



UNITED ARAB EMIRATES  
MINISTRY OF COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT

صندوق تمكين مؤسسات النفع العام  
NPO EMPOWERMENT FUND

# NPO Empowerment Fund Guide

# This Guide Covers

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## About the Non-Profit Sector in the UAE

Non-profit organizations (NPOs) are essential pillars of national development and social cohesion in the United Arab Emirates. Their contributions span civic, economic, and social dimensions, positioning them as key enablers of the nation's long-term prosperity. By fostering civic engagement and volunteerism, creating employment opportunities, and advancing the UAE's enduring values of generosity and social responsibility, these organizations play an indispensable role in shaping an inclusive and connected society.

Recent system-level reforms include the introduction of a new law allowing expatriates to establish non-profit organizations on the mainland, the decentralization of licensing to local authorities, and the creation of a unified national classification framework encompassing 11 distinct non-profit categories to ensure full sectoral representation. Additional measures, such as simplified registration, risk-based oversight, and the development of a centralized NPO registry, have enhanced transparency, accessibility, and coordination across the sector.

In 2025, the Ministry of Community Empowerment (MoCE) launched eight impactful initiatives under the Volunteering and Community Engagement Ecosystem. Among these is the **100M AED NPO Empowerment Fund**, a flagship initiative designed to expand, professionalize, and strengthen the non-profit sector across the UAE. This Fund aims to equip NPOs with the resources, capabilities, and support they need to drive sustainable impact and contribute meaningfully to national development.

To learn more about the UAE's NPO ecosystem, including how to establish a new NPO, the regulatory requirements, and best practices for operating an existing organization, please visit:



[www.moce.gov.ae](http://www.moce.gov.ae)

## What is the 100M AED NPO Empowerment Fund?

The 100M AED NPO Empowerment Fund was launched as one of the national initiatives aligned with the Year of Community, aimed at supporting the growth of the non-profit sector in the UAE and enhancing its impact on society. The Fund focuses on empowering Non-Profit Organizations (NPOs) and strengthening their impactful projects and initiatives through financial and operational support.

### The objectives of the Fund are to:

Empower NPOs to be a core driver of sustainable development and improved quality of life.

Strengthen the contribution of the non-profit sector to national priorities and community wellbeing.

Develop innovative solutions to address social and economic challenges.

Strengthen innovation and strategic partnerships among the government, private, and NPOs.

Enhance the financial and operational capacity of NPOs to deliver sustained impact

### There are two types of funding available, based on the age of the applying NPO:

01

#### Seed Stage Funding

for NPOs registered for less than two years.

02

#### Scale Funding

for NPOs registered for more than two years.

01

100M AED NPO Empowerment Fund

## Seed Stage Funding



**Criteria:**  
less than 2 years old from the date of registration.



**Amount Available:**  
Up to 500,000 AED.



**Purpose of Funds:**  
Support the establishment of operational processes and to build institutional capabilities to ensure impact and sustainability.

### Use of Funds:

Operational expenses

Costs of foundational projects and programs

**Disbursement Mechanism:** Direct disbursement as a one-time grant, according to specific controls/regulations

### What are we looking for?

We are looking for early-stage NPOs with a strong vision and clear mission, who demonstrate the potential to create meaningful social impact.

Applicants should show:

- A solid foundational plan for establishing operational processes and institutional capabilities.
- Clear ideas for initial projects or programs that address community needs.
- Commitment to sustainability and impact, even at this early stage.
- Organizational readiness to effectively use the grant to build capacity and achieve results.

02

100M AED NPO Empowerment Fund

## Scale Funding



**Criteria:**  
more than 2 years old from the date of registration.



**Amount Available:**  
Up to 5 million AED.



**Purpose of Funds:**  
Support the expansion of community activities and enhance social impact through new programs or the expansion of existing programs.

