information, Protect Aid Workers reserves itself the right to make a double verification.

For grants where there is an **urgency** to receive confirmation of funding, please tick “yes” in the **emergency request box**. Please only answer “yes” if approval of the grant **within 48 hours is essential** to safeguard the wellbeing and safety of the affected staff or to provide immediate support after a serious incident.

When it comes to the budget, remember that in any case, the contract between Protect Aid Workers and your organisation allows for a full flexibility between budget lines. This means that you can move money from one response activity to another. Being 100% accurate in the estimation of costs is therefore not essential. To facilitate the approval of your application, you can already share the details of the bank account of your organisation, stamped and signed by the authorised Director of your organization.

The approval process is as follows:



In case of rejection, the Case Manager will inform you of the reasons for the decision. If you do not receive information on the rationale of the rejection, you have the right to request it from the Case Manager.

Update: 1 July 2024

If you are concerned that your application may have been unjustly rejected, or if you believe that you have not been treated correctly by the Protection of Aid Workers Project Team, you can appeal to the vetting committee through the following email address: vettingcommittee@protectaidworkers.org

The vetting committee serves as the complaints mechanism for the project. The committee consists of advisory board members, other external specialists and the program director.

Additionally, the vetting committee regularly meets to review anonymous samples of cases that were rejected and cases that were funded, to verify continued alignment with agreed criteria and to adjust criteria where needed.

7. Grant contract

The grant contract will be signed between Protect Aid Workers and the organization that is the main recipient of the Protection Grant. The latter will be responsible for the implementation of the grant received and will be held liable (in case of disallowed cost, etc.) for the total amount received.

As per DG ECHO rules and regulations, the organizations certified by DG ECHO will become Co-Partners of the project, and non-certified organizations will become Implementing Partners (C.f. [Humanitarian Aid General Model Grant Agreement](#)). For reasons of financial accountability, the main recipients should keep all relevant supporting documents for a period of 10 years. In case of audit, they remain individually responsible for justifying the cost incurred towards DG ECHO.

For reporting purposes, the main recipients shall provide a short narrative and financial report one month after the closure of the grant.

8. Data protection

The applying organizations are invited, where feasible, to obtain the consent of the data subject (i.e. the individual who will ultimately benefit from the grant), which will serve as the primary basis for the processing of personal data within the project. It will be obtained in a manner that is freely given, specific, informed, and unambiguous. The consent can be obtained orally or in written from the data subject.

Many cases submitted to the Protect Aid Workers project involve highly sensitive information, impacting the privacy and safety of affected staff. The project has implemented several measures to safeguard data:

- Access to full case details is limited to a minimal number of team members.
- Approved applications will not be attached to the grant agreement but will be referenced only by the date and time of receipt by the team to limit access.
- The project and the applicant will each appoint a single individual responsible for communications.
- All data protection practices adhere to the General Data Protection Regulation (EU GDPR).

Additionally, Protect Aid Workers ensures further data security through the following means:



Update: 1 July 2024

- Original case data (non-anonymised) is accessible only to three designated individuals involved in case management among the team.
- Application data is fully anonymised and identifiers removed before sharing with finance or contract management staff.
- Data used internally for learning and evaluation will also be fully anonymised and stripped of identifiers.
- Only fully anonymised and aggregated data summaries are shared externally.
- External auditors, as designated by the grantor or donor, may access unedited source data under strict conditions, following a signed confidentiality agreement.
- Appropriate measures are in place to safeguard IT systems and protect data integrity.

In managing personal data, we adhere to the highest standards to ensure the following:

- **Data subjects:** Individuals have rights to access, correct, delete, or restrict processing of their data, object to processing, and withdraw consent at any time.
- **Purpose of Data Processing:** Data is processed to assess eligibility for grants, manage grants, provide support services, and facilitate project operations.
- **Data Collection Sources:** We collect data directly from individuals, their representing NGOs, and through publicly available sources for due diligence.
- **Basis for Processing:** Processing is based on public interest, vital interest of the data subject and others, legitimate interests for safety and well-being of workers, and consent.
- **Types of Data Collected:** Contact and personal information, employment details, incident-related information, financial and health information necessary for grant management.
- **Data Sharing:** Data is shared internally and with partner organizations under strict confidentiality protocols, solely for project administration and application evaluation.
- **Data Retention:** Data is retained only as long as necessary to fulfil processing purposes, not exceeding 5 years post-case closure, unless legal requirements specify otherwise.