



Programme BG08

“Cultural Heritage and Contemporary Arts”

**THE EUROPEAN ECONOMIC AREA
FINANCIAL MECHANISM 2009-2014**

CALL UNDER THE FUND FOR BILATERAL RELATIONS

Programme BG08 Cultural Heritage and Contemporary Arts

I. INTRODUCTION

1. This document entitled a Call under the Fund for Bilateral Relations (Bilateral Fund) within the Programme BG08 "Cultural Heritage and Contemporary Arts" under the EEA Financial Mechanism 2009-2014 sets out how the Fund intends to stimulate bilateral cooperation between Bulgarian cultural players and their counterparts in Iceland, Liechtenstein and/or Norway (the Donor States) and it aims to provide clear and transparent information on the procedure for allocation of relevant support from this Fund. This document is elaborated in accordance with good practices, shared values and standards for effective and efficient allocation of funds in order to achieve the defined outcomes to be reached through the successful implementation of the Programme BG08 "Cultural Heritage and Contemporary Arts".

The main objectives within the Bilateral Fund are:

- Strengthening bilateral relations between entities from Bulgaria and cultural players from the Donor States;
- Knowledge development, exchange of experiences and best practices and strengthening networks and networking in the area of cultural heritage and contemporary arts in Bulgaria and the Donor States.

II. LEGAL BASIS

2. The Bilateral Fund is established in compliance with the following documents:

2.1. 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;

2.2. 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;

2.3. Programme Agreement for the Programme BG08 "Cultural Heritage and Contemporary Arts" within the EEA Financial Mechanism 2009-2014 (in force as of 14 October 2013);

2.4. Programme Implementation Agreement between the National Focal Point and the Ministry of Culture;

2.5. Guideline for strengthened bilateral relations (EEA and Norway Grants 2009-2014, adopted by the Financial Mechanism Committee on 29.03.2012);

2.6. Public Access Policy (adopted by the Financial Mechanism Committee on 10 March 2011).

III. FUNCTIONING OF THE BILATERAL FUND

3.1. The Bilateral Fund under programme BG08 shall be used in order to facilitate exchange of experience, knowledge and strengthening networking between beneficiaries and cultural players from the Donor States. The aim is to contribute to the development of project proposals, exchange of ideas and knowledge, enhance quality of projects which could be implemented under the programme and maintain sustainable relations among people and organizations. The Bilateral Fund under programme BG08 "Cultural Heritage and Contemporary Arts" is established in order to facilitate the search for partners during the preparation of a project application, the development of such partnerships, attendance of meetings, conferences, seminars, preparation of an application and/or networking, exchange, sharing and transfer of knowledge, technology, experience and best practice between Project Promoters and entities in the Donor States.

3.2. Funding within the Bilateral Fund under programme BG08 will be considered as an additional source of funding, i.e. other than the project budget.

4. Eligible applicants and activities:

4.1. The eligible applicants within the Bilateral Fund under the BG08 programme are:

- under Measure A at stage "Project preparation" (in accordance with Article 3.6.1.A of the Regulation on the implementation of the EEA Financial Mechanism 2009-2014) for elaboration of a project application to be submitted within the selection procedure under open calls of the Programme BG08 "Cultural Heritage and Contemporary Arts":
 - ✓ public authorities from Bulgaria that are 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 heritage made accessible to the public";
 - ✓ public authorities, non-governmental/non-profit organizations and natural persons from Bulgaria 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
 - ✓ entities from the Donor-States that are eligible to become project partners under the programme measures 1, 2, 3 and the Small Grant Scheme.

4.2. The eligible applicants shall submit an application form (annex 1) for presenting interest in obtaining funding by the Bilateral Fund under the Programme BG08 "Cultural Heritage and Contemporary Arts".

4.3. The activities for which the eligible applicants envisage to apply for funding under the Bilateral Fund shall be dedicated to purposes of project proposals preparation (meetings, data purchase, etc.).

