

PARKS 2016: NEW REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS FOR GRANTS TO CITIES, RURAL MUNICIPALITIES, AND MICRO-REGIONS

(1 November 2016) Prague – **For the sixth time, Karel Komárek's Proměny Foundation is offering towns up to 25 million crowns in grants for the complete renewal of municipal parks and for expert assistance with the execution of their projects. Unlike in the past, assistance under the Parks grant program is now also available to smaller municipalities and micro-regions in any part of the Czech Republic. The deadline for the submission of proposals is the end of March 2017.**

According to the Proměny Foundation, the **main parameters of a well-prepared project** include a conceptual approach to the use of public space, the timely planning of its sustainability, partnerships with specialists, and the local community's involvement in the transformation process – these factors will be of decisive importance in the selection of the grantee in the fall of next year. Proposals under the Parks 2016 program can be submitted by **towns and municipalities with over 5,000 inhabitants, districts and boroughs of larger cities** that have their own self-administration bodies, and, unlike in the past, **micro-regions** (over 5,000 inhabitants).

"We have decided to give a chance to a wider range of applicants. Among other benefits, this decision responds to calls from smaller towns, for which the extensive assistance we normally offer can be difficult to attain. I am confident that the new conditions will be conducive to the execution of new interesting projects," explained the Proměny Foundation's Director **Jitka Přerovská**, adding, *"Our experience shows that submitting a proposal under our grant program or attending a program-related conference helps municipalities improve the preparation of their projects. Even if they do not receive a grant under our program, they are subsequently better able to seek assistance from other sources or execute their projects successively in stages."*

Grants up to 25 million crowns are intended for **the construction or renewal of public spaces**, such as parks, public gardens, and green recreational areas. A prerequisite is the grantee's financial participation in the minimum amount of 10% of the total value of a grant. The successful applicant's partnership with the Proměny Foundation will include support in the form of **technical consulting** during all project stages, including the organization of an architectural contest for the design of the transformed public area and assistance with efforts aimed at involving the public in the project.

"We believe that the involvement of people from the local community as well as other local partners, such as nonprofit organizations, schools, and local businesses, is an essential prerequisite for the long-term sustainability of public space. Today, sustainability is frequently invoked, especially in the context of architectural designs. In this regard, however, I believe that insufficient emphasis is placed on the role of participation and the necessity to educate the public. Likewise, investors need to cooperate with specialists in planning the future maintenance and development of transformed localities from the very beginning. This is another area we try to change," stressed **Přerovská**.

Applicants interested in submitting a proposal under the grant program or in receiving information on current trends on the development of the urban landscape can attend the **City Parks 2017 Conference** that will be held by the Proměny Foundation in **Prague on 2 February 2017**. In addition, useful information can be obtained from the Proměny Foundation's thematic portal at www.promenypromesta.cz.

The deadline for submitting proposals is 31 March 2017. Proposals will be assessed in a three-round evaluation process. The results will be announced next fall. The execution of the selected project will take at least three to four years thereafter. The Proměny Foundation will make contribution for maintenance of the locality during three years after project completion.

The three-year assistance period will end this year with regard to the Santos Island project that was completed in Sušice in 2013. The successful revitalization of the local wooded park, which has received several awards, was one of transformation projects supported by Karel Komárek's Proměny Foundation. Another venture, Jirásek's Orchard in Litoměřice, has been shortlisted for the Czech Architecture Award. The revitalization of an embankment lining the river Loučná in Litomyšl will be completed shortly, and another large project is being prepared in Pilsen.

For additional information, visit www.nadace-promeny.cz.

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Illustrative photo – Jirásek's Orchard in Litoměřice (from the Proměny Foundation's archive)

→ download here: http://www.nadace-promeny.cz/cz/novinky/437_parky-2016-nova-grantova-vyzva-pro-mesta-obce-a-mikroregiony.html

Karel Komárek's Proměny Foundation is a private nonprofit organization whose mission is to support the development of the urban environment in the Czech Republic and to promote public awareness of architecture, landscaping, and the impact of the environment on people. The Foundation disburses grants and provides consulting services and technical support for projects targeting the public space and school gardens. Other activities include the organization of educational activities related to urban development for children and adults. The Proměny Foundation and its projects have received several awards from both specialized institutions and public organizations.

For more information, visit: <http://www.nadace-promeny.cz/cz/o-nadaci/poslani.html>