



# ANNOUNCEMENT ON THE LAUNCHING OF THE MEASURE B of the Bilateral Fund at programme level

<b>Version</b>	<b>1.1</b>
<b>Eligible for programme areas</b>	Adaptation to Climate Change (ACC) – PA7 Conservation and Revitalisation of Cultural and Natural Heritage & Promotion of Diversity in Culture and Arts within European Cultural Heritage (CLT) – PA16 + PA17 Green Industry Innovation (GII) – PA21 Cross-border Cooperation (CBC) – PA26 Domestic and Gender-based Violence (DGV) – PA29
<b>Provider</b>	<b>Programme Operator – Government Office of the Slovak Republic</b>
<b>Funding</b>	<b>EEA Financial Mechanism/Norwegian Financial Mechanism and State Budget of the Slovak Republic</b>
<b>Code of measure</b>	<b>BFB</b>

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The Government Office of the Slovak Republic as the Programme Operator of the following programs:

SK02 Adaptation to Climate Change – Floods and Drought; SK05 Conservation and Revitalisation of Cultural and Natural Heritage & Promotion of Diversity in Culture and Arts within European Cultural Heritage; SK07 Green Industry Innovation; SK08 Cross-border Cooperation; SK09 Domestic and Gender-based Violence hereby announces the opportunity to apply for a financial contribution to implement activities to strengthen bilateral relations between the Slovak Republic and donor states (Norway, Liechtenstein and Iceland).

The information declared in this Announcement aim to be fully sufficient to submit a well-developed application form for support under Measure B of the bilateral fund at programme level. However applicants should also take note of the following additional documents:

- a) The newest version of the Regulation on the implementation of the European Economic Area (EEA) Financial Mechanism and of the Norwegian Financial Mechanism, in particular Chapter 3.6.b) and 7.7
- b) Appendix No. 1 to the newest version of Project Promoter and Project Partner Guide

These documents are published on the website <http://www.eeagrants.sk/documents/>.

The aim of this Announcement is to create a flexible tool for an easy funding and supporting the development of cooperation among the Slovak Republic, Norway, Iceland and Liechtenstein in the relevant programme areas. The provisions of this Announcement are therefore always interpreted in favour of the applicant and to support flexibility of this financial instrument.

**The application form will be evaluated by Slovak and foreign entities and therefore shall be submitted in English only.** The application must be accompanied by the favourable opinion of the partner (s) to participation

in the activity. If the only purpose of activity is the participation in events, this opinion is replaced by an invitation.

The Programme Operator reserves the right to demand submission of further documents if it is considered necessary.

## 2. ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

Eligible applicants are entities from the Slovak republic, entities from the Donor states and international organizations (following point b) of Article 3.6.1 of the Regulation on the implementation of the EEA Financial Mechanism and the Regulation on the implementation of the Norwegian Financial Mechanism).

Priority is given to entities and their Slovak and donor partners who are implementing or have already implemented some of the projects supported under the EEA Financial Mechanism and the Norwegian Financial Mechanism.

One of the Conditions of eligibility of the applicant is that the applicant has at least one partner chosen according to the following key:

- a) in case of programme areas PA7, PA16 and PA17 it is necessary to have at least one partner from Norway, Iceland or Liechtenstein or an international organization<sup>1</sup>
- b) in case of programme areas PA21, PA26 and PA29 it is necessary to have at least one partner from Norway or international organization.
- c) If the applicant is a subject from the donor states or an international organization, it must have at least one partner from Slovakia.

The provisions of points a), b) and c) shall not apply if the activities' aim is participation at an event only. Every partner must have relevant experiences in the respective area.

## 3. OBJECTIVE OF THE MEASURE

The main objective of the measure is to support networking, skills-sharing- / exchange of knowledge, best practice, experience and their transfer **between Slovak entities and entities from the donor countries.**

The Bilateral Fund generally supports single activities with clearly specified purpose and objective. It includes study tours, organizing events, participation in events and so on.

