

OPEN CALL TO STRENGTHEN BILATERAL RELATIONS BETWEEN DONOR STATES AND SLOVAKIA IN FIELD OF CONTEMPORARY CULTURE AND LIVING ART
under the
FUND FOR BILATERAL RELATIONS WITHIN THE PROGRAMME “CULTURE”
EEA and Norway Grants 2014 – 2021
SLOVAKIA

1. BASIC DATA AND CONDITIONS

The Fund for Bilateral Relations within the programme “Culture” (hereinafter referred to as “the Bilateral fund CLT”) was established to enhance cooperation and improve mutual knowledge and understanding between Slovakia and the Donor States – Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway in the area of cultural entrepreneurship, cultural heritage and cultural cooperation.

Call launch:	15 December 2022
Call closure:	15 December 2023, 23:59 CET or until its total allocation is used
Call number:	CLTBF05
Area of Support:	Initiatives contributing to strengthen bilateral cooperation between the Donor States and Slovakia within field of contemporary culture and living art
Maximum grant to be applied for:	EUR 7,000
Minimum grant to be applied for:	N/A
Co-financing:	No co-financing is requested by the applicants
Total allocation:	EUR 20,000
Announced by:	Ministry of Investments, Regional Development and Informatization of the Slovak Republic – the Programme Operator for the programme Culture
Eligible applicants and partners:	All legal entities established in Slovakia or in one of the Donor States ¹ are eligible to apply.
Further eligibility limitations:	The Programme Operators of the Programmes within the EEA and Norway Grants 2014 – 2021 and the members of the Cooperation Committee for the Programme Culture are not eligible to apply.
Further conditions:	1. Each Slovak applicant must have at least one partner from a Donor State and each applicant from Donor states must have at least one partner from Slovakia. No more than two partners may participate in the implementation of an initiative (in addition to the applicant). 2. The implementation of the initiative shall not be planned to last more than 12 months and should be finished until 31 st March 2024.

¹ Norway, Iceland, Liechtenstein

	3. Signed Partnership Statement or other similar document proving the interest of the applicant and its partners to jointly implement the initiative is mandatory ² .
Funding source(s):	EEA Financial Mechanism (EEA Grants) - 48,54 % Norwegian Financial Mechanism (Norway Grants) - 51,46 %

2. ELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES

The range of activities eligible for support under the Bilateral fund CLT is broad, including networking, exchange, sharing and transfer of knowledge between the Slovak and Donor States entities, provided that both the beneficiary and the partner(s) are actively involved in planning of the initiative and its implementation. The main aim of the initiative shall be connected with contemporary culture and living art.

The initiatives shall have a clear bilateral profile and serve the purpose of strengthening bilateral relations between Slovakia and Donor states in the Area of Support. Welcomed are bilateral exchanges of artists and cultural experts - workshops, study trips and bilateral exchanges to transfer know-how and experience.

Taking into account the unpredictable situation with COVID-19, it is mandatory to plan an online alternative for the activities within the initiative; it is therefore necessary to describe a mitigation plan for the possibility that the face-to-face activities could not be realized. The mitigation plan has to describe an eventual virtual fall-back option.

Examples of activities that can be carried out under the Bilateral fund CLT:

- development of bilateral cooperation, initiation and support of common initiatives within contemporary culture and living art;
- networking, exchange, sharing and transfer of knowledge, experience and best practice among Slovakia and Donor States in the above mentioned Area of Support;
- joint meetings, visits, exhibitions, performances and seminars among Slovakia and Donor States on topic of common interest in the above mentioned Area of Support, e.g. with special focus how to address and/or promote the culture of minorities in a sensitive way;
- publishing of joint studies and publications.

This list is non-exhaustive and it is meant just as an example of possible activities.

Initiatives may not generate profit. If an initiative generates income as a part of its operation, the use of this income shall be described in the Grant Application.

The Applicant shall select at least 3 indicators listed in the *Annex IV to the Bilateral Fund Guide*.

² The Partnership Statement or other similar document proving the interest of the applicant and its partner/s to jointly implement the initiative can be signed by any person representing the organization with the power to declare interest of the organization to enter into such partnership. Scanned signed version is sufficient. Should the partner request financial contribution, a Partnership Agreement shall be concluded after approval of the initiative, but prior to its implementation.

