

GUIDELINES FOR APPLICANTS

FUND FOR BILATERAL RELATIONS

under Programme BG08 “Cultural Heritage and Contemporary Arts”

EEA Financial Mechanism 2009-2014

Sofia, January 2014

MANUAL OF PROCEDURE SUMMARY

<p>Basic objectives of the procedure</p>	<p>Development and strengthening of partner relations in the domain of culture between Bulgaria and the Donor States (Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway), development of joint projects, development and exchange of knowledge, good practices and strengthening of the networks and joint work in the field of cultural heritage and contemporary arts.</p>
<p>Total amount of the grant under the procedure</p>	<p>EUR 123 529.50</p>
<p>Minimum amount of the grant for the separate applications</p>	<p>EUR 2 000</p>
<p>Maximum amount of the grant for the separate applications</p>	<p>EUR 5 000</p>
<p>Deadline for submitting applications</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ 30.04.2014, 16:00 hrs– for applications related to elaboration of project proposals under the <u>Small Grants Scheme of Programme BG08</u>; ✓ 19.05.2014, 16:00 hrs– for applications related to elaboration of project proposals under <u>measure 1, measure 2, measure 3 of Programme BG08</u>.

Abbreviations used

EEA	European Economic Area
EFTA	European Free Trade Association
PO	Programme Operator for Programme BG08
FM	Financial Mechanism

The Programme BG08 “Cultural Heritage and Contemporary Arts” includes priorities under the programme area “Conservation and Revitalisation of Cultural and Natural Heritage” (PA16) and the programme area “Promotion of Diversity in Culture and Arts within European Cultural Heritage” (PA17), receiving financial support from the Financial Mechanism of the European Economic Area (EEA) 2009-2014. The basic objectives of Programme BG08 are to safeguard and conserve cultural heritage for future generations as well as to enhance cultural dialogue and cultural diversity.

The Fund for Bilateral Relations (Bilateral Fund) within the Programme BG08 “Cultural Heritage and Contemporary Arts”, co-financed under the Financial Mechanism of EEA 2009-2014, was established to promote the cooperation between Bulgarian participants and their partners from the Donor States (Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway).

The basic objectives of the Bilateral Fund are to contribute to the development and strengthening of the relations between partners in the field of culture from Bulgaria and the Donor States, development of joint projects, exchange of knowledge, good practices and strengthening of the networks and joint work in the domain of cultural heritage and contemporary arts.

Application

1. This call for applications under Measure A, “Project Preparation” phase (in compliance with article 3.6.1.A of the Regulation on the Implementation of the Financial Mechanism of the EEA 2009-2014) for preparation of project proposals to be submitted within the selection procedure under open Calls within Programme BG08 “Cultural Heritage and Contemporary Arts”.

Eligible Applicants

2. The eligible applicants within the Bilateral Fund under Programme BG08 are:
 - ✓ Public institutions (state, regional and local), cultural institutes, state universities and other bodies governed by public law registered in Bulgaria, eligible to submit project proposals or to be project partners under measure 1 “Cultural heritage restored, renovated and protected”, measure 2 “Cultural history documented”, measure 3 “Cultural history made accessible to the public”;

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- ✓ Public institutions (state, regional and local), cultural institutes, state universities and other public entities, non-profit organizations registered in Bulgaria as well as natural persons who are eligible to submit project proposals or to be project partners under the Small Grant Scheme [“Contemporary art and culture presented and reaching a broader audience”](#); and
- ✓ Persons and organizations who are eligible to be project partners under measure 1, measure 2, measure 3 or the Small Grant Scheme under Programme BG08 of the Donor States.

Submitting Applications

3. Eligible applicants should submit an application form in compliance with template (Annex 1) for expressing an interest in the utilization of resources from the Bilateral Fund under Programme BG08 “Cultural Heritage and Contemporary Arts”. The application form shall be submitted in English.

4. The application form contains the following information:

- ✓ Conceptual idea, description of envisaged activities, locations to be visited in the Donor States;
- ✓ Brief description of the motivation for applying and how this would contribute to the achievement of the objectives of Program BG08; readiness to develop a project proposal under measure 1, measure 2, measure 3 or the Small Grant Scheme under Programme BG08; description of the activities envisaged;
- ✓ Budget for the activity/activities offered;
- ✓ Brief information about the applicant’s professional experience as well as contact information about the partners from the Donor States with whom there are meetings scheduled.

Submitting an application under the Bilateral Fund in agreement with Programme BG08 consists of an Application Form (**Annex 1**) and supporting documents in conformity with these Guidelines for applicants. It is important that they contain the entire requisite application-related information.

The application form **should not** be hand-written.

The applicant must submit the following **attachments and supporting documents**:

- Invitation letter, agenda of planned meetings, conferences, etc. (if applicable);

- **Two offers** for each set expenditure with a proposed price, including for the purchase of data and analyses related to the preparation of a project proposal under Programme BG08, airplane tickets, hotel accommodation, etc. (if applicable).