### Use of Funds:

Limited operational expenses, such as administrative costs, staff costs, and any necessary venue hire or external support costs

Project costs, provided that impact is demonstrated, and funding does not exceed 50% of the NPO's annual operating budget

### What are we looking for?

We are looking for established NPOs with a proven track record of delivering impactful programs, who are ready to scale or enhance their social impact.

Applicants should show:

- Demonstrated past impact, with evidence of successful programs or initiatives.
- A credible plan for expansion or new programs, with measurable outcomes.
- Strategic use of funding that aligns with the organization's mission and enhances sustainability.
- Capacity to manage larger grants, including operational, financial, and reporting readiness.



## 2026 Priority Areas

In its first funding cycle, the Fund will prioritize initiatives that reinforce social stability and community cohesion, deliver targeted, high-quality support to individuals and families, and amplify community impact in line with national priorities.

The Fund will support initiatives across a number of priority sectors, including education, health and wellbeing, community development, individual and family support, NPO enablement and volunteering, as well as environment and animal welfare.

We are seeking NPO-led initiatives that translate these priorities into practical, on-the-ground action by reaching key community segments, supporting overall wellbeing, and enabling coordinated responses that complement national efforts and reinforce societal resilience.

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The Fund will prioritize support across the following areas:



**Education**



**Health  
& Wellbeing**



**Community  
Development**



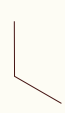
**Individual  
& Family Support**



**NPO Enablement  
& Volunteering**



**Environment &  
Animal Welfare**



## Who is eligible?

To be eligible for the funding, you must be a registered NPO in the UAE. If you are interested in setting up an NPO, please visit the MoCE website for guidance.



[www.moce.gov.ae](http://www.moce.gov.ae)

### To be eligible for the funding, you need to:

**Be a licensed Non-Profit Organization (NPO)** registered in the UAE, including those licensed by the Ministry of Community Empowerment, Local Community Development Authorities, or relevant free zone authorities.

**Submit a proposed project aligned with the 2026 priority areas:**

- |                          |                                  |
|--------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1. Education             | 4. Individual & Family Support   |
| 2. Health & Wellbeing    | 5. NPO Enablement & Volunteering |
| 3. Community Development | 6. Environment & Animal Welfare  |

**Plan to spend the awarded funds within the UAE** (international spending is not permitted)

Please note, for NPOs registered with Local Community Development Authorities, you will be issued a Declaration Number by the Ministry if you are approved for funding.

## How to apply?

### Step 1 Locating the application form



### Step 2 Filling out the application form

The application form is divided into five sections:



#### Section #1: Basic Information

You will be asked for the name of your NPO in English and Arabic, your position within the NPO, and details around your licensing. You will be asked to select the Authority under which you are licensed, with the options being: Ministry of Community Empowerment, Local Development Authorities, or Freezones.

**Step 2**

## Filling out the application form

**Section #2: Organizational Details**

These questions help us understand how your organization operates, who you serve, and the impact you aim to achieve, so we can assess your structure, capacity, and alignment with the Fund's goals.

**1. You will be asked to give more detail about your NPO, with a focus on your vision and mission, general objectives, and current programs.**

We are looking for a concise statement of the organization's core purpose and approach to creating change (mission) and its long-term aspiration (vision). Strong responses will be specific and realistic.

This is also your opportunity to explain what you do on a day-to-day basis and how these activities contribute to your mission - it should include an overview of your primary programs, services, and activities.

**2. You will be asked share up to 5 initiatives that you are currently delivering.**

We want to see specific examples of meaningful change that your NPO is currently creating in the community. This can be in the form of a paragraph or a bullet point list. You can also use this space to mention any previous initiatives with a clear description of the impact, outcomes, numbers, stories.

**3. You will be asked to tell us more about the target audience of your programs and activities.**

We want to see a short and clear description of who your NPO serves, including demographics, needs, and why this group is important. We are looking to see that you understand your community and tailor your work accordingly.