Indicator	Description	Source of verification
Number of participants from Slovakia in bilateral events / activities	Number of all actively involved participants from Slovak organization at bilateral event or activity organized within the implemented initiative. Every person should be counted and reported only once during the whole implementation (e.g. if the same person participated in more activities/events, it will be counted only once).	Mandatory: <input type="checkbox"/> List of participants and/or attendance sheet Other: <input type="checkbox"/> Photo documentation <input type="checkbox"/> Presentation, contribution, etc.
Number of participants from Donor States in bilateral events / activities	Number of all actively involved participants from the Donor State organizations at an event or activity organized within the implemented initiative. Every person should be counted and reported only once during the whole implementation (e.g. if the same person participated in more activities/events, it will be counted only once).	Mandatory: <input type="checkbox"/> List of participants and/or attendance sheet Other: <input type="checkbox"/> Photo documentation <input type="checkbox"/> Presentation, contribution, etc.
Number of created joint results, such as studies, analyses, reports	The indicator represents all tangible outputs planned to be delivered by the initiative (must be clearly described in the Application) that both partners participated on, in form of studies, analyses, strategies, reports, publications, etc.	Mandatory at least one of the following: <input type="checkbox"/> Copy of the study <input type="checkbox"/> Copy of the analysis <input type="checkbox"/> Copy of the report
Number of promotional / information activities	Number of publicity and communication activities carried out during the implementation of the initiative, that are focusing on raising awareness on the EEA and Norway Grants, such as press conferences, publicity campaigns, press release, articles in print media / social media, etc.	Mandatory at least one of the following: <input type="checkbox"/> Web link to the published information <input type="checkbox"/> Programme of the event, invitation, photo documentation <input type="checkbox"/> Presentation / video record of the contribution / Press release <input type="checkbox"/> Information material itself
Number of joint bilateral events / activities organised	Number of any events and activities (e.g. conference, workshop, seminar, etc.) implemented in cooperation between organizations from Slovakia and Donor State(s). The joint bilateral events/activities shall be reported only once for the reporting period the event/activity was completed.	Mandatory for events: <input type="checkbox"/> Programme of the event, if applicable <input type="checkbox"/> List of participants and/or attendance <input type="checkbox"/> Photo documentation For other activities: <input type="checkbox"/> According to the nature of the activity

Implementation of the initiative must have a tangible result that all partners contributed to. It can be in form of a video, presentation, study, analysis, strategy, publication, photos from events etc. Non-compliance with this rule may lead to a reduction of the approved grant.

Unless otherwise agreed by the Programme Operator, the initiative needs to be financially completed within one month from the last day of eligibility of expenditures stated in the Grant Offer Letter. The Final Report should be submitted no later than two months following the practical completion of the activity. The Programme Operator reserves the right not to reimburse the grant or its part in case the above mentioned was not complied with.

3. ELIGIBLE EXPENDITURES

Under this Call, only expenditures falling under *Article 8.8, point a) and c) of the Regulations*³ are eligible.

- activities aiming at strengthening bilateral relations between the Donor States and the Beneficiary States;
- networking, exchange, sharing and transfer of knowledge, technology, experience and best practice between entities in Beneficiary States and entities in the Donor States and/or international organisations;

Eligible expenditures therefore are those related to:

- activities aiming at strengthening bilateral relations between the Donor States and Slovakia in the mentioned Area of Support;
- networking, exchange, sharing and transfer of knowledge, technology, experience and best practice between entities in Slovakia and entities in the Donor States and/or international organisation in the mentioned Area of Support.

Except for the so-called “excluded expenditures” listed in Article 8.7 of the Regulations, all types of expenditures can be eligible, provided that they meet the conditions listed in this Call and in *Article 8.2 of the Regulations*.

No expenditures incurred before and after the dates set in the Grant Offer Letter shall be eligible. While there are no limitations regarding the types of expenditures (salaries, travel costs, purchase of equipment etc.), the past experience shows that the general principles on the eligibility of expenditures contained in Article 8.2. of the Regulations need to be considered. This is especially relevant as far as the *proportionality* and *necessity* of expenditures is concerned. As an example, purchase of equipment or consumables such as PCs, laptops, furniture might not be considered proportionate given the short time-span of the initiative implementation. Expenditures on wages that would be incurred irrespective of the implementation of the initiative might also be considered unnecessary (and thus not eligible). Further details can be found in the *Bilateral Fund Guide*, issued by the National Focal Point.

