



Swiss-Estonian Cooperation Programme social innovation activities



The activities of the cooperation programme implemented during 2024–2028 are based on the objective of the development plan “Cohesive Estonia 2030”: “Estonia is a people-centred country that supports the development of communities and civil society.” It is a country where people are valued and included, where democratic values are shared, and where individuals contribute to improving their living environment through active participation in community and societal activities.

National Foundation of Civil Society

NFCS is a state financed civil society fund established in 2008 by the Estonian Government. NFCS aims to build the capacity of Estonian civil society organizations and shape the environment that fosters civic action.

The strategy of NFCS is based on the [Estonian Civil Society Development Concept](#) approved by the parliament on December 12, 2002.

The NFCS coordinates a diverse range of funding mechanisms and programs. Read more: <https://kysk.ee/en/about-us/>

Our mission

NFCS is a support and development center that strengthens communities and civil society by empowering civil society organizations.

Our vision

Estonia has a vibrant civil society where impactful civil society organizations and active communities are platforms for mutual cooperation, active participation and civic awareness.

Description

The goal of social innovation activities is to raise awareness among social innovation and social entrepreneurship stakeholders, as well as the broader public, about the nature, concept, and methodology of social innovation in addressing complex societal challenges – both in Estonia and internationally. The activities aim to foster an environment that encourages testing new solutions to complex social issues, including the support of integration for people from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds, including immigrants and refugees, in Estonia.

Social innovation focuses on finding solutions to so-called “wicked” societal problems – issues that have no clear owner or a straightforward solution. Social innovation holds significant societal value, as it employs co-creation processes that not only help in solving problems but also empower those individuals and groups who have, in one way or another, been left behind by mainstream responses to social challenges.

Partners

Parties involved in the programme: Ministry of Culture, Ministry of Social Affairs, Ministry of Education and Research, Ministry of the Interior, National Foundation of Civil Society, Education and Youth Board, Integration Foundation, National Library of Estonia, Social Insurance Board, Estonian Association of Social Work, University of Tartu, Tallinn University, and Bern University of Applied Sciences, Switzerland.

Areas of activity

1. Advising on the development, renewal, scaling or continuation of innovative products and services with social impact
2. Providing workshops and trainings to target groups to increase knowledge on social innovation
3. Disseminating information to raise public awareness on social innovation
4. Supporting the emergence and development of social innovation networks to promote cooperation between target groups and policy makers
5. Collecting, systematising and disseminating social innovation know-how and best practices

Budget

Programme activities are supported by the Swiss contribution to reducing economic and social disparities in the EU.

The budget allocated to the National Foundation of Civil Society for social innovation activities is €1,168,831.55, of which 85% is funded by the Swiss financial contribution and 15% comes from the Estonian state budget through the Ministry of the Interior.

Activities

1. Advising on the development, renewal, scaling or continuation of innovative products and services with social impact

- Providing coaching for organisations in various areas of social innovation and for social enterprises
- Creating and delivering social hackatons
- Creating and delivering incubation programmes

2. Providing workshops and trainings to target groups to increase knowledge on social innovation

- Organizing trainings, workshops, conferences and meetings on social innovation and social entrepreneurship
- Creating and delivering a tailor-made training programme for consultants and advisers
- Creating, launching and managing of an online course on social innovation and social entrepreneurship
- Organising study visits to other countries within Europe

3. Disseminating information to raise public awareness on social innovation

- Creation, production and distribution of video clips, TV series and podcasts on social innovation
- Dissemination of information on social innovation
- Evaluating the effectiveness of disseminating information on social innovation

4. Supporting the emergence and development of social innovation networks to promote cooperation between target groups and policy makers

- Developing and supporting social innovation networks
- Organising meetings and lobbying
- Organising study visits within Estonia

5. Collecting, systematising and disseminating social innovation know-how and best practices

- Collection and systematisation of best practices in social innovation
- Preparation and dissemination of a handbook on social innovation

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