RO-CULTURA

EEA GRANTS 2014 - 2021

FUND FOR BILATERAL RELATIONS

CALL FOR BILATERAL INITIATIVES 1/2018

APPLICANT GUIDELINES

Bucharest. 2018

Iceland Liechtenstein Norway grants

MINISTRY OF CULTURE AND NATIONAL IDENTITY

project management unit

EEA GRANTS 2014 - 2021

RO-CULTURA

FUND FOR BILATERAL RELATIONS

APPLICANT GUIDELINES

CALL FOR BILATERAL INITIATIVES 1/2018

Bucharest, July 2018

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. INTRODUCTION 1

2. INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK 1

3. LEGAL FRAMEWORK OF EEA FINANCIAL MECHANISM 2014-2021 1

4. ABOUT RO-CULTURA PROGRAMME 1

5. ABOUT THE CALL FOR BILATERAL INITIATIVES 1

5.1 Eligibility of applicants and partners 1

5.2 Grant value 1

5.3 Payments 1

5.4 Eligibility of costs 1

5.5 Launch of the call for bilateral initiatives 1

5.6 Submission of applications 1

5.7 Evaluation of applications 1

6. CONTRACTING 1

7. REPORTING 1

8. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION 1

9. ANNEXES 1

1. INTRODUCTION

The aim of the **Programme *Cultural Entrepreneurship, Cultural Heritage and Cultural Exchange***, hereinafter referred to as the RO-CULTURA Programme, is to strengthen social and economic development through cultural cooperation, cultural entrepreneurship and cultural heritage management.

The Programme is part of the implementation of the EEA Financial Mechanism 2014-2021. The EEA Grants contribute to the reduction of economic and social disparities in the European Economic Area and to strengthening bilateral relations between the Donor States and the Beneficiary States through financial contributions in the priority sectors and programme areas by providing more than €1,548 million support in 15 beneficiary countries.

Romania's allocation within EEA Grants is € 275,2 million, out of which **€ 24,6 million is provided for the cultural sector through RO-CULTURA Programme**.

An important EEA objective is to contribute to the strengthening of the bilateral cooperation between cultural operators from Romania and the Donor States. **A total amount of 250,000 euro will be available within RO-CULTURA to strengthen bilateral relations.**

RO-CULTURA Programme funds projects within two components:

- **Cultural heritage management enhanced**;
- **Access to culture increased**.

At least 10% of the total eligible costs of the Programme shall target the improvement of the situation of the Roma population.

This document presents the procedures and conditions for submitting applications for funding to strengthen bilateral relations initiatives under the RO-CULTURA Programme.

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

2. INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK

The **Ministry of European Funds** acts as the **National Focal Point**, having the overall responsibility for reaching the objectives of the EEA Financial Mechanism 2014-2021 as well as for its implementation in Romania. The National Focal Point represents Romania in the relations with the Financial Mechanism Committee regarding the implementation of the EEA Financial Mechanism 2014-2021 in Romania.

The **Certifying and Paying Authority** within the Ministry of Public Finance acts as the **Certifying Authority**, which is responsible for certifying the financial information, the accuracy of the interim reports and final reports for the Programme. The **Irregularity Authority** within the Ministry of Public Finance is 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 and National Identity acts as the **Programme Operator** and it 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 2014-2021 and the specific programme outcome(s) and objective(s);
- collecting applications, selecting projects to be funded and signing project contracts for each project;
- facilitating bilateral cooperation;
- verifying that the expenditure declared by the Projects Promoters has actually been incurred and complies with the Regulation for implementing the EEA Financial Mechanism, the programme agreement as well as applicable national and European Union law;
- monitoring the progress of projects, ensuring the quality of the implementation of the projects and verifying the project outputs.

The programme partners from the Donor States are the **Norwegian Directorate of Cultural Heritage** and **Arts Council Norway**.