In relation to the nature of this Call, the most common types of expenditures are salary costs and fees, rental of premises, rental of virtual rooms, rental of equipment, travel and accommodation, costs of

³ Regulation on the Implementation of the EEA Financial Mechanism 2014-2021 and Regulation on the Implementation of the Norwegian Financial Mechanism 2014-2021

providing quality lecturers, moderators, costs of creating on-line publications, development of videos and other kinds of communication materials, preparation of studies and monographs, or purchase of advertising or other media coverage costs.

4. GRANT APPLICATION SUBMISSION AND EVALUATION

All the Grant Applications shall be prepared in English and submitted electronically at eeagrants@mirri.gov.sk along with the following mandatory attachment:

- a) Signed Partnership Statement or other similar document proving the interest of the applicant and its partners to jointly implement the initiative². A recommended template for a statement can be found in the Bilateral Fund Guide (Annex 10).

The date and time of the submission of the Grant Application is identical to the date and time of its receipt by the server of the Ministry of Investments, Regional Development and Informatization of the Slovak Republic.

The Grant Application does not need to be signed. Signature shall be required prior to the conclusion of the Contract.

Grant Application should be submitted as DOC or DOCX files. Other annexes should be submitted as PDF files to prevent accidental loss of data.

The Grant Application shall be received in due time prior to the scheduled start of its implementation. When drafting the schedule, applicants shall take into account that the whole evaluation may take up to 4 weeks, thus it is recommended to plan the activities not earlier than 8 weeks following the submission of the Grant Application. While aiming to be flexible, a grant application submitted later than eight weeks before the planned start of a bilateral initiative shall be rejected by the Programme Operator. Resubmission can be allowed in case the Call closure is not approaching.

5. SELECTION PROCEDURES

The Grant Applications will be evaluated in the order they are received ("FIFO" – First in, first out principle), which means that the applications are being assessed in the exact same order in which they were delivered. The Selection Criteria are attached to this Call, where the detailed information on the selection procedures can be found.

6. FINANCING AND REPORTING

Unless otherwise agreed by the Programme Operator, no advance payments will be provided.

The reimbursement is based on the approved Final Report submitted by the beneficiary within two months after the completion of substantive implementation.

In case of longer initiatives (more than 6 months), an Interim Report shall be submitted, in order to report the progress in the implementation of the bilateral initiative.

7. STATE AID

The activities eligible under this Call (networking, exchange, sharing and transfer of knowledge, technology, experience and best practice; joint seminars; workshops and trainings; self-help activities etc.) are aimed at bilateral cooperation between Slovakia and Donor states. It is supposed that the activities will not be economic in nature.

Before approving a Grant Application, the Programme Operator will carry out a state aid test. If applicable, the grant or its respective part can be provided as *de minimis aid* under the scheme number DM-8/2019 published at www.eegrants.sk, if conditions for granting this aid are met.

8. FURTHER INFORMATION

Please note that all applicants are required to disclose any consultant⁴ involved in the preparation of the Grant Application.

Before and during preparation of a Grant Application it is recommended to become familiar with the following documents, as amended.

- *Bilateral Guideline* issued by the Financial Mechanism Office;
- *Bilateral Fund Guide* issued by the National Focal Point;
- *Regulation on implementation of the EEA Financial Mechanism 2014 – 2021* and *Regulation on implementation of the Norwegian Financial Mechanism 2014 – 2021*;
- Guidelines, instructions and other documents issued by the Financial Mechanism Office, National Focal Point and Ministry of Finance of the SR (Certifying Authority).

These documents are published on the websites <https://www.eegrants.sk/en/basic-information/zakladne-dokumenty/> and/or <https://eegrants.org/resources>. The Programme Operator may also introduce the FAQ section, if relevant.

Link to the website of the National Focal Point with information on how to submit complaint is here: [complaints](#).

The Programme Operator can be contacted for queries by:

- e-mail: eegrants@mirri.gov.sk (the request needs to be linked to the call – by call code “CLTBF05”; questions received by e-mail will be responded within 10 days);
- phone: +421-2-2092 8464.

⁴ Staff of the Programme Operator providing general advices or answers on queries by phone is not considered consultants and therefore should not be listed on the list of consultants.

9. CALL ANNEXES

1. Grant Application form
2. Selection criteria and selection procedure