5. Eligible expenditures:

5.1. The following categories of expenditure are eligible (in accordance with Article 7.7 of the Regulation on the implementation of the EEA Financial Mechanism 2009-2014):

- (a) fees and travel costs for participation in conferences, seminars, courses, meetings and workshops;
- (b) travel costs for study trips;
- (c) travel and salary costs for visits by experts;
- (d) costs related to feasibility studies and preparation of financial and economic analysis related to the bilateral activity;
- (e) costs of conferences, seminars, courses, meetings and workshops;
- (f) promotional and information activities;
- (g) purchase of data necessary for the preparation of the application; and
- (h) external consultancy fees.

6. Total budget of the Fund for Bilateral Relations

6.1. The Budget of the Bilateral Fund under Programme BG08 "Cultural Heritage and Contemporary Arts" within Measure A (in accordance with Article 3.6.1.A of the Regulation on the implementation of the EEA Financial Mechanism 2009-2014) amounted to 123 529.50 euro.

6.2. The Budget of the Bilateral Fund under Programme BG08 "Cultural Heritage and Contemporary Arts" within Measure B (in accordance with Article 3.6.1.B of the Regulation on the implementation of the EEA Financial Mechanism 2009-2014) amounted to 123 529.50 euro. The Call for submission of applications within the Measure B under the Bilateral Fund under Programme BG08 shall be launched in the second half of the 2014. The Measure B is applicable at stage "Project implementation" and is dedicated to activities encompassing networking, exchange of experience, sharing and transfer of knowledge, technology, best practice, etc.

6.3. Total amount of the Bilateral Fund under Programme BG08 is 247 059 euro.

7. Grant rate and maximum amount

7.1. Grant rate under the Fund shall be up to 100%.

7.2 The minimum amount of funding within the Measure A of the Bilateral Fund under Programme BG08 is 2 000 euro and the maximum amount of funding is 5 000 euro.

8. Timeframe

8.1. The timeframe for Measure A “Project preparation” is as follows:

- First date of eligibility – the day of launch of the Calls for proposals under programme BG08 within measure 1, measure 2, measure 3 and the Small grant scheme.
- The deadline for **Measure A** is the 17th of April 2014 for targeting stage “Project preparation” within the Small grant scheme “Contemporary art and culture presented and reaching a broader audience”.
- The deadline for **Measure A** is the 19th of May 2014 for targeting stage “Project preparation” within the measure 1 “Cultural heritage restored, renovated and protected”, measure 2 “Cultural history documented” and measure 3 “Cultural heritage made accessible to the public” of the programme BG08

9. Applicants will be required to submit (in English):

9.1. Conceptual idea, description of envisaged activities, places in the Donor States intended to be visited, letter/invitation/agenda for the meetings envisaged, scheduled conferences, seminars, etc.;

9.2. Short explanation of the motivation of the application and how the conceptual idea is going to contribute to the overall objectives of the programme BG08 and in particular the applicant’s targeted project idea, etc.

9.3. Estimated budget for the proposed activity (activities).

9.4. Report in brief following the fulfillment of respective activities (only for applicants awarded to obtain funding from the Bilateral Fund under programme BG08).

* templates covering points 9.1), 9.2), 9.3), 9.4) above are enclosed in annexes to this Call. Templates are elaborated in order to facilitate applicants and to simplify activities for review of applications submitted under the Bilateral Fund under programme BG08.

9.5 List of documents:

- annex 1: Application form under the Bilateral Fund within Programme BG08 "Cultural Heritage and Contemporary Arts", funded by the EEA Financial Mechanism (2009-2014);
- annex 2: Request for reimbursement under the Bilateral Fund within Programme BG08;
- annex 3: Declaration related to *de minimis* aid (if applicable).

9.6. Requirements during the application procedure:

9.6.1. The deadline for submission of applications is:

- under Measure A

- ✓ **19 May 2014** (postmark), at 16:00 local time (hand-delivery) under Measure A for targeting stage "Project preparation" within the measure 1 "Cultural heritage restored, renovated and protected", measure 2 "Cultural history documented" and measure 3 "Cultural heritage made accessible to the public" of the programme BG08.
- ✓ **17 April 2014** (postmark), at 16:00 local time (hand-delivery) under Measure A for targeting stage "Project preparation" within the for targeting stage "Project preparation" within the Small grant scheme "Contemporary art and culture presented and reaching a broader audience".