3. LEGAL FRAMEWORK OF EEA FINANCIAL MECHANISM 2014-2021

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

a) Regulation on the implementation of the EEA Financial Mechanism 2014-2021 approved by the EEA Financial Mechanism Committee in accordance with art. 10.5 of the Protocol 38c to EEA Agreement on 8 September 2016;

b) Memorandum of Understanding on the implementation of the EEA Financial Mechanism 2014-2021 between Iceland, The Principality of Liechtenstein and Kingdom of Norway and the Government of Romania, signed on 13 of October 2016, amended 19 October 2016;

c) RO-CULTURA – EEA FM Programme Agreement ;

d) Government Emergency Ordinance no. 34/2017 regarding the financial management of the non-refundable external funds through EEA Financial Mechanism 2014-2021 and Norwegian Financial Mechanism 2014-2021;

e) Order of the Minister of Public Finance no. 2.840/2017 regarding the methodology for applying the Government Emergency Ordinance no. 34/2017;

f) Order of the Minister of European Funds no. 348/21.05.2018 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 2014- 2021;

g) Emergency Ordinance no. 66/2011 of 29 June 2011 on preventing, finding and sanctioning the irregularities found in accessing and using European funds and/or related public national funds, with further amendments and completions.

4. ABOUT RO-CULTURA PROGRAMME

RO-CULTURA Programme shall contribute to the overall objectives of the EEA Financial Mechanism 2014-2021 to reduce economic and social disparities in the European Economic Area and to strengthen bilateral relations between the Donor States and the Beneficiary States.

The Programme funds projects within these major components:

- cultural heritage management;
- access to culture.

The Programme results are presented in the table below:

Number	**Expected programme results**
Outcome 1	***Cultural heritage management enhanced***
Output 1.1	➢ Monuments restored and revitalised
Output 1.2	➢ Innovative cultural exhibitions of restored objects supported
Output 1.3	➢ Roma cultural heritage revived
Outcome 2	***Access to culture increased***
Output 2.1	➢ Cultural entrepreneurship enhanced
Output 2.2	➢ Larger audience developed
Output 2.3	➢ Roma cultural initiatives developed
Bilateral outcome	***Enhanced collaboration between Beneficiary and Donor State entities involved in the programme***
Bilateral output 1	➢ International cultural cooperation in the field of cultural heritage supported
Bilateral output 2	➢ International cultural cooperation in the field of contemporary arts supported

In accordance with art. 8.8 of the Regulation, the **Fund for bilateral relations** finances the following types of activities:

a) activities aiming at strengthening bilateral relations between the Donor States and Romania;

b) the search for partners for donor partnership projects prior to or during the preparation of a project application, the development of such partnerships and the preparation of an application for a donor partnership project;

c) networking, exchange, sharing and transfer of knowledge, technology, experience and best practice between entities in Romania and entities in the Donor States and/or international organisations;

d) activities aiming at strengthening cooperation and exchanging experiences and best practices

between the Programme Operators and similar entities within the Beneficiary States and Donor States, as well as international organisations, provided at least one entity within the Donor States is involved in the activity.

5. ABOUT THE CALL FOR BILATERAL INITIATIVES

The total allocation for bilateral initiatives under the present call for bilateral initiatives is **60,000 Euro**.

The present call for bilateral initiatives aims to support the search for partners for donor partnership projects prior to or during the preparation of a project application, the development of such partnerships and the preparation of an application for a donor partnership project, through the following **eligible activities**:

a) Activities to develop partnerships between Romanian and Donor States entities through meetings, working together, sharing knowledge/ interests/ experiences in order to elaborate specific **CULTURAL and CULTURAL HERITAGE** ideas for future projects that will be submitted under the Programme's calls for proposals;

b) Activities to identify partners to develop partnership projects through participation in **CULTURAL and CULTURAL HERITAGE** conferences, seminars, workshops.

The activities can be implemented only in Romania, Norway, Iceland or Liechtenstein.

It is compulsory for the application to be submitted by an applicant from Romania or the Donor States and to include at least one of the activities described above. The activities must be carried out with a potential partner from Romania (if the applicant is from the Donor States) and from the Donor States (if the applicant is from Romania).

The role of the bilateral initiative is to develop a future project which can be implemented together with the partner.

IMPORTANT! The current Call for bilateral initiatives does not fund specific projects, but aims at supporting exchange activities and partner/potential partner meetings with the purpose of preparing projects to be further implemented.

5.1 ELIGIBILITY OF APPLICANTS AND PARTNERS

Organizations/entities from Romania or the Donor States can directly apply for funding under this call. In order to be eligible under the present call, the applicant and the partner must fulfil the following conditions:

a) it is established as a legal person in Romania or in one of the Donor States;

b) it can activate in the field addressed by the bilateral initiative;

c) it falls into one of the following categories:

I. any public or private entity, commercial or non-commercial, as well as non-governmental organisations established as a legal person in one of the Donor States;

II. any public or private entity, commercial or non-commercial, as well as non-governmental organisations established as a legal person in Romania.