Eligible Costs

5. The following categories of costs will be admissible within the Bilateral Fund under Programme BG08 (consistent with art. 7.7 of the Regulation on the Implementation of the Financial Mechanism of the EEA 2009-2014):

- (a) fees and travel costs for participation in conferences, seminars, courses, meetings;
- (b) travel costs for training-related travel;
- (c) travel costs and fees of visiting experts;
- (d) costs related to feasibility studies and preparation of a financial and economic analysis related to the bilateral activity;
- (e) costs for conferences, seminars, courses, meetings and workshops;
- (f) promotional and information activities;
- (g) purchase of data requisite for the preparation of a project proposal under measure 1, measure 2, measure 3 or the Small Grant Scheme under Programme BG08; and
- (h) external consultancy fees.

Budget of Measure A of the Bilateral Fund under Programme BG08

6. The budget of the Bilateral Fund under Programme BG08 “Cultural Heritage and Contemporary Arts” within Measure A (consistent with art. 3.6.1.A of the Regulation on the Implementation of the Financial Mechanism of the EEA (2009-2014) amounts to EUR 123 529.50.

Grant Amount and Maximum Amount

7. The grant amount under the Bilateral Fund is up to 100% of the amount for which the application was submitted.

8. Under measure A of the Bilateral Fund, the minimum financing amount is EUR 2 000, and the maximum amount is EUR 5 000.

Assessment of the Applications

9. Applications for funding by the Bilateral Fund under Programme BG08 will be reviewed by a Selection Panel. Assessment of the submitted applications will be carried out by two assessors. Provided there are missing documents, the applicant will be asked to submit the required documents within 3 to 5 days. As part of the assessment process, the assessors must fill-in an **evaluation grid** (Annex 4), independently of each other. In cases where the difference in the points in the assessment tables of the two assessors is more than 30% from the higher result, a third assessor will be invited to carry out the assessment of the same application. The average result for the specific application will be the average result from the points of the two closest results of the assessors.

10. The assessment table filled-in by the assessors contains the following basic components:

- ✓ Relevance of the planned budget (including eligibility of expenditure)
- ✓ Justification of the motivation for applying
- ✓ Description of the planned activities and a vision of how they will contribute to the achievement of the objectives of Programme BG08 and the development of the relations between the Bulgarian party and the Donor States;
- ✓ Applicant's professional experience (relevance with the objectives of Programme BG08).

The maximum number of points the applicants can obtain is 100 (respectively – a maximum of 50 points under the “Budget” component, a maximum of 20 points under the “Motivation” component, a maximum of 20 points under the “Description and Justification” component, and a maximum of 10 points under the “Professional Experience in the Respective Field” component).

11. The submitted applications will be considered eligible for financing when the achieved result is a **minimum of 70 points**.

12. Applicants with the highest result in the assessment procedure will be given a grant to the full use of the available total amount for measure A within the Bilateral Fund under Programme BG08.

13. Provided that an applicant under the Bilateral Fund has not participated in the presenting of a project proposal as an applicant or a project partner under measure 1, measure 2, measure 3 or the Small Grant Scheme, the application for funding under the Bilateral Fund will not be reviewed. This requirement is not applicable for Donor State applicants under the Bilateral Fund.

14. The Selection Panel will summarize the assessment results and will prepare a List of the applicants with the highest point score. The List of the applicants will be approved by the Head of the Programme Operator of Programme BG08.

15. The Programme Operator will not permit discriminatory treatment of applicants and will apply an equal approach to all submitted applications.

16. All applicants will be notified about the assessment results within 3 days as of the confirmation date of the approved List of applicants.

17. The List of applicants who will receive financing will be published on the website of Programme BG08 www.Culture-EEA-BG.org

Accounting, Verification of Expenses and Reimbursement

18. The applicant under the Bilateral Fund consistent with Programme BG08 will have to submit a short report in compliance with template (Annex 2) and related documents for accounting purposes **within 20 workdays** as of the end date for application submission. It is mandatory that the respective invoices, boarding passes, and other documents in support of payments are enclosed to the report.

19. The bank identification form (an inseparable part of Annex 2) will be filled-in by the eligible applicant under measure 1, measure 2, measure 3 or the Small Grant Scheme under Programme BG08.

20. Payments will be carried out according to the fixed exchange rate of the Bulgarian National Bank – 1 Euro = BGN 1.9558.

21. Only eligible costs made from the initial date to the end date of the Calls for project proposals, respectively under measure 1, measure 2, measure 3 or the Small Grant Scheme will be reimbursed within measure A of the Bilateral Fund under Programme BG08.

22. The report consistent with the template (Annex 2) will have to be submitted **in 2 paper copies (one original and one copy)** at the following address: **Ministry of Culture, “European Programs and Projects” Department, 17 “Aleksander Stambolyiski” Blvd., Sofia 1040.**

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23. Provided the submitted application is approved, the eligible applicant will be required to fill in a Declaration regarding assistance *de minimis* (Annex 3) in relation to Regulation (EC) No. 1998/2006 of the Committee as of December 15, 2006 (if applicable).

24. Amounts set out by the Bilateral Fund under Programme BG08 must be confirmed for reimbursement consistent with the confirmation procedures.

