

Frequently asked questions (FAQ)

E1.1. (Questions 1-24) Application process

1. What is the first stage in the application process?

The first step before sending any documents is to verify the eligibility criteria for your organization and the project you wish to submit as well as our funding restrictions. For further information, please refer to the page **Application process** on our website. If you consider that your project meets our eligibility and evaluation criteria and may fit with our **geographical focus** and **program areas**, the next step is to send us a letter of inquiry accompanied by the necessary financial information and, if available, relevant existing documents in support of your application, as described on our website.

2. Can I send a letter of inquiry at any time? Is there a deadline?

Letters of inquiry are accepted throughout the year; there are no deadlines.

3. In which language can I write my letter of inquiry?

Letters of inquiry may be submitted in English, French or Spanish.

4. Can I call someone from PVF to discuss my project / programme?

PVF's website exists precisely to avoid phone calls (or email enquiries) during the initial steps of an application, so please do not telephone or visit the office.

5. I'm coming to Geneva; can I meet a representative of PVF?

Due to the very large number of similar requests, no meeting can take place prior to establishing whether there is sufficient initial interest on the part of PVF. This in turn depends on the content and quality of the letter of inquiry and accompanying documents described in the **application process**. Only these documents can tell us whether there is a sufficient degree of convergence to make a potential meeting fruitful for all. The Foundation must therefore have received and studied project documents before any meeting.

6. What should I look at before sending a letter of inquiry?

If you are considering sending a letter of inquiry, please consult the following sections of our website: **mission, values, approach, geographical focus, program areas, selection criteria, restrictions** and **application process**.

7. What is the amount of funding available from PVF? How much is a typical grant?

There is no specified range of funding, as the amount of our contribution always depends on the project's characteristics, needs and quality. Please note, however, that we favor co-financing in general.

8. My project / program is NOT in PVF's geographical focus or program areas. Can I still submit a letter of inquiry?

Projects outside these priorities may be taken into consideration if they are consistent with the [approach](#) of the Foundation.

9. We are a NGO with no prior experience of international donors. Can we still submit a letter of inquiry?

Our main constraint is being obliged to follow projects from a distance. We cannot fund NGOs which do not have prior experience of international donors' expectations.

10. We are an international organization with an annual budget exceeding 10 million Euro. Can we still submit a letter of inquiry?

For international organizations with an annual budget exceeding 10 million Euros, only projects / programs for which a strong institutional commitment can be demonstrated are eligible. The most convincing evidence of such commitment is if having failed to raise the required funds, the grant-seeker has used its contingency fund to finance the project for over 24 months and can provide undisputable evidence of the project / program's quality.

11. We are a religious organization. Can we still submit a letter of inquiry?

Faith-based organizations may submit a letter of inquiry if the project falls within our guidelines and is intended for non-denominational segments of the population.

In any case, please read the pages called [eligibility criteria](#), [restrictions and evaluation criteria](#) before submitting your request.

12. Does PVF have its own format for letters of inquiry?

PVF has no standard format for letters of inquiry. Please visit our website for more information on the content of letters of inquiry. Likewise, PVF has no standard format for budgets, but guidelines and templates may be found on our website.

13. How long should the letter of inquiry be?

Letters of inquiry should not exceed 10,000 characters (+/- 4 pages, not counting [requested financial information](#) and other [useful supporting documents](#)).

14. Where should I send my letter of inquiry?

Letters of inquiry and accompanying documents should preferably be sent by **email**. Our contact details are on our website, and for applications sent by email there is **no need** to additionally mail a hard copy of the documents by post.

In any case, please read and download the documents on our website.

15. We have sent our letter of inquiry. What happens next?

Usually within a week, PVF will send you an acknowledgement that your letter of inquiry was received, after which it will be directed to the appropriate staff member for review. Although we strive to respond swiftly, the review process for letters of inquiry and accompanying documents can take up to six weeks.

16. Can I call the Foundation about the status of my letter of inquiry?

Due to the large volume of submissions we receive, we cannot respond to phone calls from applicants requesting status updates on a submitted letter of inquiry.

17. I have been waiting for six weeks for a reply from PVF concerning my letter of inquiry. What should I do now?

If you do not hear from us after six weeks, please do not hesitate to get in touch by email for further news.

