



Terms of Reference

Connect for Global Change EU DEAR Programme

Tender document – External Evaluation



Co-funded by
the European Union

1. Background and context

Connect for Global Change (CfGC) is a 3,5-year EU-funded sub-granting and capacity building Action under the DEAR Programme, led by Stichting Wilde Ganzen with 10 co-applicants across 11 EU member states. The program aims to empower, engage, and connect EU citizens—especially youth and those less sensitive to global challenges—to take shared responsibility for a more inclusive, equal, and sustainable world. CfGC does so by funding impactful communication and civic engagement initiatives, training and coaching grantees, and facilitating learning across 11 EU countries.

CfGC addresses the growing need for citizen engagement in sustainable development and global justice, focusing on critical understanding, meaningful engagement, and gender equality. Through funding, capacity building and facilitating networking for small and medium-sized CSOs the project also strengthens civil societies and participatory democracy in 11 European countries. It builds on proven methodologies from previous DEAR projects, notably Frame, Voice, Report! and Mindchangers, and aligns with Agenda 2030, the EU Gender Action Plan III, and the EU Youth Action Plan.

(See Annexes B: Project proposal and C: Logframe)

2. Purpose and objectives of the evaluation

This final external evaluation serves two complementary purposes:

- (a) accountability towards the European Commission (DEAR Programme) and other stakeholders; and
- (b) learning and reflection for the consortium and partners to inform future programming, sub-granting design and policy dialogue in the field of Global Citizenship Education (GCE) and civic engagement.

In line with the **DEAR Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability and Learning (MEAL) framework**, the evaluation is expected to go beyond compliance and output reporting to assess **how and to what extent change occurred**, for whom, under which conditions, and why.

Specifically, the evaluation will:

- Assess the **relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability and contribution to impact** of CfGC, using OECD/DAC criteria **as interpreted for DEAR and GCE contexts**. Whereas we expect the evaluation to have an extra deep focus on **effectiveness, efficiency and contribution to impact**.
- Analyse results against the CfGC logframe and DEAR core indicators, with particular attention to **critical understanding, meaningful engagement, inclusion of youth and previously less-sensitive groups, and gender-transformative change**.
- Examine **contribution pathways** rather than attributing impact, recognising the complexity of social change and communication-driven interventions.
- Generate **actionable lessons and recommendations** for DEAR-style sub-granting, capacity building and trust-based support models at national and EU level.
- Produce **clear reports** to support learning, advocacy and future DEAR programming.

3. Scope and key evaluation questions

The scope covers the entire CfGC action period (April 2024 till September 2027) and geographies (Finland, Latvia, Lithuania, Denmark, Poland, Netherlands, Belgium, France, Catalonia (SP), Italy, Slovenia) where about 250 sub-grants and consortium activities were implemented. Evaluation questions are structured around impact, outcomes for grantees and partners, process/efficiency, and added value/legacy. Evaluators may further refine wording during the inception phase to align with available data and sampling constraints.

The evaluation should be framed in line with the DEAR programme-level intervention logic, recognising CfGC's role as a multi-country, sub-granting and capacity-building action contributing to broader DEAR objectives. Key evaluation questions should focus on contribution to change, learning and added value, as well as early signals of long-term societal impacts and the project specific impacts.

3.1 Impact (awareness and engagement)

1. To what extent did CfGC contribute to increased critical understanding of global challenges (e.g., climate and environment; social and gender justice; inclusion) among EU citizens reached by the action? Consider youth and previously less-sensitive groups.
2. To what extent did CfGC contribute to meaningful engagement and behaviour change among EU citizens?
3. What credible signals of contribution to societal change can be captured/ observed? And should this question be under Impact
4. What unintended (positive/negative) impacts emerged, and for whom?

