



**Kodanikuühiskonna  
Sihtkapital**



Merlin Sepp  
Program coordinator

# Background



- Idea in **2001**.
- **Estonian Civil Society Development Concept (EKAK)** – state strategy for developing civil society, prepared by NGOs and adopted by the Estonian Parliament in **2002**. Establishing National Foundation of Civil Society (NFCS) one out of 11 priorities of EKAK.
- **The Concept for NFCS** was compiled by the Ministry of the Interior and the Network of Estonian Nonprofit Organisations (NENO) in **2007**. *The Concept for NFCS presents the basis and principles of action for establishing the Foundation.*
- The Estonian Government approved the Concept in **October 2007**.
- NFCS Statue and Structure were composed in **November 2007**.
  - NFCS was established by the Estonian Government on **February 18, 2008**. Executor of the founder's rights is Ministry of the Interior.

# NFCS



According to the Statute, the goal of NFCS is **to help building the capacity of Estonian non-profit associations and foundations to develop civil society and shape an environment that fosters civic action.**

NFCS respects the following values:

- **Transparency and openness**
- **Competence and professionalism**
- **Impartiality and political independence**
- **Partnership**
- **People**

**Budget:** approximately 1,1 -1, 3 million euros (State Budget).

# Vision



- **Vision of NFCS:** Estonia has a functioning civil society and capable civil society organisations represent its main engine. By the year 2013 the NFCS will be a significant supporter of the operational capacity of NGOs, an acknowledged cooperation partner for public authorities and civil society organisations, and has achieved better preconditions for the development of civil society.
- NFCS has developed **three programs** to accomplish the goal of the organisation.

# I program



**I Program for operational capacity of national and regional non-profit associations and foundations** – different focused open calls. (50% of the total NFCS budget).

Organisations have submitted 267 different project applications through 8 open calls of which **128 received the grant.**

Until now, NFCS has financed

- 18 national level projects,
- 55 regional level projects (three open calls),
- 10 integration thematic projects,
- 15 advocacy thematic projects,
- 25 social entrepreneurship projects,
- 5 volunteers coordinating centers' projects.

# II program



**II Program for innovative ideas and international cooperation**  
continuous open calls for grants. (10% of the total budget)

- **Innovative ideas.** In this program, NFCS has received more than 90 good idea applications of which 26 projects have received the grant.
- **International distribution of the experience of Estonian civil society.** NFCS has financed 13 international distribution of the experience of Estonian civil society projects.

# III program



**III Advocacy and support program for civil society development.** The program is implemented through the activities initiated by the Board of NFCS. (10% of the total budget)

- Project management trainings, advocacy and social entrepreneurship thematic trainings, information seminars and civil society researches.
- Important sustainable civil society events: Annual summer and spring schools, National Conference of Civil Society (Network of Estonian Nonprofit Organizations); Estonian Volunteer Awards (Volunteer Development Estonia); Regional Conferences of Civil Society (Economic Development Centers)

# Structure



- **The Supervisory Board** administrates the work of NFCS (5 representatives of public sector and 5 representatives of civil society organisations).
- Daily work is organised by a **bureau** (6 employees).
- The **expert group** evaluates the applications and submits the proposals for funding (12 experts).



# Important to know



- Not duplicating other funding schemes.
- The activities of the NFCS are clearly focused.
- Continuous assessment of needs of civil society. New open call focuses are developed in cooperation with NGOs.
- Application and budget forms, projects' content and financial report forms are being improved based on the feedback of NGOs.
- Counselling and supervision. NGOs as partners - regular communication and consultation; monitoring visits, on-spot checks; informative seminars and meetings.
- Transparency and responsibility.
- Working pre-financing system for projects.
- 10% co-financing required in projects. In-kind contribution is eligible (max 5%).
- Possibility to present project applications and reports digitally signed.

# Problems



- Capacity (including financial).
- Dependence on projects. Lack of business and economic activities of the association, self-earned money.
- Long term planning and other strategic, institutional and sustainability questions.
- Readiness for involvement, advocacy activities.
- Cooperation with public sector, other NGOs (networks).

***During these 3 years all of these mentioned areas have improved greatly!***



National Foundation  
of Civil Society



# Suured tänud!

Merlin Sepp

Program coordinator

Merlin.Sepp@kysk.ee

+372 53 016 866

[www.kysk.ee](http://www.kysk.ee)