

# Request for TYI-Uganda Small Grants Applications for Transgender and Gender Diverse CSOs, 2025

## How to apply

Applicants are expected to download the form from https://tyiuganda.org/ fill it, and submit it (including the attachments) back to e-mail tyismallgrants@gmail.com

Deadline 3rd November, 2025

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# 1.0 INTRODUCTION TO TYI-UGANDA AND THE SMALL GRANTS PROGRAM

Trans Youth Initiative-Uganda (TYI-Uganda) is a human and health rights organization committed to improving the lives of rural transgender and gender diverse individuals, especially in the context of HIV, TB, Malaria, and reproductive health services. TYI also advocates for equitable healthcare access, focusing on marginalized communities in rural Uganda.

TYI-Uganda, with financing from the **Gender Equality Fund (GEF)**, an initiative of the **Global Fund to Fight AIDS**, **Tuberculosis**, and **Malaria**, along with **GSK** and **ViiV Healthcare**, is running a three-year (2024-2026) Capacity Improvement and Advocacy Strengthening (CIASP) Project. The project is working with 20 transgender and gender diverse Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), coalitions, and network members, specifically in 10 Districts in Western Uganda and generally in other selected regions across Uganda. The CIASP Project is hinged on the belief that ending HIV, TB, and Malaria as epidemics requires a multi-stakeholder approach – leaving no one behind.

Globally, Transgender and gender diverse people are disproportionately affected by HIV, TB, Malaria, and other health situations. In Uganda, approximately 25% of new HIV infections are among members of these key populations and their partners. In 2021, Key Populations and their sexual partners accounted for 70% of new HIV infections. TYI-Uganda is therefore convinced of the need to confront the inequalities and injustices that make some people especially transgender and gender diverse people more vulnerable to illness, infections and diseases as they are often unable to prevent or access the health services they need. For this Project, TYI-Uganda aims "to increase the well-being of life through access to and utilization of stigma-free, non-discriminatory, quality and affordable HIV, Malaria, TB, and Reproductive health care services to transgender, gender-diverse youth and transgender sex workers in Uganda.



#### 1.1 WHY THE TYI-UGANDA SMALL GRANTS PROGRAM?

Comprehensive Organizational and Advocacy Capacity Assessments, along with other tailored institutional development and performance reviews, have been conducted throughout the project's lifetime. They reveal that Transgender and Gender Diverse-led CSOs and institutions are chronically grappling with inhibitive challenges in governance, leadership, fundraising, program design, data use and M&E, advocacy planning, and financial management, among others.

These findings have shaped a responsive technical assistance (TA) strategy designed by TYI-Uganda to offer demand-driven and customized support to enhance the effectiveness and sustainability of community-led interventions that are Transgender and Gender Diverse-friendly.

Together with our development partners, TYI-Uganda is convinced that additionally, offering flexible financing through Small Grants is a more effective framework to ignite non-partisan multi-sectoral support, develop institutional capacity, increase resilience, and sustain a movement of grassroots CSOs, Groups, and networks that can demand for greater access to stigma free, non-discriminatory, and quality health care services that everyone yearns for.

# 1.2 FOCUS AREAS FOR THE TYI-UGANDA SMALL GRANTS PROGRAM

TYI-Uganda is inviting proposals from the 20 CIASP-eligible project partners and other transgender and gender diverse-led organizations in Uganda. Applications must focus on the following areas/ themes.

# (i) Increasing access to stigma-free, non-discriminatory, and quality health care services

Organizing and mobilizing members, along with providing stigma-free, non-discriminatory, and quality health services, is the first step to improving general health care for transgender and gender diverse communities.

It's expected that CSOs may not be direct providers of health services but facilitate, mobilize, and act as conduits to the process of service provision. Specific activities to be prioritized may include, but are not limited to, the following;

- a) Activities that ensure increased access to stigma-free, non-discriminatory, and quality health care, specifically prevention of HIV/AIDS, TB, and Malaria, and access to SRH.
- b) Plans that foster peer referral and service outreaches based on the CSO's area of coverage.