3.2 Outcomes for third parties (grantees and their partners)

5. How and to what extent did CfGC communication reach the public and potential applicants and possible grantees, and created opportunities to increase critical understanding?
6. How and to what extent did CfGC funding and coaching enable grantees to increase outreach, connect with new target groups, and create opportunities for meaningful engagement?
7. How effective was the combination of financial support and capacity building (including toolkits, mentoring and networking) in improving the quality and inclusiveness of communication and engagement?
8. What differences in activities on the pyramid of engagement can be observed across projects (clarify this a bit) ?
9. What unintended outcomes arose for grantees (e.g., leverage of additional funds, media partnerships, network effects)?

3.3 Outcomes for consortium partners and partnerships

10. What were the major takeaways from implementing CfGC and from cooperation within the consortium (e.g., partner roles as networks and intermediaries; bottom-up approaches; linking local and global)?
11. How were these takeaways applied within partner organisations and platforms (including practices to include youth and less-sensitive groups; gender-transformative approaches)?
12. How could the communication, cooperation, governance and learning architecture be improved in future joint programmes?

3.4 Process, efficiency and accessibility

13. How efficient were the sub-granting processes (assessment, reporting, coaching) relative to results achieved (cost/benefit)?
14. To what extent were the administrative requirements accessible and proportionate for small and youth-led organisations?
15. Which assumptions in the Theory of Change held true (e.g., “subgranting through NGOs is effective”; “combining capacity building and funding creates stronger outcomes”)? Which did not? What were key enabling and limiting factors?

3.5 Added value and legacy for EU/DEAR and national levels

16. What is the added value of CfGC for EU/DEAR objectives (e.g., reaching new publics, strengthening democratic participation, gender equality)?
17. What policy/practice recommendations emerge for EU/DEAR and for national/regional stakeholders regarding sub-granting and support structures (e.g., trust-based approaches; avoiding overly burdensome administration)?
18. How can the evaluation evidence be best communicated (e.g., national-level infographics; European synthesis) to support future programme design?

4. Logframe reference and priority indicators for analysis

Evaluators should explicitly map findings to CfGC's logframe. Priorities include (non-exhaustive):

- Impact indicators on perceptions of EU development cooperation, climate action behaviours, and gender equality; youth participation in civic/environmental/human rights organisations; and total EU citizens reached by sub-granted projects.
- Outcome indicators on critical understanding, engagement (including youth and women shares and those previously less sensitive), multipliers, and stories of significant change.
- Capacity outcomes for CSOs (incl. youth-led) to reach youth and less-sensitive groups; adoption of improved practices; and gender-transformative approaches.

The logframe is provided as Annex C to guide sampling, question routing and data triangulation.

Evaluators are expected to make explicit use of DEAR core indicators, where relevant, and to situate CfGC results within the wider DEAR Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability and Learning (MEAL) framework. This includes qualitative data such as stories of significant change, shifts in narratives, empowerment, partnerships and learning processes, alongside quantitative indicators.

5. Methodology and approach

The evaluation must be conducted independently and in accordance with DEAR MEAL principles and DG INTPA evaluation quality standards, including confidentiality, impartiality, participation, ethical data collection and learning orientation.

A theory-based, mixed-methods approach is expected, emphasising contribution analysis, qualitative inquiry and triangulation rather than attribution of impact.

- Desk study of programme documents (application, guidelines, toolkits), monitoring data, grantee reports, selected communication products, DEAR materials, and stories of significant change.
- Semi-structured interviews with consortium partners, grantees (incl. youth-led), multipliers and other stakeholders (e.g., assessment committee members, media partners, authorities as relevant).
- Beneficiary/user research at country level (interviews and/or focus groups) with audiences reached by grantees, ensuring inclusion of youth and less-sensitive groups.
- Survey(s) as appropriate to capture cross-country patterns (e.g., reach, engagement, administrative accessibility, perceived capacity gains).
- At least one cross-European exchange/webinar to test and discuss interim findings with partners and selected grantees.
- Clear sampling strategy covering countries, project types and target groups; and triangulation to substantiate contribution claims.
- Explicit reflection on what could not (yet) be measured or evidenced, and credible signals of longer-term contribution beyond the project horizon.

Evaluators may propose methodological refinements in the inception report, including options to limit travel and reduce CO₂ emissions (e.g., use of remote methods) while safeguarding data quality.