18. What happens if my letter of inquiry is rejected by PVF?

If, as a result of our review, the Foundation concludes that there is no prospect of PVF funding, you will be notified by email. Due to the large number of unsuccessful applications, we are regrettably not in a position to provide detailed, individual feedback on grounds for rejection. Insofar as possible, we will briefly state why an inquiry letter failed to be selected for further review.

19. My project / program fits in with the geographical focus and/or program areas of PVF, so why was my letter of inquiry declined and my project refused?

Internal considerations that are not made public which relate to the content and quality of the documents submitted to us compared to others ("open competition"), may also influence the outcome of an application, even if it is apparently fully in line with PVF's priorities and the above assessment criteria.

20. What happens if my letter of inquiry is selected for further review?

You will be invited to submit a **full project proposal** (i.e. formal grant proposal) and you will be provided with all the necessary information to complete the process at that stage. Please note that an invitation to submit a full proposal is not an indication of PVF's intention or commitment to award a grant.

21. How long does it take to review a full proposal?

Depending on the complexity of the project. it may take an additional 3 to 6 months (in exceptional cases, even more).

22. Does PVF take project/program indicators into account?

Experience shows that indicators of outcome and impact, as well as the associated data gathering methodology, are most often the critical topic at the study phase of the project. Please also read the page called "**indicators**" on our website (under "content of project proposal").

23. Does PVF contract third parties during the review process?

During the review process, PVF may contact third parties for appraisal / evaluation of the project.

24. What happens if the full proposal is refused by PVF??

If, as a result of our review, the Foundation concludes that there is no prospect of PVF funding, you will be notified by email. Due to the large number of unsuccessful applications, PVF is regrettably not in a position to provide detailed, individual feedback on grounds for rejection. Nevertheless, if time allows, we will do our best to briefly state why a full proposal failed to be selected for further review.

E1.2. (Questions 25-35) Project/program follow-up

25. What happens if the full proposal is endorsed by the PVF secretariat?

Complete project proposals are submitted to the Foundation's Board. **All grants are approved by the Board of Trustees.**

26. How often does the Board meet?

The Board of Trustees meets three times a year to approve grant requests, and may hold other meetings to discuss other matters.

27. When does the Board meet next?

Dates of Board meetings are not made public.

28. PVF studied my project / program for months, so why was it refused by the Board?

Our funds being limited in relation to the large number of worthwhile inquiries we receive, full project applications selected for Board submission are always in open competition for final approval. Regardless of the number of exchanges or the length of a project review phase, we are never in a position to guarantee a positive outcome.

29. My project / program was approved by the Board, what happens next?

If the Board approves a new project, a Partnership Agreement detailing PVF's expectations in terms of narrative and financial reporting will be sent – usually within a month – and must be signed before any funds can be transferred.

30. Does PVF make payments in instalments?

Payments are always made in instalments, subject to receipt and approval of progress reports, both narrative and financial, as specified by the Partnership Agreement.

31. What is the usual reporting frequency?

As a rule, PVF requests half-yearly reports. In the case of co-financing, it does its best to align itself with the reporting calendar of the other project donors, in order to avoid unnecessary duplication of efforts and excessive administrative burdens.

32. Does PVF have its own format for narrative reports?

The Foundation does not have a standard narrative reporting format, preferring to offer grantees the possibility to express themselves freely or to use relevant documents drafted for internal use or following the standard form of another donor of the project. Grantees should nevertheless make sure to provide detailed information on the agreed indicators as attached to the Partnership Agreement.

33. Does PVF have its own format for financial reports?

Similarly, the Foundation does not have a standard financial reporting format. However, grantees are requested to use the same presentation and line items for financial reporting as the project budget which has been accepted by the Board of Trustees and which will be attached to the Partnership Agreement.

34. How does the Foundation evaluate the progress or results of a project?

During a project, PVF may consult experts in various fields (health, construction, etc.) for an appraisal of the content and quality of the reports received. As a result of this scrutiny, the study of a report can take over a month. For obvious reasons, the identity of these experts is not shared. Likewise, the Foundation may at any moment make or arrange for visits to the project with a view to evaluating project quality.

35. Does PVF make visits to the program or contract external consultants?

The Foundation reserves the right to verify, at all times, the implementation of the project / program and the disbursements of funds by on-site visits, audits, joint evaluations with organizations which are co-funding the project or any other appropriate means deemed necessary including, but not limited to, contacts with experts or external consultants.

If you do not see your question above, you are welcome to contact the Foundation by email !

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