#### (ii) Building advocacy for health justice and accountability

Supporting transgender and gender diverse individuals to advocate for gender-transformative and promotion of gender affirmative approaches to health are key strategies in improving the available measures aimed at reducing stigma and discrimination of transgender and gender diverse individuals, along with the broader Key population cascade.

Ultimately, this will ensure greater access to HIV/AIDS, SRH, and TB services by transgender and gender diverse individuals, along with the broader key population cascade. Specific activities to be prioritized under this theme may include, but are not limited to, the following;

- a) Mobilization of transgender and gender diverse members into associations, CSOs, Groups, or coalitions to increase the quality and quantity of joint advocacy voices.
- b) Training and capacity-building forums targeting VHTs, peers, health workers, policy members, and community leaders on specific topics like Unconditional Positive Regard (UPR) and the Rights-Based Approach. These forums focus on quality, stigma-free health service delivery, particularly for transgender and gender diverse individuals, and other KP groups.
- c) Plans to conduct District-Based sharing and learning sessions among frontline health workers and officers
- d) Initiatives that promote social services impacting health, such as strengthening responses to gender-based violence, advocacy to expand access to social protection programs, or efforts to improve access to justice or provide non-discrimination training for law enforcement personnel.
- e) Community mobilization efforts and talk shows aimed at challenging and changing harmful practices and gender norms. Specific activities include engagements and meetings with various local leaders, community-based education and awareness campaigns, and initiatives on gender equality and human rights.

- f) Activities that aim to promote positive change regarding perceptions, attitudes, and feelings about violence, economic and bodily autonomy, and decision-making power for intimate partners.
- g) Activities focused on developing, sharing, publishing, or distributing IEC materials, knowledge, and messages on HIV/AIDS, TB, and Malaria to transgender and gender diverse communities, as well as the broader KP community, to enhance awareness and promote action or policy.
- h) Activities boosting service accountability and improvement in health, like scorecard on transgender as well as key population-specific health issues, or efforts to assess policy, structural, and legal barriers that impede equitable access to services

#### (iii) Strengthening Grassroots Health Care Systems

Challenges Transgender and gender diverse people face in accessing health services show the urgent need to improve the entire healthcare apparatus if it's going to provide them better access to quality, affordable healthcare.

This involves having available, qualified, and KP-friendly Health Workforce at clinics and DICs where they access services, KP-pro health policies, and an efficient Health Service Delivery system which also ensures that essential medicines, health products, vaccines, and technologies specifically for HIV/AIDS, SRH, TB, and Malaria reach them and are of good quality, are available and accessible. Specific activities to be prioritized may include, but are not limited to, the following;

- a) Initiatives that generally ensure better health for rural transgender and gender diverse individuals, as well as the entire Key Population in their locations
- b) Inventions that enhance the efficiency and effectiveness with which transgender and gender diverse communities, as well as KPs, access health services —not only at hospitals but also at clinics/DICs and at the community level.
- e) Innovations that aim to remove barriers so that more transgender and gender diverse individuals and the broader key population cascade in the areas of operation can link/ access/ receive health care.
- f) Plans that enable development partners and mainstream health service providers (promptly) to engage and detect the critical need to address health threats and emergencies within and among transgender and gender diverse communities, as well as the broader key populations.

g) Efforts to design new plans to deliver interventions that address or aim to overcome gender-related barriers to HIV, TB, malaria, and sexual and reproductive health services, specifically at the community and DIC levels for transgender and gender diverse populations, as well as the broader Key Populations.

# (iv) Improving the Capacity of transgender and gender diverse CSOs, including networks, partners, and members

The different capacity assessments and evaluations that TYI-Uganda and partners have conducted clearly indicate that transgender and gender diverse-CSOs' ability to achieve their health and rights goals is hindered by several internal capacity gaps. These, among others, include limitations to identify, secure, and manage resources, then limited qualified human resources among the members themselves, a lack of technical skills (like advanced digital security and data management, including protecting sensitive information. This generally hinders their ability to effectively support their communities to demand or advocate for policy change), then inability to design, deliver, advocate and influence gender-transformative and gender-affirmative approaches to health - with a focus on HIV, TB, Malaria and SRH, limited capacity to learn, document, share and integrate lessons and innovations, lack of practical knowledge and skills to navigate discriminatory environments and stigma – among others. So for this theme, specific activities to be prioritized may include, but are not limited to, the following;