In their offer, evaluators must clearly describe how their proposed methodology aligns with the DEAR MEAL framework.

6. Deliverables

- Inception report: refined questions, sampling, tools, workplan and risks/mitigations.
- Draft evaluation report (≤30 pages, excluding annexes) with executive summary.
- Final evaluation report in English covering all countries, with lessons for the consortium and EU/DEAR; annexes to include methods, sample, tools, indicator mapping and cases. The final evaluation report should explicitly distinguish between findings, interpretation, and learning-oriented conclusions, and clearly indicate the strength of evidence underpinning key claims.
- Executive summary with stand-alone infographic suitable for national stakeholders.
- Slide deck with key findings and recommendations (for consortium presentation).

7. Evaluation quality assurance

The evaluation process and outputs should be guided by recognised evaluation quality standards, including those outlined in the DEAR MEAL Guide and the DG INTPA Evaluation Handbook. The Evaluation Steering Committee will assess deliverables against criteria such as relevance, methodological rigour, transparency, evidence-based reasoning, and usefulness for decision-making and learning.

8. Team profile and qualifications

- Proven experience evaluating DEAR/Global Citizenship Education and communication/engagement programmes, including sub-granting schemes.
- Strong qualitative methods expertise (interviews, focus groups, contribution analysis, case study design) and ability to present data concisely.
- Knowledge of civil society dynamics and youth engagement in Europe; gender-transformative and intersectional approaches.
- Ability to work in English and, preferably, additional consortium languages to conduct interviews; or credible strategies to ensure multilingual coverage.

9. Management, governance and ethics

- Contracting authority: Stichting Wilde Ganzen on behalf of the consortium.
- An Evaluation Steering Committee (ESC) comprising consortium representatives will oversee the assignment, review deliverables and validate the final report.
- The evaluators will ensure GDPR-compliant data handling and informed consent; protect anonymity where agreed; and disclose any conflicts of interest.
- The evaluators will be required to familiarise themselves with and comply with the organization's protocol for SEA-H in order to provide safe workspaces to any individual or facilitation of groups linked with the evaluation.

10. Timeline (indicative)

- Tender launch — 28 April 2026
- Deadline for questions — 22 May 2026
- Proposal submission — 19 June 2026
- Evaluator interviews/selection — till end of July 2026
- Final selection of offer — 31 August 2027
- Inception phase — September 2026
- Data collection — September 2026– September 2027
- Draft report and presentation— June 2027
- Final report and presentation — November 2027

Exact dates to be confirmed in consultation with the Lead Coordinator and ESC, aligned with CfGC's overall reporting schedule and activity planning.

11. Budget and payment schedule

The maximum available budget for the final external evaluation is €40,000 (including all fees, travel and other costs, and taxes where applicable).

Payment schedule to be agreed at contracting (e.g., 30% on inception approval; 40% on submission of acceptable draft; 30% on acceptance of final report).

12. Proposal content and submission

Proposals (in English) should include:

- Methodology and approach, including data collection tools and strategies to ensure inclusion of youth and less-sensitive groups, and options to limit travel/CO₂
- Workplan and timeline.
- Detailed budget (in EUR), including VAT/taxes.
- Team composition, roles, languages and relevant experience; CVs (max. 2 pages each).
- Two references and one sample of a comparable evaluation delivered in the last 5 years.
- Declaration of any conflicts of interest; and nationality of team members (as per tendering rules).

Submission: ernstjan@wildeganzen.nl by [deadline]. Questions should be sent to the same address by [deadline for questions].

13. Selection criteria

- Quality and coherence of proposed methodology (including considerations to limit travel/CO₂).
- Understanding of CfGC's sub-granting and capacity-building model and target groups.
- Realism of workplan/timeline.
- Team capacity and relevant experience in similar assignments.
- Best value for money (price–quality ratio).
- Overall impression following interviews with shortlisted evaluators.

14. Annexes

Annex A. Concept note

Annex B. Program proposal

Annex C. Logframe



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