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

5.2 GRANT VALUE

The provisions of **Order no. 348/2018** issued by the Ministry of European Funds from Romania regarding the application of lump sums in case of trips financed from the Bilateral Fund and Technical Assistance Fund within the EEA Financial Mechanism and the Norwegian Mechanism 2014-2021 is applicable for calculating the lump sums awarded to each bilateral initiative. **Under this call for bilateral initiatives the real cost method is not applicable.**

For a bilateral initiative financed under this call, the lump-sum can be awarded for maximum 2 people/ applicant. The amount per person is:

- maximum 1,260 EUR for travels from Romania to Norway;
- maximum 1,635 EUR for travels from Romania to Iceland;
- maximum 1,025 EUR for travels from Romania to Liechtenstein;
- maximum 1,280 EUR for travels from Norway, Iceland, Liechtenstein to Romania.

Lump sums will be granted only for a whole day (24 hours) and no partial travel day will be included in the budget. The amounts are calculated for 3 full days.

IMPORTANT! An applicant can receive funding under the present call for bilateral initiatives only once. Only the expenditures incurred by the applicant for its own experts/personnel are eligible under the present call for bilateral initiatives. The expert/person must present a contract signed with the applicant organization. An expert/person is eligible only once under the present call for bilateral initiatives.

5.3 PAYMENTS

Under this call for bilateral initiatives, an advance payment of 100% of grant will be paid for public authorities/institutions from Romania and 30% for other applicants from Romania or the Donor States, based on an advance payment request (Annex 7).

The final amount of the bilateral initiative will be authorized by the Programme Operator based on the travel report (Annex 4) and payment request (Annex 5) submitted by the applicant within maximum **30 days** after the return from the bilateral initiative.

For payment/authorization of the grant, the supporting documents are as follows:

- boarding passes;
- travel report approved by the legal representative of the applicant organization;
- other documents for proving the fulfilment of the indicators (e.g. pictures, articles etc.).

IMPORTANT! All the supporting documents will be submitted in Romanian or English.

The final payment will be done within 30 days after the approval of the payment request.

All payments will be made in LEI for Romanian applicants and in EURO for Donor States applicants, according to the provisions of the financing contract.

5.4 ELIGIBILITY OF COSTS

The grant may cover up to 100% of the total eligible value of a bilateral initiative. Co-financing is only required in case the total bilateral initiative budget exceeds the maximum size of the grant. For the present call for bilateral initiatives the grant is awarded only to **the applicant** involved in the bilateral initiative.

According to art. 8.2 and 8.12 of the Regulation eligible expenditures of a bilateral initiative are those which meet the following criteria:

- they are indicated in the budget of the bilateral initiative;
- they must be used for the sole purpose of achieving the outcome(s) of the bilateral initiative, in a manner consistent with the principles of economy, efficiency and effectiveness;
- they are identifiable and verifiable, in particular through being recorded in the accounting records of the applicant and determined according to the applicable accounting standards of the country where the applicant is established and according to generally accepted accounting principles.

5.5 LAUNCH OF THE CALL FOR BILATERAL INITIATIVES

The present call for bilateral initiatives for Bilateral Relations is launched on **July 2nd, 2018**. The deadline for submitting the applications is **November 9th, 2018**.
Applications that are submitted will be reviewed continuously, in order of their registration, until the full allocation of funds available under this call.

All bilateral initiatives funded under this call must be completed no later than **December 21st, 2018**.

5.6 SUBMISSION OF APPLICATIONS

The application will include:

- **Application Form** (Annex 1), filled in English, signed and stamped (if applicable);
- **Applicant's eligibility statement** (Annex 2), filled in by the applicant, signed and stamped (if applicable);
- **Partnership expression of interest** (Annex 3) filled in by the potential partner, signed and stamped (if applicable) or **Document for attending a specific cultural event**;
- the **Applicant's documents** regarding registration as legal person;
- **Contracts** signed between the persons that travel and the applicant organization (e.g. working, civil, volunteering contracts).

