**PA17/RO13 - Promotion of diversity in culture and arts within European cultural heritage**

**FUND FOR BILATERAL RELATIONS**

**MEASURE B: COLLABORATION AND EXCHANGE OF EXPERIENCE**

**CALL FOR PROPOSALS 1/2015**

**Bucharest**

 **August, 2015**

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# INTRODUCTION

The aim of the **PA 17/RO13 *Promotion of diversity in culture and arts within European cultural***

***heritage*** Programme (which is supported by the EEA Grants), hereinafter referred to as the Programme, is to increase cultural dialogue and foster the European identity through understanding of cultural diversity.

The Programme is part of the implementation of the EEA Financial Mechanism 2009-2014. Through EEA Grants, the Donor States (Norway, Iceland and Liechtenstein) contribute to the reduction of economic and social disparities and to the strengthening of bilateral relations with 16 EU countries in Central and Eastern Europe.

Another important objective is to contribute to the strengthening of the bilateral cooperation between cultural operators from Romania and the Donor States.

The EEA Grants contribute to protecting cultural heritage and revitalizing cultural heritage and to promoting cultural diversity, intercultural dialogue, fostering minority cultures and cultural exchange by providing more than €200 million support in 14 beneficiary countries.

**In Romania a total of €20,8 million is provided for support in this area.**

The Programme Promotion of Diversity in Culture and Arts within European Cultural Heritage funds projects within two components:

* **Awareness of cultural diversity raised and intercultural dialogue strengthened;**
* **Cultural history documented.**

**A total amount of 120.332 euro is available within this Programme to strenghten bilateral relations.**

The total allocation for bilateral relations, Measure B, Collaboration and exchange of experience under the present call for proposals is **48,973 Euro**.

The maximum size of the grant is **5,000 Euro per application**.

The Programme Operator in Romania is the Project Management Unit (PMU), within the Ministry of Culture (Romania), in partnership with Arts Council Norway.

This document presents the procedures and conditions for submitting applications for funding to strengthen bilateral relations’ actions under the **Promotion of diversity in culture and arts within European cultural heritage** Programme*.*

The present call is addressed to project promoters who wish to develop bilateral relations with institutions from the Donor States and non-governmental organizations active in the field of culture, creators, artists and practitioners who inted to initiate and carry out activities/projects in partnership with organizations and institutions from Romania.

**This document does not exempt the applicants from the obligation to comply with legislation in force at national and European level.**

For any clarifications please contact the Programme Operator. For the purpose of this call, the Programme Operator has set up a help-desk for potential applicants. Additional information may be requested from the Programme Operator, on the given contact details or on the programme’s email office@fonduri-diversitate.ro.

Questions will be answered in maximum 3-5 working days. The questions and answers that may be relevant to other potential applicants shall be published on the website of the Programme [www.fonduri-diversitate.ro](http://www.fonduri-diversitate.ro).

# INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK

The **Ministry of European Funds** acts as the **National Focal Point**. The National Focal Point has the overall responsibility for reaching the objectives of the EEA Financial Mechanism 2009-2014 as well as for the implementation of the EEA Financial Mechanism 2009-2014 in Romania. The National Focal Point represents Romania in its relations with the Financial Mechanism Committee regarding the implementation of the EEA Financial Mechanism 2009-2014 in Romania.

The **Certifying and Paying Authority** within the Ministry of Public Finance acts as the **Certifying Authority**. The Certifying Authority is responsible for certifying the financial information, the accuracy of the interim reports and final reports for the Programme. The Certifying Authority shall also be responsible for the preparation and submission of irregularities reports.

The **Central Harmonization Unit for Public Internal Audit** (CHUPIA), within the Ministry of Public Finance, acts as **Audit Authority**. The Audit Authority is responsible for conducting audits of the management and control system at the level of the Programme and individual projects.

