

**E-ffective Governance:
Accelerating E-Government and
Digital Public Services in
Bangladesh**

Call for a Grant Concept Note

30 April 2026

CALL FOR A GRANT CONCEPT NOTE

E-effective Governance Accelerating E-Government and Digital Public Services in Bangladesh

1. Background

The project “*E-effective Governance: Accelerating E-Government and Digital Public Services in Bangladesh*” is funded by the European Union and implemented by the British Council and eGovernance Academy (eGA) Estonia over a 36-month period from November 2024-October 2027.

The overall objective of the action is to improve transparency, responsiveness, integrity, and accountability in public service delivery through the enhanced use of digital government tools and processes designed to improve access and usability for citizens.

Grants proposed under this Call support the British Council managed Component of the project which focuses on a portfolio of work to improve the quality, accessibility, and responsiveness of public digital services by addressing both supply and demand-side constraints. The component places strong emphasis on citizen engagement, inclusive service design, and practical improvements in how services are accessed and experienced by users. This project component is being implemented in the following districts:

- Nilphamari
- Bagerhat
- Kushtia

2. Purpose of this Grant Concept Note

This is a Call for a Grant Concept Note issued under the British Council’s grant management framework, aligned with European Union requirements.

Financial support will be awarded to eligible civil society organisations (CSOs) through a competitive selection process to design and implement locally grounded, practical interventions that improve equitable access to and effective use of public digital services, particularly for marginalised and underserved populations.

This call follows a two-stage selection process:

- **Stage 1:** Submission of Concept Note (submitted in the format provided in Annex 1)
- **Stage 2:** Invitation to shortlisted applicants to submit Full Grant Proposals.

Submission of a Concept Note does not guarantee invitation to submit a full proposal.

3. Context and Rationale

Bangladesh has made significant progress in expanding digital public services. However, access to and effective use of these services remains uneven across population groups.

Evidence from the **project’s context analysis** indicates that barriers to access are not limited to infrastructure or digital skills. Citizens often face:

- Limited awareness of available services.
- Low confidence in using digital services.
- Reliance on intermediaries to access services.
- Service that are difficult to navigate or understand.
- Social, cultural, and gender-based barriers.
- Limited opportunities to provide feedback on service experience.

The project, to better understand and address exclusion, adopts a practical approach that focuses on the barriers citizens face when accessing and using public digital services. These barriers may relate to:

- Functional limitations (e.g. disability affecting service use)
- Capability constraints (e.g. digital literacy, language, or skills)
- Contextual factors (e.g. access to devices, connectivity, affordability, or social norms).

Applicants are encouraged to identify and address these types of barriers in their concept note.

This grant call recognises the role of CSOs as trusted facilitators, capable of addressing these barriers through context-specific and citizen-centred approaches.

4. Key Challenge Areas

Proposed interventions must respond to one or more of the following:

1. Citizens are unable to access digital services independently and rely on intermediaries.
2. Low awareness and understanding of available and functioning digital public services.
3. Barriers faced by marginalised groups in accessing and using services.
4. Low digital confidence in using digital public services.
5. Services that are difficult to navigate or use.
6. Limited mechanism for capturing and responding to citizen feedback on services.

5. Scope of Support

The project will **award grants and provide accompanying technical support** to CSO-led initiatives that:

- Improve practical access to public digital services.
- Enable citizens to complete service transactions independently.
- Improve local access to digital services at the community level (underserved communities).
- Build digital confidence to access and use public digital services.
- Enhance inclusivity in accessing services.
- Strengthen citizen engagement and feedback on service experience.
- Demonstrate a clear understanding of the barriers faced by different user groups in accessing and using public digital services.

All concept notes must demonstrate a clear and direct linkage to improved access to and use of public digital services.

6. What the Call Will Not Support

The following types of concept note are **unlikely** to be considered:

- Standalone digital literacy initiatives without linkage to service access or use.
- General awareness campaigns that are not targeted or tailored to intended audience.
- Technology-driven solutions.
- Physical infrastructure development.
- Activities not linked to real service delivery challenges.

7. Grant Structure

Grants will be awarded under three categories:

- **Project Grants:** For implementation-ready interventions with clearly defined results.
- **Research and Seed Grants:** For piloting innovative or exploratory approaches.
- **Community Engagement Grants:** For awareness and encourage behaviour change linked to service uptake.

8. Grant Size and Duration

- **Maximum grant value:** BDT 4,200,000
- **Duration:** Up to 12 months

9. Eligibility Criteria

Applicants must:

- Be legally registered CSOs in Bangladesh.
- Have at least 5 years of operational experience with demonstrated capacity to manage grants of similar scale.
- Demonstrate relevant thematic experience.
- Demonstrate financial and operational capacity.
- Have experience working with marginalised populations.

10. Nature of Funding

This call provides financial support in the form of **grants**, awarded through a competitive process.

Selected organisations will enter into a grant agreement with the British Council and will be required to comply with applicable financial management, reporting, and monitoring requirements in line with British Council and European Union standards.