25. The use of the most economical option will be required as a rule. Automobile transportation will be allowed only for a distance of up to 150 km.

26. As a rule, accommodation expenses will be allowed from the day before the start of the respective conference/seminar/meeting, etc. to the day on which the respective event ends. If required, an additional justification must be submitted.

27. The rules and the standard business trip expenses consistent with the national legislation in force should apply (Ordinance on Business Trips and Specializations Abroad).

Time and Venue for Submission of Applications

28. The starting date from which the applications under the Bilateral Fund of Programme BG08 will be considered eligible will be the announcement date of the Call for applications.

29. The deadline for application submission under Measure A will be:

- ✓ **30 April 2014** (postmark), 16:00 hrs local time (in case of hand delivery) under Measure A, “Project Preparation” phase within the Small Grant Scheme “Contemporary art and culture presented and reaching a broader audience” under Programme BG08.
- ✓ **19 May 2014** (postmark), 16:00 hrs local time (in case of hand delivery) under Measure A, “Project Preparation” phase within measure 1 “Cultural heritage restored, renovated and protected”, measure 2 “Cultural history documented”, measure 3 “Cultural history made accessible to the public” under Programme BG08.

30. The application form and the respective supporting documents **must be submitted in 2 paper copies in separate folders (one original and one copy) and 1 copy in an electronic version on a CD, identical with the paper copies.**

The application form, together with other related additional documents (as specified in Annex 1, “Application Form”) must be submitted in an intact and sealed envelope/package received in the form of a

letter by registered mail or express delivery, by courier, by hand delivery or by mail at the following address:

Ministry of Culture
“European Programs and Projects” Department
17 “Aleksander Stamboliiski” Blvd.
Sofia 1040

The envelope containing the application form should be labeled: “Application under the Bilateral Fund of Programme BG08, measure A, “Project Preparation” consistent with FM of the EEA 2009-2014” – “DO NOT OPEN”.

The external envelope should have an inscription with the following information:

Name of procedure – measure A, “Project Preparation” under the Bilateral Fund of Programme BG08

Full name of applicant;

Unified Identification Code/BULSTAT;

Full address of applicant;

Contact

person; E-mail;

Address of the Programme Operator of Programme BG08.

Example:

... (full name of applicant) ...

UIC/BULSTAT:

Street.....

City:

Municipality:

E-mail:

Contact person:

Open Call

under measure A under the Bilateral Fund of Programme BG08, EEA FM 2009-2014

Programme operator for
Programme BG08 "Cultural Heritage and Contemporary Arts"
Ministry of Culture
"European Programs and Projects" Department
17 "Aleksander Stamboliiski" Blvd.
Sofia 1040

Applications sent by fax or e-mail as well as applications sent to an address other than the one specified above will be rejected. In the event the application is sent by post, the postmark date must not be later than the final date for receipt of applications.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Before submitting APPLICATIONS, applicants may seek clarification on the grant procedure. Questions may be sent to the Programme Operator for Programme BG08 **by post or email:** info@culture-eea-bg.org

Questions may be asked no later than 10 days before the deadline for submission of applications. The deadline for **answers** by the Programme Operator is within 5 days of receipt of the respective question. Oral questions will not be answered.

In order to ensure equal treatment of applicants, the Programme Operator will not give preliminary statements on the compliance of the application or the applicant with the application requirements.

Questions and answers will be posted on the website of Programme BG08. They will be presented to the Selection Panel and will be taken into account in the assessment of the received applications.

The Programme Operator will hold information days for the purpose of explaining the peculiarities of applying for a grant under this procedure. More information about the date and venue of the information day will be posted on the website of Programme BG08.

List of Documents:

- Annex 1: Application form for the Bilateral Fund under Programme BG08 “Cultural Heritage and Contemporary Arts”, co-financed by the Financial Mechanism of EEA (2009-2014);
- Annex 2: Request for reimbursement of amounts by the Bilateral Fund under Programme BG08;
- Annex 3: Declaration related to assistance *de minimis* (if applicable).
- Annex 4: Evaluation grid.

Information Documents

- Memorandum of Understanding on the implementation of the EEA Financial Mechanism 2009-2014 agreed between the Donor States (Iceland, the Principality of Liechtenstein and the Kingdom of Norway) on one hand, and the Beneficiary State (Republic of Bulgaria) on the other hand, signed on 29th of June 2011;

- Regulation on the implementation of the EEA Financial Mechanism (2009-2014) – adopted by the EEA Financial Mechanism Committee pursuant to Article 8.8 of Protocol 38b to the EEA Agreement on 13 January 2011 and confirmed by the Standing Committee of the EFTA States on 18 January 2011, as amended on 4 January 2012 and on 14 March 2013;
- Guidelines for strengthened bilateral relations (EEA and Norway Grants 2009-2014, adopted by the Financial Mechanism Committee on 29.03.2012).

Upon the occurrence of amendments in the legislation relating to the current grant procedure, the Programme Operator reserves the right to make changes to the Guidelines for applicants. Amendments will be announced on the website of Programme BG08 www.Culture-EEA-BG.org.