The **Project Management Unit (PMU)**, within the Romanian Ministry of Culture acts as the **Programme Operator** and is responsible for preparing and implementing the programme in accordance with the principles of economy, efficiency and effectiveness and in particular for:

* + ensuring that projects contribute to the overall objectives of the EEA Financial Mechanism 2009-2014 and the specific programme outcome(s) and objective(s);
	+ collecting applications, selecting projects to be funded and signing project contracts for each project;
	+ verifying the project outputs and that the expenditure declared by the Projects Promoters has actually been incurred and complies with the Regulations for implementing the EEA Financial Mechanism, the programme agreement as well as applicable national and European Union law;
	+ monitoring the projects’ progress and ensuring the quality of the implementation of the projects.

For more information regarding the responsibilities of the Programme Operator, please see Regulation on the implementation of the European Economic Area (EEA) Financial Mechanism 2009-2014 article 4.7 which can be accessed using the following website link:<http://eeagrants.org/Results-data/Results-overview/Documents/Legal-documents/Regulations-with-annexes/EEA-Grants-2009-2014> .

# LEGAL FRAMEWORK OF EEA FINANCIAL MECHANISM 2009-2014

This call for proposals is governed by the following laws and regulations:

a) Memorandum of Understanding for implementation of the EEA Financial Mechanism 2009-2014 between Iceland, The Principality of Liechtenstein and Kingdom of Norway and the Republic of Romania, signed on 24 of March 2012, amended 18 October 2012;

b) Regulation on the implementation of the EEA Financial Mechanism 2009-2014 approved by the EEA Financial Mechanism Committee in accordance with Art. 8.8. of the Protocol 38b to EEA Agreement on 13 January 2011 and confirmed by the Standing Committee of the EFTA States on 18 January;

c) Government Emergency Ordinance no. 88/2012 regarding the institutional framework for coordination, implementation and management of financial assistance for Romania through EEA Financial Mechanism for years 2009-2014 between the Iceland, The Principality of Liechtenstein and Kingdom of Norway and the Republic of Romania, approved through Law no. 246 from 17 July 2013;

d) Government Emergency Ordinance no. 23/2013 regarding the financial management of the non-refundable external funds through EEA Financial Mechanism 2009-2014.

# ABOUT THE PROGRAMME

The Programme shall contribute to the two objectives of the EEA Financial Mechanism 2009-2014: reduction of economic and social disparities in the European Economic Area and strengthening of the bilateral relations between the Donor States and the beneficiary states.

The Programme funds projects within two major components:

* **Awareness of cultural diversity raised and intercultural dialogue strengthened;**
* **Cultural history documented.**

The Fund for bilateral relations is an integral part of the Programme.

The main objectives of the Fund are as follows:

* increasing the cooperation between organizations and institutions from Romania and the Donor States;
* improving mutual knowledge and understanding;
* sharing the results of their activities.

There are two measures within the Fund for bilateral relations:

**Measure A – Partnership development  / building** - the search for partners prior to or during the preparation of a project application, the development of such partnerships and the preparation of a project application for a donor partnership project;

**Measure B – Collaboration and exchange of experience** - networking, exchange, sharing and transfer of knowledge, technology, experience and best practices between project promoters and entities in the Donor States.

# ABOUT THE CALL FOR PROPOSALS

The present call for proposals falls within **Measure B – Collaboration and exchange of experience** and aims to support the development of networking, exchange, sharing and transfer of knowledge, technology, experience and best practices between project promoters and entities in the Donor States (Norway, Iceland and Liechtenstein) or international organisations.

Project promoters within the Programme can apply for financing from the bilateral fund in order to establish or develop collaborations with entities from the donor states or with international organisations as to take part in events, seminars, conferences in the donor states or to organise such events in cooperation with organisations from the donor states or with international organisations.

**ELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES**

**The following activities between project promoters within the Programme and entities from the Donor States (Norway, Iceland and Liechtenstein**) **or international organisations are eligible:**

* **Meeting entities from Donor States/international organisations in view of collaboration, exchange of experience, transfer of knowledge and good practices;**
* **Additional meetings with donor project partners, besides those already previewed in the project(s), meetings aiming to prepare future projects;**
* **Organising events for the exchange of experience, transfer of knowledge, disemination of good practices gained during project implementation;**
* **Attending different conferences, workshops, study trips, visits, meetings organized by potential partners from Donor States/ international organisations aiming at identifying ways and partners for developping future common projects projects;**
* **Other activities that lead to increased bilateral collaboration and exchange of experience in the field of culture.**

**IMPORTANT!**

**Through the present Call for proposals of the bilateral fund, Measure B – Collaboration and exchange of experience does not finance activities that are already previewed in the project contracts or activities that are financed by project savings or are implemented according to further notifications within the projects financed within the PA17/RO13 Programme.**

# Eligibility of applicants

**The eligible applicants under this call are:**

* **Large project promoters granted through PA17/RO13 Programme**
* **Small project promoters granted through PA17/RO13 Programme**

**The eligible partners under this call are:**

* **entities** based in the Donor states, organized and managed according to the applicable law;
* **international organisations**

**An entity/applicant can submit a single application under this call for proposals**.

**IMPORTANT!**

The applicant will be excluded from the evaluation and selection process if it is found it has misinformed the Programme Operator by providing incorrect information process.

# Eligibility of costs

The total allocation for bilateral relations: Measure B, Collaboration and exchange of experience under the present call for proposals is **48,973 Euro.**

**The maximum size of the grant is 5,000 Euro per entity.**

For trips in the Donor States are taken into consideration lump sums, according to the provisions of **Order no. 1055/16.10.2014** issued by the Ministry of European Funds regarding the application of lump sums in case of trips financed from the Bilateral Fund at national and at programme level within the EEA Financial Mechanism and the Norwegian Mechanism 2009-2014.

**Co-financing and eligible costs**

**The grant may cover up to 100% of the total eligible expenditure of a bilateral partnership action. No co-financing is required. Eligible expenditures under this call are incurred by the applicant involved in the bilateral partnership actions.**

These expenses must be consistent with current practices of the applicant and include:

* international travel (round trip), economic class;
* travel expenses: accommodation, per diem under national legislation;
* access to conferences, seminars and workshops;
* travel insurance
* event organisation expenses.

**IMPORTANT!**

Under this call for *bilateral partnership actions* pre-financing is only available for public entities. All expenditures incurred within the action must be disbursed by private organisations will be reimbursed by the programme operator based on the final report and supporting documents. The reimbursement will be paid within 30 days after the approval of the final report.

**Launch of the call for proposals**

The first call for proposals for Bilateral Relations: Measure A, Partnership development/building is launched on **…. August, 2015**. The deadline for submitting the applications is **October 15, 2015**.

Applications that are submitted will be reviewed continuously, in order of their registration, on the principle *first in –first out*, until the full allocation of funds available for this call.

All the partnership actions funded under this call must be completed no later than April 30, 2016.

# Submission of applications

**The application will include:**

* **Application Form** (Annex 1 - form attached to this call), completed in English;
* **Letter of intent** from the potential partner (Annex 2 - form attached to this call), in English;
* **Partner statement of eligibility** (Annex **4**), completed by the partner, signed and sealed, in English;
* **Documents for attending a specific event** (where applicable), in English.

The application file, consisting of all the above documents, will be submitted in **1 copy** and **1 electronic version** comprising all application documents (e.g. CD / USB stick). Documents in electronic version must be in formats compatible with MS Word, Adobe Acrobat, MS Excel).

Applications shall be submitted in a sealed envelope by registered mail, courier or personal delivery at the address below:

**Project Management Unit**

**Ministry of Culture**

**Unirii Bld. No. 22, 2nd district, room 503, Bucharest, 5th floor– 030833**

The sealed envelope must have the following information marked:

**EEA Grants**

**PA17/RO13 - Promotion of diversity in culture and arts within European cultural heritage**

**Fund for bilateral relations**

**Call for bilateral relations actions round 2/2014**

**Applicant: <**fill in name and address**>**

**Name and nationality of partner – if the case: <**fill in name and partner’s nationality**>**

**IMPORTANT!**

Applications sent by e-mail or fax will NOT be accepted.

The last day of receiving bilateral partnership applications is **October 15, 2015**. It is relevant the date of the courier service or the post stamp, that confirms the submission.