**4. You will be asked about your current team.**

This response should outline a clear staffing and volunteer structure, the roles people play, and any expected changes. We are assessing your capacity to deliver their work effectively so it is important you demonstrate how the team will support any future goals.

**5. You will be asked about how you track and measure your impact as an NPO.**

You should include a short description of the tools, systems, or methods you use to collect and analyse data (e.g., surveys, software, spreadsheets). We are looking to see that you have a thoughtful and reliable approach to monitoring your impact.

## Step 2

### Filling out the application form

#### Section #3: Project Details

These questions help us understand the specific project or initiative you are proposing, how it will address a community need, and the outcomes you aim to achieve, so we can assess the project's feasibility, alignment with the Fund's goals, and potential for meaningful social impact.

##### **1. You will be asked which priority area your project covers.**

You can select from Education, Health & Wellbeing, Individual & Family Support, Community Development, NPO Enablement & Volunteering, and Environment & Animal Welfare

##### **2. You will be asked what the main outcomes are that you expect your project to achieve.**

We want to see a clear connection between your project's objectives and the positive impact it will have on individuals, communities, or systems.

##### **3. You will be asked about the reason you are applying for the funding and how your application aligns with the Fund's objectives.**

You will need to clearly articulate your organization's needs at this stage and the problem or opportunity the funding will address. We want to see a clear rationale for the funding request, evidence that you understand the Fund's priorities, and a compelling case for how the funding will enable you to strengthen capacity, expand impact, or achieve specific outcomes in line with the Fund's objectives.

##### **4. You will be asked to provide a detailed description of the project you are proposing for funding.**

You should clearly describe the project's objectives, target beneficiaries, key activities, timeline, and expected outcomes, and explain how it addresses a clear community need and contributes to measurable social impact.

##### **5. You will be asked about your plans to monitor the progress of the project and the impact that the funding has had.**

You will need to show that you have a practical, realistic, and structured plan for monitoring progress, learning, and adapting throughout the funded period. We want to see the specific tools, methods, or systems you will use (e.g., reporting templates, surveys, data tracking tools) and a clear plan for collecting and reviewing data regularly.

##### **6. You will be asked for three Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) that you will use to track impact and report on.**

We want to see three or more KPIs that are specific, measurable, and directly linked to the outcomes they aim to achieve with the funding.

A strong response should show:

- KPIs that are relevant to your activities and impact goals.
- Clear, quantifiable indicators (numbers, percentages, milestones).
- Indicators that will genuinely demonstrate progress, not superficial metrics.

## Step 2

### Filling out the application form

#### Section #4: Finances

These questions help us understand your organization's financial health, budgeting, and plans for using the requested funds, so we can assess your capacity to manage the grant responsibly, allocate resources effectively, and achieve the intended impact.

##### **1. You will be asked for the amount of funding you are requesting.**

You are able to apply for a maximum of 500,000 AED if your organization is less than 2 years old and therefore you are applying for Seed Stage Funding.

You are able to apply for a maximum of 5 million AED if your organization is more than 2 years old and therefore you are applying under Scale Funding. Please note, funding will be distributed in multiple tranches.

We do not recommend requesting the maximum budget unless your application clearly demonstrates a strong plan for impactful use of the full amount. While we may approve your request, we reserve the right to offer a smaller funding amount than applied for. Funding decisions will take into account both your organization's overall annual budget and your proposed project plan.

Please note that no NPO will receive more than 50% of their annual turnover in funding and for Scale Funding administrative costs are capped at 20% of the budget.

##### **2. You will be asked to declare your annual operating budget (in AED).**

##### **3. You will be asked how you plan to use the requested funds, and how will this support your impact goals.**

If you are applying for Seed Stage Funding, we are looking for NPOs that can clearly explain how the requested funds will be used to establish core operational processes, build institutional capacity, launch foundational projects or programs, and set the groundwork for achieving early and sustainable social impact.