The submitted application must relate to one of the programme areas, as it is defined in table below. For more information we recommend to study the document entitled Programme Areas 09-14.<sup>2</sup>

<b>PA7</b>	<p><b>Programme area: Adaptation to Climate Change</b> Objective: Reduced human and ecosystem vulnerability to climate change</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Developed systems for information exchange on climate change adaptation</li> <li>• Developed strategies and measures for adapting to a changing climate</li> <li>• Increased capacity to assess vulnerability to climate change</li> <li>• Increased awareness of and education in climate change adaptation</li> </ul>
<b>PA16 &amp; PA17</b>	<p><b>Programme area: Conservation and Revitalisation of Cultural and Natural Heritage &amp; Promotion of Diversity in Culture and Arts within European Cultural Heritage</b> Objective1: Cultural and natural heritage for future generations safe-guarded and</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cultural heritage restored, renovated and protected</li> <li>• Cultural history documented</li> <li>• Local communities further developed and economically sustainable livelihoods established through the revitalisation of cultural and natural heritage</li> <li>• Cultural heritage made accessible to the public</li> </ul>

<sup>1</sup> In case of partner "international organisation" it is required also:  
 - partner from Norway, Iceland or Liechtenstein (PA7, PA16&17)  
 - partner from Norway (PA21, PA26, PA29)

<sup>2</sup> For more information visit [www.eeagrants.sk](http://www.eeagrants.sk)

	conserved and made publicly accessible, Objective2: Increased cultural dialogue and strengthened European identity through understanding cultural diversity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contemporary art and culture presented and reaching a broader audience</li> <li>• Awareness of cultural diversity raised and intercultural dialogue strengthened</li> <li>• Individual citizens' cultural identity strengthened</li> <li>• Cultural history documented</li> </ul>
<b>PA21</b>	<b>Programme area: Green Industry Innovation</b> Objective: Increased competitiveness of green enterprises, including greening of existing industry, green innovation and green business	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Realisation of the business opportunities of greening of the European economy</li> <li>• Reduced production of waste and reduced emissions to air, water and ground</li> <li>• More use of environmentally friendly technologies</li> <li>• Increased green job creation and entrepreneurship</li> </ul>
<b>PA26</b>	<b>Cross-border Cooperation</b> Objective: Strengthened cross-border cooperation between regions on both sides of the EU external border	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Closer contact and cooperation between local and regional institutions and NGOs on both sides of the EU external border</li> <li>• Local and regional institutions and NGOs are enhancing knowledge and skills for developing cross-border cooperation</li> <li>• Mitigation of existing barriers to cross-border cooperation</li> <li>• Greater understanding of common cross-border challenges and opportunities</li> <li>• New and innovative forms of cross-border cooperation developed</li> </ul>
<b>PA29</b>	<b>Domestic and Gender-based Violence</b> Objective: Gender-based violence prevented and tackled	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gender-based violence reduced</li> <li>• Domestic violence reduced</li> <li>• Victims of trafficking supported</li> </ul>

#### 4. FINANCING

**Co-financing** of the activities by the applicant **is not required**.

The system of financing is based on **reimbursements** of eligible expenses already incurred and submitted under payment claims attached as Annex 2 to this Announcement.<sup>3</sup>

No legal entitlement to the provision and payment of the contribution under the bilateral fund exists.

#### 5. ELIGIBLE COSTS AND LIMITS

Eligible costs are costs that relate to the implementation of activity and are related to the achievement of the objective of the measure particularly travel costs, costs related to the organization of events etc. ( following Articles 7.2; 7.7.2 and 7.7.3 of the Regulation on the implementation of the EEA Financial Mechanism and the Regulation on the implementation of the Norwegian Financial Mechanism).

When financing travel expenses, except for flight tickets, lump sums compensation shall apply. Only flight tickets in economy class are eligible. Lump sums compensation is calculated as follows:

1. Lump sums compensation shall be determined in accordance with current rates stipulated by the European Commission which are published at <http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/sites/devco/files/perdiem-rate-20150318.pdf> and that represent a rate for one night stay, respectively. The lump sum for the business trip that lasted more than 12 hours (without overnight stay) in the Slovak Republic or the donor state (respectively when other State is not mentioned in the decision as an eligible area for the implementation of activities) is reduced by 60%;
2. The term lump sums compensation means compensation for accommodation, meals, travel insurance, local transport (including transport from airport to accommodation) and necessary extra expenses;

<sup>3</sup> In case of certain types of applicants (e.g. Primary schools, Secondary schools and local NGOs), the Programme Operator provides the applicant an advance payment up to 100% of eligible expenditures, provided that the Programme Operator has the contract for the project implementation with such an applicant)

3. Title for a lump sums compensation is reported by a report from business trips abroad, which must be signed by the business trip participants and must contain information about the progress and results of the trip and accurate time data path must be apparent from it (beginning and end of the business trip abroad - the date and time );
4. The lump sum compensation for participants of a domestic business trip in the Slovak Republic or the donor state (respectively when other State is not mentioned in the decision as an eligible area for the implementation of activities) is reduced by 40% if the travel takes place only in one state.

The limits specified in Annex. 1 of the newest versions of Project Promoter and Project Partner Guide, issued the Government Office as the National Focal Point, shall adequately apply on the other costs.