- a) Efforts to address internal capacity gaps inherent or identified during Organizational and Advocacy Capacity Assessments. Activities selected must have a higher comparative value, and once implemented, should positively impact other existing gaps.
- b) Activities aiming to improve CSOs' strategic and organizational planning, resource mobilization, fundraising, and financial management, among others.
- c) Activities that support and strengthen the overall transgender and gender diverse movement, building to enable them to achieve access to quality health services and rights
- d) Activities aiming at general development, growth, and vibrancy of the CSOs' management, governance, and leadership structures all of which are key to driving self-reliance and the ability to achieve development goals and mission.
- e) Training and linkages to economic empowerment programs, support groups, and education programs, legal support, and referrals to livelihood services.

#### 1.3 NUMBER OF POSSIBLE GRANT AWARDS

Due to limited financing, TYI-Uganda shall award grants to between 7 and 10 applications from the selected transgender and gender diverse CSOs. TYI-Uganda shall also follow the grant awards with demand-driven and tailored support to ensure that grantees link the resources to specific actions that build resilience, improve governance, and boost advocacy impact.



#### 1.4 FUNDING INFORMATION AND ELIGIBILITY

- a) Eligibility: This Small Grants program is open to all transgender and gender-diverse-led organizations, but priority will be given to the 20 transgender and gender-diverse CSOs that are already actively engaged and have been working with the Capacity Improvement and Advocacy Strengthening Project (CIASP).
- **b) Grant Size:** Small grants will range from **UGX 10,000,000** to **15,000,000** per successful application, depending on the scope and scale of proposed initiatives. (All budgets should be submitted in Ugandan shillings)
- c) Project Duration: The Micro-grants period shall run for a period of 6-8 months, including the review process, grant award, grants management, reporting, and close-out processes. This implies that all projects shall need to start implementation by November 2025 and complete their initiatives by 30th July 2026.
- **d) Project Performance Period:** Applicants who are unable or unwilling to start their projects by November 2025 for any reason may be disqualified.

#### 1.5 ADDITIONAL ELIGIBILITY NOTES

- a) Organizations can apply only once under this Call for Proposals, as the lead applicant. Only one application per organization will be accepted. Multiple applications from the same organization or for the same proposal will be automatically disqualified.
- b) Organizations proposing interventions not related to the set project themes or focus, as well as those whose work and mission/vision statement do not focus on or explicitly mention gender equality, health rights, and increased access to health services, shall be disqualified.
- c) CSOs do not necessarily need to be legally registered. However, it's the preferred situation, and those that are not fully registered shall need to demonstrate compliance and acceptable mechanisms of legal existence and operations in Uganda.
- d) Organizations or CSO leaders barred from receiving Global Fund funding are discouraged and may be disqualified at any time during this granting process.
- e) TYI-Uganda shall not consider applications that;
  - They are vague or lack the specifics or sufficient detail needed to appreciate the application.
  - Include only ambiguous awareness-raising or 'sensitization' activities without a clear influencing and follow-up strategy
  - Are not realistic or feasible within the timeframe or budget
  - Do not demonstrate a convincing strategy to achieve meaningful change
  - Do not show an understanding of how this work will complement other existing work, for example, in the same geographical area or around the same thematic issue by other partners

#### 2.0 KEY PROPOSAL CONSIDERATIONS

TYI-Uganda aims to improve the efficiency and integrity of the proposal review and project implementation process and therefore encourages;

