



NATO PUBLIC DIPLOMACY PROGRAMMES

**CO-SPONSORSHIP GRANTS FOR PUBLIC DIPLOMACY
PROJECTS**

**PUBLIC DIPLOMACY DIVISION, INTERNATIONAL STAFF,
NATO HEADQUARTERS**

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NATO PUBLIC DIPLOMACY DIVISION CO-SPONSORSHIP GRANTS 2023

CONTENT GUIDELINES

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In June 2022, NATO Leaders gathered in Madrid, Spain to discuss important issues facing the Alliance and will meet again in Vilnius in 2023.

The Madrid Summit has set NATO's strategic direction for the future, ensuring that the Alliance will continue to adapt to a changing world and keep its one billion people safe, in particular:

2022 Strategic Concept

- NATO's guiding document, reflecting the new security reality that has emerged since the previous Strategic Concept was agreed in 2010
- identifies Russia as the most significant and direct threat to Allied security, addresses China for the first time and includes other challenges like terrorism, cyber and hybrid

Strengthened deterrence and defence

- the biggest overhaul of Allied collective defence and deterrence since the Cold War
- upgraded defence plans, with [more forces at high readiness and specific forces pre-assigned to defend specific Allies](#)
- more troops and more pre-positioned equipment and weapon stockpiles in the East of the Alliance, enhancing NATO's eight multinational battlegroups

Investing more in defence

- reaffirmed commitment by Allies to spending at least 2 per cent of GDP on defence by 2024
- more common funding for NATO

Support to Ukraine and other partners at risk

- a strengthened Comprehensive Assistance Package for Ukraine, including support in areas like secure communications, anti-drone systems and fuel
- long-term help for Ukraine to transition from Soviet-era military equipment to modern NATO equipment
- new support packages for other partners at risk, including Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, and the Republic of Moldova

Adapting the Alliance to emerging challenges

- agreement to cut greenhouse gas emissions by NATO as an organisation by at least 45 per cent by 2030, down to net zero by 2050
- launch of the NATO Innovation Fund, which will invest EUR 1 billion over the next 15 years in start-ups developing dual-use emerging technologies, such as artificial intelligence
- pledge to continue enhancing national and collective resilience, so that Allied societies are prepared for any threat or challenge
- Australia, Japan, New Zealand and the Republic of Korea joined a NATO Summit for the first time, to deepen cooperation and address global challenges

Finland and Sweden membership

- official invitation to Finland and Sweden to become NATO members
- reaffirmed commitment to NATO's Open Door policy for aspiring members

Challenges from the South

- recommitment to the fight against terrorism and NATO's 360-degree approach to deterrence and defence
- discussion of the food crisis caused by Russia's invasion of Ukraine, and Russia's and China's increasing influence in the Alliance's southern neighbourhood
- new support packages for partner countries Mauritania and Tunisia

Reaffirming NATO's common values

- a reaffirmed, iron-clad commitment from Allies to collective defence and the importance of the transatlantic bond that unites NATO
- an equally strong commitment to the rules-based international order and Allies' shared values of individual liberty, human rights, democracy and the rule of law
- agreement to continue advancing gender equality, and to integrate human security and the Women, Peace and Security agenda across NATO's core tasks

Thematic Clusters

Applicants should consider the following thematic clusters:

NATO PROTECTS

NATO's greatest responsibility is to protect and defend its territory and populations from attack. Projects under this thematic cluster should encompass all activities that contribute to enhancing NATO's deterrence and defence posture.

NATO UNITES

All of NATO's activities must be underpinned by unity. Projects under this cluster should focus on the shared commitment to the Washington Treaty, the importance of the transatlantic bond, fairer burden sharing and the promotion of Alliance values. They should consider how NATO brings Allies together to confront challenges to the rules-based international order in defence of the common values of freedom, democracy and the rule of law.

NATO STRENGTHENS

NATO takes a global approach, working on a daily basis to strengthen its members and partner countries. Through projects and activities across the globe, the Alliance seeks to empower Allies, partners, organisations and individuals to advance peace and security.

Possible Focus Topics¹

[The New Strategic Concept](#): Setting out how NATO will deal with a more unpredictable and competitive world in an era of rising strategic competition, pervasive instability and advancing authoritarianism, the new strategic concept strengthens the Alliance as an organization based on shared

¹ The list is not exhaustive and other relevant topics that fall under the main thematic clusters are eligible for sponsorship.

democratic values, principles and norms. It also prepares NATO to address security challenges posed by authoritarian regimes, in particular, the Russian Federation and PRC, to the Euro-Atlantic security. It reinforces NATO's collective defence as the core task based on 360-degree approach by significantly strengthening its deterrence and defence posture, the backbone of Allies Article 5 commitment. Crisis Prevention and Management and Cooperative Security remain NATO's core tasks.

[Russia's War Against Ukraine](#) gravely undermines international security and stability. Russia's appalling cruelty has caused immense human suffering and massive displacements, disproportionately affecting women and children. Russia bears full responsibility for this humanitarian catastrophe.