Procedure of submission:

1. Use the **latest** version of Adobe Acrobat Reader, which you can download from https://get.adobe.com/reader/;

2. Download Annex 1, 2 and 3 (Right click then choose Save…) from https://www.ro-cultura.ro/apeluri/initiative-bilaterale/apel-pentru-initiative-bilaterale-runda-12018 (for Romanian applicants) or https://www.ro-cultura.ro/en/calls/bilateral-initiatives/open-call-for-bilateral-initiatives-12018 (for Donor State applicants);

3. Fill in each Annex with **all the requested information**;

4. Digitally sign each Annex (by pressing on the appropriate box at the end of the form). **The files must be signed only after they are finalized. After signing, no modifications are allowed**;

5. Scan each supporting document at **300 dpi** in **PDF** file format;

6. Send all the documents of the application using a **single e-mail** message to **bilateral@ro-cultura.ro**. Make sure that the total size of the e-mail does not exceed 25MB.

All application files received by the Programme Operator will be registered and the registration number will be sent by email within 2 working days. **If no confirmation is received, the applicant has the obligation to contact the Programme Operator.**

The last day for receiving bilateral initiatives is **November 9th, 2018 - 14:00 Romanian time**.

5.7 EVALUATION OF APPLICATIONS

The evaluation and selection process will include the following steps:

1. **Registration of application files**: all applications received before the deadline mentioned at section 5.5 will be registered by the Programme Operator 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	Obs.
1	The Application form (annex 1), respects standard format, is properly filled in and signed			
2	The Application file contains the applicant's documents regarding registration as legal person			
3	The Applicant declaration of eligibility (annex 2), respects standard format, is properly filled in and signed			
4.1	The Partnership expression of interest (annex 3) respects standard format, is properly filled in and signed or The Application file contains the Document for			

4.2	attending a specific cultural event			
5.1 **5.2**	The partner complies with the criteria described in the Guide or The event proposed to be attended is relevant for the objectives of the Programme			
6	The applicant is eligible for receiving funding[1] and the experts proposed are eligible[2]			
7	The proposed activities are implemented in Romania, Norway, Iceland or Liechtenstein			
8	The bilateral initiative includes at least one of the categories of eligible activities envisaged in the Applicant Guidelines.			
9	The maximum grant amount requested is correct			
10	The implementation period does not exceed 21st December, 2018			
	RESULT OF THE EVALUATION	**PROPOSED FOR GRANT/REJECTED**		

Only applications that receive *"YES"* to all entries will qualify for a grant.

In order to verify the fulfilment of the criteria, the Programme Operator reserves the right to request additional documentation. Requests shall be made by email (using the address provided in the application form) and the required clarifications must be received in writing, by email, within 5 working days from the request. Failing in providing the requested information within the deadline may result in the rejection of the application.

Applications will be evaluated on a continuous basis until the full allocation of the funds available for this call.

Each applicant will be informed about the result of the evaluation. An applicant whose application was rejected can re-submit an application before the deadline indicated in section 5.5.

6. CONTRACTING

The applicants selected for receiving grant will be contacted by the Programme Operator to conclude a

[1] Under this criterion there will be verified that the applicant has not received funding under the present call for bilateral initiatives for other projects.

[2] Under this criterion there will be verified that the expert/person has a contract signed with the applicant organization and that the expert/person is not involved in other bilateral initiative financed under the present call.

grant contract (Annex 6). The contract will set out the terms and conditions of grant award as well as the roles and responsibilities of the parties, provisions for payments and reporting.

In order to receive the grant for the bilateral initiative, it is necessary for the applicant to open a dedicated bank account and to provide a bank statement or a letter confirming the organization's bank account.

In case of applicants that are public authorities/institutions from Romania, the payments will be paid in Lei, in the bank accounts opened at the State Treasury according to the provisions of article 30 paragraphs (2) and (3) of the Order of the Minister of Public Finance no. 2.840/2017 regarding the methodology for applying the Government Emergency Ordinance no. 34/2017:

- 20D483203 - Revenues from the budget of the non-reimbursable funds - Bilateral Relations Fund for the EEA and Norwegian Financial Mechanisms 2014-2021 - Pre-financing "- on behalf of the beneficiaries who are public institutions financed from the state budget, including all or part of the central public administration's own revenues
- 21D483203 - Revenue from the budget of the non-reimbursable foreign funds - Bilateral Relations Fund for the EEA and Norwegian Financial Mechanisms 2014-2021 - Pre-financing "in the name of the Beneficiaries of administrative territorial units / subdivisions, including the local subordinated public institutions, fully or partially financed from own revenues

IMPORTANT! Changes regarding information provided in the approved application form (e.g. timeline of the visit, persons travelling etc.) must be notified to the Programme Operator by email as soon as they occur.