- a) Open, BUT ethical communication between applicants and the Program Management Team at TYI
- b) Projects that serve community purposes and not personal gain
- c) Only CSOs that are not already principal/ direct recipients of the Gender Equality Fund, Global Fund, GSK, and ViiV Healthcare. Agencies that have been running direct financing mechanisms with GF are not eligible to apply for this Small Grants Program.
- d) Project Total Budgets that DO NOT exceed 15,000,000M UGX, regardless of whether applicants chose to work as a consortium. Please note that consortia are acceptable as long as the lead agency is an eligible entity and shall be the principal recipient of the Grant award, if successful.
- e) Applicant CSOs that can receive wire transfers
- f) Applicants are to submit ONLY ONE proposal. No CSOs shall be considered for more than one award, even if they choose to apply as a consortium.
- g) The TYI-Uganda Grants review committee shall retain unsuccessful applications, and TYI-Uganda shall ensure these are kept under its Document and Data safety policy and guidelines. Applicants seeking a waiver to this shall need to submit their objection as a separate request to TYI within 7 days after the close of the application process.
- h) CSOs to demonstrate a clear understanding of the problem that they seek to address in the relevant context they are working in, where possible, including evidence of the issue at that level
- i) Applicants should state clear and realistic objectives
- j) Applicants should demonstrate an understanding of related work in the same setting and explain why this project is necessary to complement such efforts.
- k) CSOs to ensure maximum respect and confidentiality, and also place the safety and security of the communities they serve at the center of the interventions. Proposals that are indifferent to such critical transgender and gender diverse-related issues may score lower marks.
- I) Applicants should consider some of the challenges they may face during the project, indicate these challenges, and demonstrate how they will be overcome truthfully and realistically.
- m) Applicants are to use the existing grant support to identify and address any significant gaps in their organization.

#### 2.1 THE OUTCOMES OF THE SMALL GRANTS PROGRAM

- a) Improved legal and policy environment for the selected transgender and gender diverse CSOs to access affordable and quality comprehensive health care services
- b) Transgender and Gender Diverse-CSO can influence legal / policy reforms
- c) Improved advocacy capacity among transgender and diverse CSOs
- d) Increased CSOs' demand for accountability from the government on commitments related to transgender and gender diverse communities and the broader Key Populations
- e) Evidence-based transgender and gender diverse policies / regulations on HIV/AIDS, SRH, TB, and Malaria national response formulated
- f) Improved capacity of transgender and gender diverse-CSOs and groups to successfully secure diversified funding and manage health and advocacy programs
- g) Measures to reduce stigma and discrimination of transgender and gender diverse communities have been adopted
- h) Greater access to HIV/AIDS, SRH, and TB services by transgender and gender diverse communities, as well as the broader KP cascade.

#### 3.0 SUBMISSION OF APPLICATIONS

Applicants should prepare their Small Grant proposals and ensure compliance with all TYI-Uganda guidelines. This includes completing the application forms, attaching supporting documents, and accurately filling out all required information.

#### Applicants must;

- 1. Submit their Grant Applications by November 3<sub>rd</sub>, 2025, at 11:59 pm EAT. You are also encouraged to ensure that all mandatory attachments are submitted.
- 2. A downloadable Application form and all the necessary attachments are available on the TYI website <a href="https://tyiuganda.org/">https://tyiuganda.org/</a>. Should one be unable to access these forms for some reason, they can be directly sent to the prospective applicant upon official request (send an e-mail).
- 3. TYI-Uganda will evaluate and score all applications based on merit, then contact and engage the best-scoring applicants. Any form of lobbying will lead to automatic disqualification.



#### 3.1 HOW TO APPLY

- a) Applicants are expected to download the form from <a href="https://tyiuganda.org/">https://tyiuganda.org/</a> fill it, and submit it (including the attachments) back to e-mail <a href="mailto:tyismallgrants@gmail.com">tyismallgrants@gmail.com</a>
- b) The online application will be available between 15th October and 3rd November 2025.
- c) Only applications submitted to the indicated email and using the provided forms shall be considered.
- d) TYI-Uganda shall NOT consider any applications received after the deadline.
- e) Applications can only be submitted in English. Proposals in any other language shall automatically be disqualified.
- f) Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI): Applications that are predominantly written using AI without meaningful human input, contextual understanding, or alignment with the proposal guidelines or focus themes shall be penalized.
- g) All content must accurately reflect the organization's own work, knowledge, and context. Misuse of Al and submission of unverified Al-generated content will result in disqualification.
- h) You must plan for and set aside enough time to complete, attach/ upload your proposal and documents before mailing them to TYI-Uganda. Applicants should not wait until the final day/hour/minutes before the deadline to apply, as any failure in the mailing system, unless clearly on TYI-Uganda's side, will not be tolerated and will result in disqualification.
- i) We will acknowledge receipt of a submitted application within 36 hours after the proposal submission deadline expires. TYI-Uganda shall use the same email to send each applicant a confirmation e-mail.
- j) Please get in touch with us immediately if you do not receive this confirmation email. You will be informed of updates on the application process by email.