If you are applying for Scale Funding, we are looking for NPOs that can clearly explain how the requested funds will be used to scale existing programs or launch new initiatives, strengthen organizational capacity for larger impact, and demonstrate measurable growth and sustainable social outcomes.

We want to see a clear, realistic, and well-structured budget that outlines how funds will be allocated across activities, operational costs, and project expenses, demonstrating alignment with your proposed plans and you also have the option of uploading the budget as a document under the "Upload Documents" section.

##### **4. You will be asked to propose a disbursement period for the funding.**

We want to see a clear schedule, outlining how much funding is required and when over the project period. This should reflect the timing of major activities, project phases, or deliverables, demonstrating that funding will be used in a logical and well-planned way.

## Step 2

### Filling out the application form

#### Section #5: Additional Information

**1. You will be asked if there is anything else you would like to share with us.**

This section is optional but gives you an opportunity to provide any additional context, insights, or information that helps us better understand your NPO, its work, and its impact. If you have any media posts or features, we recommend you sharing them with us here.

#### Section #6: Upload Documents

**1. You will have the opportunity to upload several documents, including your latest financial statement, your organization's license, a copy of your ByLaws, and any other supporting documents.**

## Step 3

### Submitting the application form

You will have the opportunity to review your application before submission, and you will need to declare that the information provided is accurate before you submit.

## Step 4

### After Submission

Once submitted, your application will be reviewed. You will receive one of the following responses through the email registered to your NPO account:

**Approval** – Your application has been successful, and you will be invited to proceed with the funding process.

**Request for More Information** – The reviewers require additional details or clarification before making a final decision. You will be asked to provide the requested information within a specified timeframe.

**Invitation for Presentation** - Shortlisted NPOs will be invited to present their proposal to the Ministry's Committee

**Rejection** – Your application has not been successful. Feedback will be provided to support you with improving your application for any future funding cycles.

## How will we assess your application?

Your application will be assessed by a specialized committee within the Ministry of Community Empowerment who will evaluate the applications, according to objective criteria. This process ensures that every application is reviewed fairly and that decisions are based on complete and accurate information.

There are three categories of assessments; organizational capacity, impact potential, financial feasibility.

Category	Description	Weight (%)
<b>Organizational Capacity</b>	The NPO's ability to deliver the proposed project effectively, e.g. leadership, staffing, governance, experience, and track record.	25%
<b>Impact Potential</b>	The likely scale, depth, and sustainability of the project's social or community impact; alignment with the fund's goals.	40%
<b>Financial Feasibility</b>	Budget realism, cost-effectiveness, sound financial management, and sustainability of funding.	35%

## Preparing for the Presentation

### Presentation to the Review Committee (Shortlisted Applications)

If your application is shortlisted, your NPO will be invited to attend a meeting with the Review Committee to present your proposed project and respond to questions.

This presentation forms part of the assessment process and allows the Committee to better understand your organization's capacity and the feasibility and expected impact of your proposed project.

You will be asked to deliver a 20-minute presentation, followed by a question-and-answer session with the Committee.

## How to Prepare?

Your presentation should be structured in alignment with the assessment criteria outlined in the section “How will we assess your application?”, specifically:

### 1. Organizational Capacity (25%)

You may wish to cover:

- Your organization’s mission and track record
- Relevant experience delivering similar projects
- Key team members who will deliver the project
- Your governance and management structure
- Your organization’s readiness to implement the project

### 2. Impact Potential (40%)

You may wish to cover:

- The need or problem your project addresses
- The project’s objectives and expected outcomes
- Who will benefit and how many beneficiaries will be reached
- The expected social or community impact
- How impact will be measured
- How the project aligns with the Fund’s objectives

### 3. Financial Feasibility (35%)

You may wish to cover:

- Summary of the requested funding amount
- Key cost components and budget rationale
- How the budget represents value for money
- Your organization’s financial management approach
- Any additional funding sources or sustainability plans

#### Additional Notes:

Please ensure your presentation is consistent with the information submitted in your application. You may use presentation slides if you wish. The Committee may ask questions to clarify any aspect of your organization or project.