9.6.2. The candidates must fill in the Application form annexed to this Call and published on the web-sites:

www.culture-eea-bg.org and <http://www.eeagrants.bg/bg/2009-2014/>.

9.6.3. The filled Application form must be submitted in **2 paper copies (1 original and 1 copy) and 1 copy in electronic format on CD, identical with the hard copies.**

The Application alongside with relevant supplementary documents (as set out in annex 1 "Application form") must be submitted in sealed and intact envelope/package received in the form of letter/parcel through registered mail or express delivery, courier, by hand or mail on the following address:

Ministry of Culture
„European programmes and projects” Department
1040 Sofia, Bulgaria
17, "Al. Stamboliiski" Blvd.

The envelope containing the Application must be labeled "Application under Bilateral Fund measure A "Project preparation" under EEA FM 2009-2014" - "**DO NOT OPEN**".

The Applications sent by fax or e-mail, as well as applications sent to other than the above address will be rejected. In case the application is sent by mail the date of the postmark must be not later than the final date for receiving the applications.

10. Evaluation of applications:

10.1. The Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Bulgaria is the Programme Operator for BG08 programme and functions for the administration of the Bilateral Fund are carried out by the “European programmes and projects” Department within the Ministry of Culture.

10.2. The applications for funding by the Bilateral Fund under programme BG08 will be reviewed by Selection Committee. The Programme Operator will establish the Selection Committee for evaluation of applications submitted under this Call.

10.3. The Selection Committee for evaluation of applications shall encompass:

- chairperson – representative by the Programme Operator;
- at least 3 evaluators/experts with competence in the relevant field, at least one of these three evaluators will be external to the Programme Operator;
- Observers will be invited to participate in the meetings of the Selection Committee from the following institutions:
 - National Focal Point;
 - EEA Financial Mechanism Committee or a representative from the Royal Norwegian Embassy in Sofia.

10.4. The main activities of the Selection Committee encompass:

- ✓ Opening session;
- ✓ Evaluation process carried out by two experts/evaluators. Within the evaluation process the evaluators have to fill evaluation grids (annex 4) independently from each other. If there are missing documents the applicant will be invited to submit required documents in 3 to 5 days. In cases where the independent evaluators scores for respective application have difference in more than 30% of the higher score, then a third external evaluator will be invited to carry out the independent assessment for the same application. In such cases the average score of the two closest scores shall be used for the ranking of the application. Within 5 working days following the opening session the duly completed and signed by the evaluators evaluation grids shall be submitted to the Chairperson of the Selection Committee.
- ✓ Final session for elaboration of report of the Selection Committee for results of the evaluation process.

The submitted application will be considered eligible for funding when the average scoring is at least 70 points. Where an application will not reach the **minimum score of 70 points**, a rejection letter will follow with a short argumentation for the rejection.

10.5. Grant will be awarded to the applicants with the highest total scores achieved within the evaluation process until the full disbursement of the available total amount for measure A within the Bilateral Fund under programme BG08.

10.6. Following the completion of activities of evaluators and submission of duly filled and signed evaluation grids the chairperson of the Selection Committee has the responsibility for elaboration of report for results of the evaluation process and established list of applicants that will be proposed for funding under this Call within Bilateral Fund of programme BG08. The List of applicants that will be proposed for funding shall be submitted to the Head of Programme Operator for endorsement.

10.7. The approved applicants within the evaluation process will be notified by e-mail and official letter within three days following the date of endorsement of the approved List of applicants by the Head of Programme Operator. The rejected applicants will be notified by e-mail and official letter, containing the arguments for the rejection. The Programme Operator shall duly maintain a register of all the submitted applications and relevant documentation.