Total limits on one activity (one grant application) are defined as follows:

PROGRAMME	Minimum limit	Maximum limit
Adaptation to Climate Change – floods and droughts prevention	1 000 €	10 000 €
Domestic and Gender-based Violence	1 000 €	10 000 €
Green Industry Innovation	1 000 €	20 000 €
Cross-border cooperation	1 000 €	10 000 €
Conservation and Revitalisation of Cultural and Natural Heritage & Promotion of Diversity in Culture and Arts within European Cultural Heritage	1 000€	10 000 €

## 6. ALLOCATIONS

The **indicative allocations** for each programme area are listed below. Prior to the submission of the application form we suggest you to contact the Programme Operator at [bilateralnyfond@vlada.gov.sk](mailto:bilateralnyfond@vlada.gov.sk) whether there are more funds available in the programme area.

PROGRAMME	Total indicative allocation (in EURO)
Adaptation to Climate Change – floods and droughts prevention	74,000
Domestic and Gender-based Violence	35,000
Green Industry Innovation	115,000
Cross-border cooperation	60,000
Conservation and Revitalisation of Cultural and Natural Heritage & Promotion of Diversity in Culture and Arts within European Cultural Heritage	50,000

## 7. ELIGIBLE AREA

In general, the activities can be implemented either in Slovakia or in the donor countries. Within the EEA area activities can be implemented only in exceptional cases, which must be reasoned and approved properly in the application form by the Programme Operator.

## 8. ELIGIBLE PERIOD FOR THE SUBMISSION OF GRANT APPLICATION

Grant applications can be submitted up to 30.06.2017.

Grant applications are evaluated using the “first in, first out” method (FIFO). The date and time of submission of the grant application is the decisive factor for the FIFO system. The possibility of submitting application form can also be closed if the available allocation for funding grant applications for the given programme has been fully used. In case the available allocation is absorbed, the Programme Operator will publish a notice on the

website [www.eeagrants.sk](http://www.eeagrants.sk) informing potential applicants that the allocation for the funding of applications has been absorbed and also informing that the possibility of submitting applications under measure B of the Bilateral fund in the given programme area has been closed.

## 9. ELIGIBLE IMPLEMENTATION PERIOD

**Activities can be implemented** from the date of delivery of the acceptance of the decision on the approval of the grant application to 31.08.2017. **The financial implementation of the activity needs be completed within two months** from the completion date of the substantive implementation of the activity through the submission of the grant application by the beneficiary to the NFP.

## 10. EVALUATION OF GRANT APPLICATION

Grant applications are evaluated pursuant to order of receiving (FIFO - "First In, First Out"). Evaluation consists of three phases:

- a) Evaluation of formal criteria.
- b) Evaluation of substantive criteria.
- c) Approval process, which may lead to approval of the application form, refusal of the application form or approval of the application form at a reduced amount.

The whole approval process should be completed in 15 working days (5 working days for the approval of the formal and substantive criteria; 10 working days for evaluation done by evaluators part III).

## 11. FORMAL CRITERIA OF GRANT APPLICATION

Formal criteria evaluation is carried out by the Programme Operator. In the event of failure any of the following criteria the application form will automatically be rejected:

- a) Grant application must be delivered **electronically** to [bilateralnyfond@vlada.gov.sk](mailto:bilateralnyfond@vlada.gov.sk) on the prescribed form that is an Annex no. 1 to this Announcement.
- b) Grant application **must be implemented in partnership** with at least one competent partner from the donor states or an international organization. For this purpose, the applicant must submit a letter or other document proving the agreement of the partner to participate in the implementation of the activity.  
If the activity consists solely of participation in an event, only an invitation and agenda of event is required, no other documents are required.
- c) Grant application must be submitted within the eligible period.
- d) Grant application must be submitted in more than 20 working days before the planned implementation activities.

Refusal of the application because of the formal criteria failure does not abridge the applicant of the right to submit the application again.

If the formal criteria are met, the Programme Operator reserves a sum of assets in a particular bilateral fund and informs the applicant by email notification about booking funds and forwarding the request to evaluation of fulfilling the substantive criteria.

## 12. SUBSTANTIVE CRITERIA OF GRANT APPLICATION

In case the application does not meet any of the following criteria, the grant application shall be rejected or the applicant shall be asked for documentation:

- a) Grant application must contribute to the objective of the measure defined as support of networking, skills-sharing / knowledge, best procedures, experience and their transfer between Slovak entities and entities from donor countries.
- b) The application must be submitted by an entity that is an eligible applicant under this Announcement.
- c) Grant application must materially relate to at least one of the programme areas, for which this Announcement is valid.
- d) The applicant complied with the limits of activities and expense limits pursuant to this Announcement.