#### **3.2 THE GRANTS REVIEW AND SELECTION PROCESS**

TYI-Uganda shall receive, review, and evaluate all applications confidentially and based on a fair and open process. The review and evaluation of the Grant proposals shall be done at three levels as follows;

- a) Level 1: Administrative Review
- a) Level 2: External Technical Review
- b) Level 3: Board of Directors' Review and Award

#### (i) Level 1: The Administrative Review

All submitted applications shall be screened for compliance to the criteria given, completeness (as demanded in the format provided), Feasibility (if the work being proposed meets the minimum level of work and as regards those activities that can be fundable in the health sector in Uganda), transgender and gender diverse-led and focused (If indeed the program activities will be implemented and focused to transgender and gender diverse individuals themselves) and Eligibility criteria (If the lead applicant(s) are indeed among the 20 CIASP Project partners or one of the existing transgender and gender diverse organizations in Uganda). INCOMPLETE applications (for example, have no budget) or DO NOT focus on HIV/AIDS, TB, and Malaria may be eliminated at this stage. Should there be a critical need for the team to request any applicant for information that was requested but not submitted, inhibitive penalties shall be imposed. The review team uses a detailed stand-alone criterion.

#### (ii) Level 2: External Review Panel (ERP)

Proposals that have passed the Administrative Review shall be forwarded to the panel of External Reviewers. These have been selected and approved by the TYI-Uganda Board, given their experience in HIV/AIDS, TB, and Malaria work, as well as their passion, interest, and service to transgender and gender diverse work and Key Population work. These reviewers shall consider proposals for their Scientific and Technical merit. A TYI-Uganda selected Consultant familiar with the Grant goals and objectives shall attend the review meetings at this level, but only to give clarifications. This consultant does not score. Applications that are successful at this stage will be notified that they have progressed to the next level. A detailed review criterion is also used at this stage. All five (05) technical reviewers shall independently score each application out of 100% based on the given Technical Review Criteria (below). As a result, applications are ranked based on their score by the technical review panel. A detailed scoreboard and report with recommendations are prepared and shared with the TYI-Uganda Board for final approval.

# Technical Reviewers for TYI-Uganda Small Grants shall score proposals based on eight (08) predetermined evaluation criteria;

No.	Criteria	Score
1.	Project's significance to the transgender and gender diverse movement as well as Key Population movement	10
2.	Feasibility to the national/ local environment	10
3.	Methodology Appropriateness	15
4.	Impact to the overall development of the health sector in Uganda	10
5.	Alignment to TYI-Uganda's Project Objectives	15
6.	Topical to transgender and gender diverse as well as KP's current health needs/gaps	20
7.	Innovation and nobleness of the concepts	10
8.	Economically viable (the budget tallies with the outcome value)	10
	Total	100

#### (iii) Level 3: Final Review Committee (FRC) - The Board

On receiving the report from the External Review Panel, TYI-Uganda Board shall constitute a Final Review Committee (FRC) to discuss the scores, feedback, comments, and recommendations provided by the external reviewers. The committee members shall deliberate and consider various factors, including the review scores, available funding, funding priorities, and strategic considerations. Based on this deliberation, the committee shall decide which proposals to fund at this stage. This committee shall make the ultimate funding decision, and this shall be final. The committee recommends may be to make; (1) Full Funding (2) Partial Funding or (3) Make some changes in the Grant Terms and conditions or (4) to Reject the proposal(s).

#### **4.0 AWARD NOTIFICATION**

After the decision by the Final Review Committee (FRC), TYI-Uganda shall notify all applicants about the funding decisions. The successful applicants shall receive award notifications. The notifications shall outline the terms of the grant, funding amounts, reporting requirements, and any additional instructions. Unsuccessful applicants shall also be notified, typically providing feedback on why their proposals were not selected.