The personal delivery to the mentioned address is possible until **October 15, 2015, 17h00 local time**.

# Evaluation of applications

The evaluation and selection process will include the following steps:

1. **Registration and opening of Applications files**: only the Applications submitted in a sealed envelope and within the conditions described above shall be opened and will be further processed.
2. **Verification of compliance with administrative and eligibility criteria** based on the following evaluation grid:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Administrative and eligibility criteria** | **YES** | **NO** |
| The Application file (Application Form and its annexes) is sent in 1 original and 1 electronic copy of all these documents |  |  |
| The applicant is eligible for receiving funding |  |  |
| The potential partner is eligible  |  |  |
| The maximum grant amount requested is 5000 euro |  |  |
| Implementation period until April 30, 2015 |  |  |

**Only applications that receive *“YES”*to all entries will qualify for the next stage of the evaluation.**

**An applicant whose application was rejected can re-submit an application before the deadline indicated above.**

**In order to verify the fulfilment of the eligibility criteria, the Programme Operator reserves the right to request additional documentation. Request shall be made on email (on the address provided in the application form) and the required clarifications must be received in writing, by email, facsimile or mail/courier delivery within 3 working days from the request. Failure to provide the requested information within the deadline may result in rejection of the application.**

1. **Content evaluation** – each application that complies with the administrative and eligibility criteria will be evaluated by the Programme Operator. The content evaluation of an application is based on the following criteria:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Content evaluation** | **Maximum score** |
| 1. **Contribution to the objectives of the Programme:**
* the partnership action is relevant for the objectives of the Programme;
* the partnership action supports the strengthening of bilateral relations.
 | 20 |
| 1. **The motivation for the partnership action:**
* description of the partnership action: idea, objectives
* expected outcomes of the partnership action;
* coherence of the partnership action with the project(s) granted through the Programme
 | 20 |
| 1. **Description of the partnership action:**
* description of the potential partner organization in correlation with area of collaboration;
* coherence between expertise/ experience of the applicant and the potential project partner for the proposed roles in the future project;
* activities planned for the partnership action (activity plan).
 | 20 |
| 1. **The budget** is balanced and realistic, built in accordance with the proposed activities.
 | 40 |

**For a proposal to be recommended for funding, it mut receive at least 70 points.**The score of an eligible application has to include points from each of the four evaluated criteria.

**The lack of a minimum positive score for each evaluated criteria evaluation determines the rejection of the application.**

# CONTRACTING

The applicants that have submitted an application which met all the criteria previously described and were selected for receiving funding will be contacted and will conclude a bilateral actions contract with the Programme Operator. The contract will set out the terms and conditions of grant assistance as well as the roles and responsibilities of the parties, provisions for payments and reimbursement and the reporting templates.

# REPORTING AND PAYMENTS

At the end of the implementation period, the grant recipients are required to submit a **final report** - Annex 5 form (accompanied by a request for reimbursement- payment request form- Annex 6).

All expenditure included in the report has to be accompanied by the supporting documents. All the payments in a different currency have to be converted in euro using the monthly accounting exchange rate of the European Commission (InforEuro), on the month when the contract is signed.

The official exchange rate of the European Commission (InforEuro) is published on the website:

<http://ec.europa.eu/budget/contracts_grants/info_contracts/inforeuro/inforeuro_en.cfm>.

Reimbursement of payments under the financing contract shall be made in one instalment, at the end of the action based on the approval of the final report and the request for reimbursement.

Using the funds available for the project financed through the Programme PA17/RO13 in order to finance the partnership action **is not** allowed.

# ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Applicants may submit questions regarding this call for proposals by telephone, e-mail or fax to:

**Project Management Unit**

**Ministry of Culture**

**office@fonduri-diversitate.ro**

**Phone / fax: 021-2228479, 021-2244512**

# ANNEXES

Annex 1 Application Form

Annex 2 Partnership Expression of Interest – model

Annex 3 Partner Statement on Eligibility

Annex 4 Final Report

Annex 5 Payment Request

Annex 6 Grant Contract