If the grant application fails to meet any of the criteria referred to point **a), b)** and **c)** it will automatically be refused. Refusal of the application because of the substantive criteria failure does not abridge the applicant of the right to submit the application Programme Operator again.

If the grant application fails to meet the criterion in accordance with paragraph **d)** of this section, or will meet it only partially, the Programme Operator is entitled to identify costs as ineligible, respectively to reduce the amount of expenditure under the specified limits.

Programme Operator is entitled to demand providing additional documents and information within 5 working days from the day following the day of sending request for adding the documents. If these documents or information are not provided within the deadline, the grant application will be refused.

If the aim of this activity is solely participation in the event, after having fulfilled the formal and substantive criteria the Programme Operator can automatically approve the application without the need of further evaluation.

### **13. APPROVAL PROCESS**

The approval process is carried out by the Programme Operator in collaboration with the donor partner of the programme and in case of the programme areas PA16 and PA17 with Royal Norwegian Embassy in the Slovak Republic. All grant applications are, for information purposes, sent to the Royal Norwegian Embassy in Bratislava, Financial Mechanism Committee and in case of the programme areas PA7, PA16 and PA17 also to the Embassy of Iceland in Vienna, which may comment on the submitted grant application.

In order to approve the grant application it is necessary to fulfil the following conditions cumulatively:

- a) Grant application meets all formal criteria.
- b) Grant application meets all substantive criteria.
- c) The Programme Operator has at its disposal available financial resources allocated for the financing of the grant application.
- d) Grant application received a score of at least 75 points from all entities that perform evaluation.
- e) No serious reservations have been received to the grant application from the entities which it is sent for the information purposes.

If the grant application fails to meet the criterion referred to under point c), the Programme Operator shall assign grant application the reserve list for that programme area. The applicant will be informed via e-mail about this fact after completion of the evaluation of the formal criteria. If funds become available under the given component and in the given year, the evaluation process will be resumed for the application which was originally placed on the reserve list. If no financial resources become available, the grant application will automatically be dismissed.

If the application for grant is approved, the Programme Operator shall electronically inform (in 5 working days after the whole approval process is completed) the applicant about approval of the grant application and shall inform them about conditions of the grant. At the same time the Programme Operator determines the period within which the applicant must state whether they accept the conditions for grant. The applicant is obliged to submit affirmative, respectively negative opinion in due time. In the event that the applicant does not respond within the deadline, the grant application will be automatically rejected. Together with the opinion, the applicant shall submit the grant application signed by an authorized person by post.

## 14. PAYMENT CLAIM

The total amount of the grant represents total costs for activity which are recognized as eligible by the Programme Operator.

The reimbursed total amount of the grant may be lower than the approved amount in the grant application if some expenses are classified as non-eligible or eligible in a lower amount. Occasionally, especially if it comes to prolongation of the business trip for objective reasons (e.g. a natural disaster), and in case there are available financial resources, total amount of the grant may be higher than the approved amount in the grant application.

Claim for payment shall be submitted in paper form to the address of the PO and also electronically to [bilateralnyfond@vlada.gov.sk](mailto:bilateralnyfond@vlada.gov.sk), **not later than two months** after the planned completion of the activity specified in the decision. In justified cases, the Programme Operator can extend the period according to the written request. Further information about submitting a claim for payment will be part of the decision approving the application form.

## 15. REFUND

The contribution from bilateral funds including any part thereof shall be considered public funds of the Slovak Republic. If the auditing person finds out that obligations set out in this Announcement or stated in the decision on the approval of the grant application have been violated, the applicant is obliged to return the provided funds in the fixed amount to the specified account. Further details will be provided in decision on the approval of the grant application.

## 16. ARCHIVING AND ACCESS TO DOCUMENTS

For control purposes, the applicant shall keep all the accounting records and supporting documentation to the grant application to 31.05.2022. Throughout that period the applicant is obliged to enable the Programme Operator and other control entities the access to the original accounting documents and supporting documentation.

Further details will be provided in decision on the approval of the grant application.

## 17. COMMUNICATIONS

Postal address of the administrator of the programme (for the purpose of the request for payment) is:

Government Office of the Slovak Republic  
Department EEA and Norway Grants  
Strategic Action unit  
Námestie slobody 1  
813 70 Bratislava 1

Issues related to bilateral funds, and this notice may be addressed to the e-mail to [bilateralnyfond@vlada.gov.sk](mailto:bilateralnyfond@vlada.gov.sk) or by phone at +421 2 20925 574.

## 18. ANNEX

1. Grant application form
2. Payment claim form