7. REPORTING

Within **maximum 30 days** after the return from the bilateral initiative, applicants must submit a **travel report** (Annex 4), accompanied by a **payment request** (Annex 5) and supporting documents for proving the fulfilment of the indicators (e.g. boarding pass, pictures, articles etc.).

Annex 4 and Annex 5 will be downloaded from www.ro-cultura.ro, filled in and digitally signed**.** The supporting documents will be scanned at **300 dpi in a PDF document**.

All PDF documents, will be submitted in **1 e-mail** at bilateral@ro-cultura.ro

All reports received by the Programme Operator will be registered and the registration number will be sent by email within 2 working days. **If no confirmation is received, the applicant has the obligation to contact the Programme Operator.**

IMPORTANT! The originals must be sent in a sealed envelope bearing the reference:

EEA Grants 2014-2021
PA14 - Cultural Entrepreneurship, Cultural Heritage and Cultural Exchange
Fund for bilateral relations
Call for bilateral initiatives 1/2018
Applicant: <fill in name and address>

To: Project Management Unit
Ministry of Culture and National Identity
22 Unirii Avenue, Bucharest, 030833

8. COMPLAINTS

Applicants may file a preliminary complaint addressed to the Programme Operator, within 5 working days of receipt of the rejection notice.

The term starts running from the beginning of the first hour of the first working day following the day the notice of rejection was notified. If the last day of the term is a non-working day, the time limit ends on the expiry of the last hour of the next working day.

In the case of preliminary complaints that will be submitted on paper at the Programme Operator's headquarters, it will be taken into account the working program of the Programme Operator, namely: Monday to Thursday between 08.30 and 17.00, Friday between 08.30 and 14.30.

The preliminary complaints will be submitted to the Programme Operator in one of the following ways:

- via email: bilateral@ro-cultura.ro;
- by fax: +40 21 222 8479
- at the Programme Operator's headquarters: Bucharest, 3rd district, 22 Unirii Blvd., 5th floor, room 501.

Elements of preliminary complaint

The preliminary complaint shall be made in writing and shall contain the following:

a. the name and surname of the applicant's legal representative;
b. the applicant's name and address, tax identification number, registration number in the trade register. Also it will indicate the e-mail address, telephone number and fax number (where applicable) to which the response may be communicated.
c. specification of the Programme Operator's document in dispute;
d. subject of the preliminary complaint;
e. legal and factual grounds of the preliminary complaint;
f. the signature of the contestant's legal representative.

The Programme Operator's decisions on the settlement of the preliminary complaint may be appealed by the applicants to the competent courts from Romania.

9. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Additional information may be requested from the Programme Operator, at the following contact details:

Project Management Unit - Ministry of Culture and National Identity
Contact person: Cornelia Predoiu
Email: bilateral@ro-cultura.ro
Phone/fax: 021-2228479, 021-2244512

Information about this call for bilateral initiatives and about the Programme can be found on the Programme dedicated webpage: **www.ro-cultura.ro**

Questions will be answered in a timely manner. The questions and answers that may be relevant to other potential applicants shall be published on the website of the Programme.

Contact details for additional information on partner search for Norway, Iceland and Liechtenstein:

Norway:

Anna Benedicte Stigen
Arts Council Norway/ Norsk kulturråd
MØLLEPARKEN 2
Postboks 8052 Dep, 0031 Oslo, Norway
Phone: ++47 95906522
E-mail: Anna.Benedicte.Stigen@kulturradet.no

Desiré Hopen Standal
Riksantikvaren - Directorate for Cultural Heritage
P.O.Box 8196 Dep.
N-0034 Oslo, Norway
Phone: (+47) 22 94 04 00
E-mail: deshos@ra.no

Iceland

Ragnhildur Zoega
Senior Adviser
National Cultural funding, Creative Europe, EEA grants
Rannís
Borgartúni 30, 105 Reykjavík
Phone: +354 515 5838
E-mail: Ragnhildur.Zoega@rannis.is

Liechtenstein

Janine Köpfli
Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Justice and Culture
Regierungsgebäude
Peter-Kaiser-Platz 1
LI-9490 Vaduz
Phone: +423 236 60 24
E-mail: janine.koepfli@regierung.li

10. ANNEXES

Annex 1 – Application Form
Annex 2 – Applicant's Eligibility Statement
Annex 3 – Partnership Expression of Interest
Annex 4 – Travel Report
Annex 5 – Payment Request
Annex 6 – Contract for Bilateral Initiatives
Annex 7 – Advance Payment Request