[NATO's Support for Ukraine:](#) The Alliance will continue and further step up political and practical support to Ukraine as it continues to defend its sovereignty and territorial integrity against Russian aggression. Jointly with Ukraine, NATO as an organisation decided on a strengthened package of support for Ukraine with a view to accelerate the delivery of non-lethal defence equipment, improve Ukraine's cyber defences and resilience, and support modernising its defence sector in its transition to strengthen long-term interoperability.

[Defence and Deterrence:](#) Collective defence remains the Alliance's greatest responsibility and deterrence is a core element of NATO's overall strategy – preventing conflict and war, protecting Allies, maintaining freedom of decision and action, and upholding the principles and values it stands for (individual liberty, democracy, human rights and the rule of law). NATO will build on the newly enhanced posture, and significantly strengthen its deterrence and defence for the long term to ensure the security and defence of all Allies. NATO's role in the fight against terrorism is an integral part of the 360-degree approach. Allies have committed to deploying additional robust in-place combat-ready forces on the eastern flank, to be scaled up from the existing battlegroups to brigade-size units where and when required, underpinned by credible rapidly available reinforcements, prepositioned equipment, and enhanced command and control. NATO's capacity to deter and defend is supported by an appropriate mix of nuclear, conventional, and missile defence capabilities, which complement each other, and is underpinned by an array of civil and military resources to support these capabilities and the posture more broadly.

Building Resilience: Resilience remains a national responsibility and a collective commitment. Allies are enhancing resilience, including through nationally developed goals and implementation plans, guided by objectives developed by Allies together. NATO Allies have been strengthening their energy security including ensuring reliable energy supplies to military forces. NATO aims to accelerate its adaptation in all domains, boosting resilience to cyber and hybrid threats as well as interoperability. At Madrid, a new chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear defence policy was agreed and Allies agreed to significantly strengthen their cyber defences.

The South: Instability in NATO's southern neighbourhood continues to challenge Alliance security and the security of NATO's partners. Terrorism in all its forms and manifestations targeted at partners and at NATO's home populations weakens international stability and prosperity, and risks undermining the resolve and confidence of its citizens.

Terrorism in all its forms and manifestations is the most direct asymmetric threat to the security of NATO's citizens and to international peace and prosperity. Seeking to attack or inspire attacks against Allies, terrorist organizations have expanded their networks, enhanced their capabilities and invested in new technologies to improve their reach and lethality. Non-state armed groups, including transnational terrorist networks and state supported actors, continue to exploit conflict and weak governance to recruit, mobilise and expand their foothold.

Russia is the most significant and direct threat to Allies' security and to peace and stability in the Euro-Atlantic area. Seeking to establish spheres of influence and direct control through coercion, subversion, aggression and annexation, Russia uses conventional, cyber and hybrid means against NATO and its partners. NATO does not seek confrontation and poses no threat to the Russian Federation. In light of its hostile policies and actions, NATO does not consider the Russian Federation to be its partner. However, the Alliance remains willing to keep open channels of communication with Moscow to manage and mitigate risks, prevent escalation and increase transparency. Any change in the relationship depends on the Russian Federation halting its aggressive behaviour and fully complying with international law.

Partnership with the European Union: Taking into account the unprecedented level of cooperation with the European Union, NATO continues to further strengthen this strategic partnership in a spirit of full mutual openness, transparency, complementarity, and respect for the organisations' different mandates, decision-making autonomy and institutional integrity, and as agreed by the two organisations. Common resolve in responding to Russia's war against Ukraine highlights the strength of this unique and essential partnership.

Partnerships: At Madrid, Allies decided to further enhance partnerships so that they continue to meet the interests of both Allies and partners. They have, in particular, decided on new measures to step up tailored political and practical support to partners, including Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, and the Republic of Moldova. NATO works with them to build their integrity and resilience, develop capabilities, and uphold their political independence.

NATO's Open Door Policy: NATO's door remains open to any European country in a position to undertake the commitments and obligations of membership, and contribute to security in the Euro-Atlantic area. Since 1949, NATO's membership has increased from 12 to 30 countries through eight rounds of enlargement. The Republic of North Macedonia became the latest country to join the Alliance on 27 March 2020. Currently, five partner countries have declared their aspirations to NATO membership: Bosnia and Herzegovina, Finland, Georgia, Sweden and Ukraine. Finland and Sweden completed accession talks, and Allies signed the Accession Protocols for both countries in July 2022. They are now official Invitees and attend NATO meetings as such.

China: The People's Republic of China's (PRC) stated ambitions and coercive policies challenge NATO's interests, security and values. The deepening strategic partnership between the People's Republic of China and the Russian Federation and their mutually reinforcing attempts to undercut the rules-based international order run counter to NATO's values and interests. NATO will work to address the systemic challenges posed by the PRC to Euro-Atlantic security and ensure NATO's enduring ability to guarantee the defence and security of Allies. The Alliance will boost its shared awareness, enhance resilience and preparedness, and protect against the PRC's coercive tactics and efforts to divide the Alliance. At the same time, NATO remains open to constructive engagement with the PRC,

including building reciprocal transparency, with a view to safeguarding the Alliance's security interests.