## What happens if you are successful?

If you have been approved for funding, you will receive a notification to sign a grant agreement through the MoCE digital platform. The grant agreement will stipulate the amount, distribution schedule, and terms and conditions of the funding. You will be required to submit a digital signature on this document. The appropriate team will then reach out to you to arrange the funding disbursement.

## Reporting

You will be expected to report on your funding on a multi-year basis.

**For seed stage funding,** funding terms are set at one-year, so you will submit two reports – a mid-term report at 6 months, and a final report after 1 year. A reporting template will be provided, and you will be expected to report on the use of funds, progress in building operational and institutional capacity, early mission impact, and the KPIs outlined in the application.

**For scale funding,** your reporting schedule will be determined based on the disbursement schedule agreed in the grant agreement. You will need to provide satisfactory reporting in order to unlock the tranches of funding. A reporting template will be provided, and you will be expected to report on the use of scale funding, progress in expanding or enhancing programs, demonstrated and ongoing social impact, sustainability, and the KPIs outlined in the application.

## FAQs

-  **What is the Non-Profit Organizations (NPO) Empowerment Fund?**  
 The AED 100 million NPO Empowerment Fund is a national initiative aimed at strengthening the role of non-profit organizations (NPOs) in delivering impactful, community-based programs across the UAE. The Fund forms part of the Volunteering and Community Engagement Ecosystem, launched in 2025, and reflects the leadership's commitment to empowering the non-profit sector as a key partner in supporting society and advancing national priorities.
-  **Who is eligible to apply to the Fund?**  
 All NPOs registered in the UAE, including those licensed by the Ministry of Community Empowerment, local authorities, or relevant freezone authorities.
-  **What is the value of the funding that can be applied for?**  
 For NPOs that are no more than two years old, they can apply for Seed Funding up to 500,000 AED. For NPOs that are more than two years old, they can apply for Scale Funding up to 5 million AED.  
NPOs will need to demonstrate clear and impactful use of the proposed funds in their application, and are advised that they should not apply for funding greater than 50% of their total annual operating budget.  
For NPOs applying for Scale Funding, there is a cap of 20% on permitted administrative costs.
-  **What are the funding priorities for 2026?**  
 In its first funding cycle, the Fund will prioritize initiatives that reinforce social stability and community cohesion, deliver targeted, high-quality support to individuals and families, and amplify community impact in line with national priorities. The Fund will support initiatives across a number of priority sectors, including education, health and wellbeing, community development, individual and family support, NPO enablement and volunteering, as well as environment and animal welfare.
-  **How can the funding be used?**  
 The funding can be used to cover basic operational expenses (up to 20% administrative costs), implement community projects and programs, in addition to supporting expansion plans or launching new initiatives that enhance social impact.
-  **How is the funding disbursed?**  
 seed stage funding is disbursed as a direct, one-time grant, while expansion funding is provided as multi-year grants, disbursed gradually upon the achievement of performance indicators and clear criteria for sustainability.
-  **How can an NPO apply for the funding?**  
 Through the MoCE website which provides an electronic application form. You can find out more about the application process through a dedicated guidebook ([link here](#)).



## FAQs



### **Which entity is responsible for evaluating applications?**

A specialized committee within the Ministry of Community Empowerment undertakes the evaluation of applications, according to objective criteria that include organizational capacity, project impact, and financial feasibility.



### **Does the Fund require periodic follow-up reports?**

Yes, all NPOs who receive funds will be required to submit periodic financial and technical reports that illustrate the volume of achieved impact compared to the defined objectives.

## Contact Us




If you have any questions about the NPO Empowerment Fund or the application process, you can contact us at:

**[npofund@moce.gov.ae](mailto:npofund@moce.gov.ae)**



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