10.8. The Selection Committee will carry out sessions as follows:

- ✓ for review of applications under Measure A for targeting stage “Project preparation” within the Small grant scheme “Contemporary art and culture presented and reaching a broader audience - opening session on 25 April 2014;
- ✓ for review of applications under Measure A for targeting stage “Project preparation” within the measure 1 “Cultural heritage restored, renovated and protected”, measure 2 “Cultural history documented” and measure 3 “Cultural heritage made accessible to the public” - opening session on 23 May 2014.

11. Reporting, Verification of expenditures and reimbursement

11.1. The amounts absorbed under the Bilateral Fund under programme BG08 have to be verified for reimbursement of the relevant sum in accordance with the verification procedures.

11.2. The sum approved for reimbursement will be transferred to the holder of the bank account in accordance with submitted financial identification form (as set out in annex 2). Only eligible applicants under the Bilateral Fund are allowed to submit filled financial identification form.

11.3. The applicant under the Bilateral Fund under the programme BG08 shall submit a short report (annex 2 provides a template) and relevant documents for accounting purposes not later than 20 working days following the deadline for submission of applications.

11.4. The applicant under the Bilateral Fund under the programme BG08 shall confirm the involvement in elaboration of project proposal which will be submitted under Call for proposal within measure 1 or measure 2 or measure 3 or Small grant scheme.

11.5. The Measure A of the Bilateral Fund of BG08 programme shall cover only eligible expenditures incurred within the call for proposals deadlines (from the launch of relevant Calls under measure 1, measure 2, measure 3 and the Small grant scheme for BG08 programme until the respective deadline for submission of project proposals under measure 1, measure 2, measure 3 and the Small Grant Scheme for BG 08 Programme).

11.6. In case where the applicant within the Bilateral Fund of BG08 programme is not submitting project proposal or is not a project partner for project proposal submitted under Calls for proposals under measure 1, measure 2, measure 3 and the Small Grant Scheme, the requested amounts within the Bilateral Fund will not be subject to reimbursement.

11.7. In case the submitted application is approved the eligible applicant may be required to fill a Declaration regarding *de minimis* aid (annex 3) in line with Commission Regulation (EC) No. 1998/2006 of 15 December 2006 on the application of Article 87 and 88 of the EC Treaty to *de minimis* aid (if applicable). The Commission Regulation (EC) No. 1998/2006 allows an aggregate maximum amount of *de minimis* aid of 200 000 euro under all *de minimis* aid measures, over a period of three fiscal years.

12. Standard indicators

12.1. The indicators elaborated to measure the effectiveness are as follows:

a) Strengthened bilateral cooperation:

- indicator "Number of conferences, seminars, courses, meetings, workshops, etc. which are attended by applicants (whose project applications were selected for funding and thus became project promoters and/or applicants who only participated with project proposals under the open calls but whose projects were not selected) with financial assistance from the Bilateral Fund under programme BG08 "Cultural Heritage and Contemporary Arts".
- the baseline value is 0; target – at least 20.

b) qualitative indicator for measurement of level of satisfaction and sustainability of established relations:

- indicator "Number of satisfied project promoters" (information will be collected from questionnaires which will be submitted to partners/promoters awarded with grants from the Bilateral Fund under programme BG08).
- the baseline value is 0; target – at least 50% of all applicants.

IV. TRANSPARENCY

13. The Call under the Bilateral Fund within the programme BG08 "Cultural Heritage and Contemporary Arts" will be published in transparent manner in Internet on the websites www.culture-eea-bg.org, <http://www.eeagrants.bg/bg/2009-2014/>, in order to facilitate access to information of all the interested stakeholders.

Enclosed:

- Annex 1 Application form under the Bilateral Fund within Programme BG08 "Cultural Heritage and Contemporary Arts", funded by the EEA Financial Mechanism (2009-2014)
- Annex 2 Request for reimbursement under the Bilateral Fund within Programme BG08
- Annex 3 Declaration related to *de minimis* aid
- Annex 4 Evaluation grid template
- Annex 5 Notification letter template