#### 4.1 GRANT AGREEMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION

Successful applicants at this level shall enter into a formal grant agreement with TYI-Uganda, which shall outline the terms and conditions of the Grant Award. The agreement shall include, among others, reporting requirements, Milestones, Budgetary guidelines, and several specific obligations or restrictions. Although the TYI-Uganda Grant Agreement is a smaller document, signing it shall bind the recipient to all the Terms and Conditions in the detailed TYI-Uganda Small Grants Policy Booklet (available on request)

#### **4.2 SUPPORT AVAILABLE**

For any questions and technical problems with the application or the overall Grant process, don't hesitate to get in touch with TYI-Uganda Grants Management Team through the e-mail <u>tyismallgrants@gmail.com</u>. There will be a live Information session to provide information, application guidance, and support to applicants. The session shall be online and in English, to be held on 21st October 2025. To confirm that you will attend the session, please send an email to <u>tyismallgrants@gmail.com</u>.

#### 4.3 FURTHER GUIDANCE TO APPLICANTS AND POTENTIAL GRANTEES

To give your organization the best chance of success for the TYI-Uganda Small Grants funding, TYI-Uganda shall provide as much information and support as possible. These materials shall be informed by a technical team with vast experience in supporting Grant processes. It will be a requirement that;

- a) Grant recipients submit periodic progress reports.
- b) A monitoring and evaluation framework is used regularly to track impact and effectiveness.
- c) Technical assistance and mentorship are provided to strengthen project implementation.
- d) There is value addition by your project to the overall health sector (Malaria, TB, SRH, and HIV/AIDS) sector, to the transgender and gender diverse movement.

#### **During implementation;**

- 1. We encourage grantees to communicate Impact and Success Stories, as effective communication is essential for demonstrating the value of small grants. These can be achieved through various channels such as social media, newsletters, or community events. Highlighting success stories not only showcases the positive outcomes of the small, funded projects but also inspires the rest of the community members to learn, adopt, and adapt.
- 2. If storytelling is too involved in this communication, it can be a powerful tool for advocacy and fundraising efforts. We encourage grantees to share compelling narratives about the impact of their projects on both individuals and communities. This can attract additional support from other potential donors or partners. We propose that successful grant recipients document their journeys, capturing both successes and challenges along the way.
- **3. Commitment to Capacity Building:** We will prioritize capacity building support. TYI-Uganda shall not only commit to enhancing the effectiveness of each project but also contribute to the overall resilience of the health sector.
- **4. Ensuring Transparent and Efficient Financial Management:** This is paramount for the success of any project. TYI encourages its Grantees to establish and provide clear financial protocols that outline budgeting processes, expense tracking, and reporting requirements. Such levels of transparency will not only build trust with TYI and other prospective financiers but also ensure that resources are utilized effectively.

### 5.0 Timeline

Sr.	Date	Milestone
1.	15th October, 2025	Issue call for Applications
2.	3rd November, 2025, 11:59pm EAT	Deadline to receive applications
3.	15th November 2025	Feedback to Applicants and Award Notification
4.	20th November	Award and Contracting Process

5.	1st December, 2025	Official start of Projects
6.	1st December, 2025	Implementation & Technical Assistance Support
7.	1st December, 2025	Monitoring and Supervision
8.	30th July, 2026	Reporting and Close-out processes

### **6.0 THE SUBMISSION CHECKLIST**

Use the check-list below to ensure your submission are complete. Incomplete applications will be automatically disqualified.

Sr.	ltem	Check/ Tick where appropriate
1.	Duly filled Small Grants Application Form	
2.	Project Risk and Mitigation Plan	
3.	Filled Budget Summary	
4.	Project Framework and implementation Plan	
5.	Complete Implementation Work-plan	
6.	Complete M&E Plan	
7.	List of Referees (02)	
8.	Registration Certificate	



### TRANS YOUTH INITIATIVE - UGANDA (TYI-UGANDA)

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