11. Selection Process (Aligned with BC Grant Toolkit)

The selection process will follow a structured and competitive approach:

- Publication of the Call for Grant Concept Note.
- Submission of Concept Note (Stage 1).
- Administrative and eligibility screening.
- Technical evaluation of eligible Concept Note.
- Shortlisting of applicants.
- Engagement with shortlisted applicants, including clarification discussions and provision of limited technical guidance to support the development of Full Proposals (*This support will be provided in a transparent and consistent manner to all shortlisted applicants and does not guarantee final selection*).
- Invitation to shortlisted applicants to submit Full Proposals (Stage 2).
- Evaluation of Full Proposals (technical and financial).
- Final selection and award of grants.

Only shortlisted applicants from Stage 1 will be invited to submit a Full Proposal.

12. Evaluation Criteria (Stage 1 – Concept Note)

Concept Note will be evaluated through a competitive process against the following criteria:

Criteria	Description	Weight
Relevance to objectives and challenge areas	The extent to which the concept note aligns with the objectives of this call and addresses one or more of the identified challenge areas	30%
Understanding of problem and context	Demonstrated understanding of the barriers faced by citizens in accessing and using public digital services, including local context and target groups	20%
Feasibility and clarity of approach	Clarity, coherence, and practicality of the proposed approach, including how the intervention will be implemented	20%
Potential impact on service access and use	Likelihood that the proposed intervention will lead to improved access to and use of public digital services, particularly for marginalised groups	15%
Organisational capacity and experience	Relevant experience, technical capacity, and ability to deliver the proposed intervention effectively	15%

Minimum Threshold

To be considered for shortlisting, Concept Note must:

- Achieve a minimum score of 70% overall, and
- Demonstrate sufficient quality under the criteria of relevance and understanding of context.

13. Concept Note Requirements

Applicants must use the Concept Note Template provided in **Annex 1**. Applications submitted in other formats may not be considered. Concept Note must be 3–4 pages maximum and include:

- **Section A:** Organisation Information
- **Section B:** Project Summary
- **Section C:** Organisational Capacity
- **Section D:** Indicative Budget

14. Submission Details

- Concept Note Submission Deadline: **June 2, 2026, 11:59 PM (BD Time)**
- Please submit registration copy with the concept note
- The concept note and proposal should be in English
- For queries, question and submission: please send email to egov.grants@britishcouncil.org and cc mdshariful.haque1@britishcouncil.org
- The email subject line should be “**Call for Grant Concept Note**”

15. Timeline (indicative timeline)

Stage	Deadline
Call launch	30 April 2026
Request for clarification/questions	10 May 2026
Response to clarifications/questions	15 May 2026
Concept Note submission	02 June 2026
Shortlisting	15 June 2026
Discussion with shortlisted organisations/CSOs	21 – 30 June 2026
Full Proposal submission	15 July 2026
Proposal review	23 July 2026
Final selection	30 July 2026
Contracting	August 2026

ANNEX 1: CONCEPT NOTE TEMPLATE (should not be more than 3 – 4 pages max)

A. Organisation Information

- Name of the organisation:
- Location:
- Contact person:
- Email & mobile number of the contact person:
- Brief profile (max 100 words):

B. Project Summary

1. Problem Statement

What barrier does your proposed project/grant initiative address? Applicants should clearly describe the specific barriers faced by their target groups (e.g. access, skills, confidence, or social constraints) and how these affect their ability to use public digital services.

2. Target Digital Service or Service Areas

Which public digital service(s) or service areas will your project focus on?

(If your project addresses general awareness or access barriers, please indicate the types or categories of services your intervention will support, e.g. health services, civil registration, social protection, etc.)

3. Proposed Approach and Key Activities Solution

What will you do and how will it improve access or use public digital services? Please outline the key activities you will implement.

4. Target Groups

Who will benefit from your project?

5. Expected Results

What change, or impact will your project/grant initiative achieve? And how do you propose to monitor and evaluate?

6. Partnership and Delivery Approach (if relevant)

Who will you work with to delivery your project/initiative (community-based organisation, local groups, entrepreneurs, relevant stakeholders)

7. Implementation Location

District(s): Nilphamari / Bagerhat / Kushtia

C. Organisational Capacity

- Relevant experience in managing grants of a similar or larger size within the past 5 years (max 100 words).
- Please outline the qualifications and experience of your organisation and the project team as they are related to your project plan and goals.

D. Indicative Budget

What is the estimated cost of the project (as per below table)? A full budget is not required at this stage. However, a detailed budget will be required if invited to prepare a full proposal and will be subject to further discussion

Budget Head	Amount (BDT)	Comments
Staff Cost		Limited to 30% of the total budget
Activity Cost		
M&E Cost		
Indirect Cost		

This Grant Call for Concept Note seeks to support practical, scalable, and citizen-centred solutions that address real barriers to accessing and using public digital services.

Concept Note should be grounded in local realities and demonstrate clear pathways to improving service uptake, inclusion, and citizen experience of using public digital services.