

Norwegian Financial Mechanism 2014-2021

Programme SMEs Growth Romania

3rd Call for Travel Support Guidelines for the Travel Support

The **objective** of the Travel Support is to facilitate establishment of bilateral partnerships between Norway and Romania with the intent to participate in the 2nd main call under the Programme opened in February 2020.

Introduction

The **Programme SMEs Growth Romania** has the objective to increase value creation and sustainable growth in Romanian business sector. Further, the Programme will seek to stimulate and develop long-term business cooperation between Norway and Romania based on business development and innovation. **The Programme** is encouraging bilateral project partnerships in all three focus areas of the Programme:

1. **Green Industry Innovation** targets initiatives for development and/or application of innovative green technologies, development of innovative products and solutions, greener production processes, more efficient handling of resources and technological systems, material efficiency activities and waste management;
2. **Blue Growth** targets initiatives for development and/or application of innovative technologies, processes, solutions, products or services based on blue resources from the Black Sea, inland waters and rivers and coastal areas;
3. **ICT** targets initiatives for development and application of digital technologies that could mobilize growth and innovation for industrial and other economic sectors.

The Norwegian Financial Mechanism has two overall objectives of equal importance:

- Contributing to the reduction of economic and social disparities in the European Economic Area; and
- Strengthening bilateral relations between the Donor State and the Beneficiary States.

These guidelines will give the ruling criteria for **this CALL**.

What is offered?

The support from the Fund for Bilateral Relations is a travel grant awarded as a lump sum (meaning one standard rate). The following are available for applicants:

- A lump sum **Travel Support per entity** per country of EUR 1,200 for **Norway / Romania**.
- Continuous submission of applications (until depletion of the budget).
- The Travel Support is awarded as de minimis aid under "COMMISSION REGULATION (EU) No 1407/2013 of 18 December 2013 on the application of Articles 107 and 108 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union to de minimis aid" as published in the Official Journal L 352, 24.12.2013, pages 1-8".

- **Total budget** for this CALL is EUR 50,000

How to apply?

Applications shall be submitted in English! Innovation Norway will apply a simplified application procedure. Please follow the instructions presented at the weblink indicated below.

- Applications shall be completed online at this weblink: <https://www.innovasjon Norge.no/en/start-page/eea-norway-grants/Programmes/business-development/romania/SMEsGrowthRomaniaTS/>
- It is important to **fill in all the sections** of the online application with clear details as follows:
 - Entity name, contact person, telephone, e-mail, year of establishment and website;
 - The entities registration number;
 - Main line of business / economic sector;
 - Main purpose of the travel and meetings;
 - The purpose and expected outcome of visit to Romania/ Norway;
 - Meeting agenda in Romania / Norway. List the entities, location, contact details and person that the company will meet.
- Before traveling, you need to **obtain** Innovation Norway's written approval. A confirmation will be sent you by email from the official Programme email address RO.Innovation@innovationnorway.no

Who can apply?

Entities from Romania and Norway can apply for funding. The applicants must be constituted as legal entities in Romania or Norway.

The following entities are eligible for financial support under this CALL for Travel Support:

- **From Romania:**
 - Small and medium size enterprises (SMEs), as defined by Commission recommendation 2003/361/EC, and large companies with less than 25% public ownership, functioning in accordance to enforced Romanian legislation on commercial companies, respectively: Law 31/1990 regarding commercial companies, republished, with subsequent modifications and completions.

NOTE: Entities active in the following sectors are **excluded** from financing in this CALL (in line with provisions of COMMISSION REGULATION (EU) No 1407/2013¹):

- fishery and aquaculture sector;
- primary production of agricultural products;
- processing and marketing of agricultural products.

Romanian entities that are expected to play the role of applicants in the main project, must be established for at least 3 years at **28 May 2020** for the areas of Green Industry Innovation and Blue Growth and at least 1 year at the same date for ICT area.

¹ For more details, please see: http://ec.europa.eu/competition/state_aid/legislation/de_minimis_regulation_en.pdf

- **From Norway:**

Private or public entities legally established in Norway (e.g. SMEs, NGOs, research institutes etc.)

Travel support **will not be awarded** to entities presenting the same project idea that has already benefited from travel support from the Programme SMEs Growth Romania

Eligible activities and expenditures

- Travel costs in connection to/or associated with the search for partners for donor partnership projects and the development of such partnerships;
 - A partnership project must constitute of at least one entity (SME or large company with less than 25 % public ownership) from Romania and one entity from Norway;
 - Partnership projects must be developed within one of the three focus areas of this Programme;
 - Travel Support is awarded per entity and not per person;
 - The travel should take place no later than **27 May 2020**.
- The applicant must **present** that they have an eligible project idea, and that they **intend to be** involved either as a promotor or as a bilateral (Norwegian) partner performing substantial tasks in the project. The travel needs to be performed by the entity awarded the grant.

The applicant must have been established at least 3 years before the deadline of the present Call for the areas of Green Industry Innovation and Blue Growth and at least 1 year before the deadline of the Call for the area ICT (the period is calculated from the day of the registration).

Disbursement of funds and reporting

- Reimbursement principle (you cover the expenditures from own funds and ask for reimbursement from Innovation Norway after the travel).
- The reimbursement request will be composed of the following documents:
 - (a) Travel Report;**
 - (b) Financial Identification Form;**
 - (c) De minimis aid declaration** (the templates for these three documents are available at <https://www.innovasjon Norge.no/smesgrowthromania>, section Travel Support Scheme);
 - (d) proof of travel.**
- **Applicants from Norway:** The documents mentioned at letters (a)-(d) should be sent, stamped and signed, **scanned**, at the Programme's official email address - RO.Innovation@innovationnorway.no, within maximum **one month** after the travel took place.
- **Applicants from Romania:** The documents mentioned at letters (a)-(d) should be sent, stamped and signed, **scanned** at the Programme's official email address - RO.Innovation@innovationnorway.no, within maximum **one month** after the travel took place. The **originals** should be **posted** in an envelope bearing the reference: **'SMEs Growth Romania – Travel Support Scheme'** to: Innovation Norway Romania,

11 George Enescu St., Floor 2, 010301 Bucharest 1, Romania;

- In case of Romanian applicants: the entities should also submit a copy of an official document mentioning the name of the legal representative:
 - for enterprises – a copy of a recent (2020) certificate of status (*certificat constatator*) issued by Trade Registry
- The costs are reimbursed to the entity that has incurred the expenses and not to a natural person.

Selection criteria

- Applications for Travel Support are assessed and awarded by Innovation Norway on a continuous basis (until the depletion of the available budget);
- In order to be awarded Travel Support the following criteria must be fulfilled:
 - All sections in the online application is filled in correctly;
 - The planned activities are within the objective of this TravelSupport;
 - Applicant and partner(s) are eligible;
 - The purpose of the travel and the meeting need to be within one of the three focus areas of this Programme;
 - Planned activities/costs are eligible.

For possible clarifications, send e-mail to: RO.Innovation@innovationnorway.no.