

The Programme Local Development, Poverty Reduction and Enhanced Roma Inclusion  
funded by EEA and Norway Grants

## GUIDE FOR APPLICANTS FOR BILATERAL FUNDS

### CALL 2

**call for proposals for bilateral initiatives aiming at facilitating the exchange/ transfer of information/ knowledge, technology, experience and good practices between Project Promoters and project partners from Romania, on one hand, and relevant entities from Donor States and/ or international organizations, on the other hand, in areas of interest and on topics specific to the projects financed under the "Local Development" Programme**

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**"Local Development, Poverty Reduction and  
Enhanced Roma Inclusion" Programme  
(Local Development)**

**EEA and Norway Grants 2014 – 2021**

**Bucharest  
July 2020**

**The Programme Local Development, Poverty Reduction and Enhanced Roma Inclusion  
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**CONTENT**

1. General Information about the Programme and the EEA and Norway Grants 2014-2021 .....	3
1.1. Objectives, priority sectors and programme areas covered by the EEA and Norway Grants 2014-2021 .....	3
1.2. Programme objectives and actions .....	3
1.3. Bilateral relations under the Programme .....	4
2. Conditions for accessing funds for bilateral relations related to the Call 2 .....	4
2.1. Eligible applicants and participants at bilateral activities .....	4
2.2. Eligible activities.....	5
2.3. Eligible costs.....	6
2.4. The total financial allocation.....	8
2.5. Grant size and grant rate .....	8
2.6. Submission of the application form.....	8
2.7. Evaluation and selection of the applications .....	9
2.8. Reporting and payments.....	12
3. Other useful information .....	16
3.1. Facilitation of partners identification .....	16
3.2. Help-desk services.....	17
4. Annexes.....	17

**The Programme Local Development, Poverty Reduction and Enhanced Roma Inclusion  
funded by EEA and Norway Grants**

**1. General Information about the Programme and the EEA and Norway Grants 2014-2021**

**1.1. Objectives, priority sectors and programme areas covered by the EEA and Norway Grants 2014-2021**

The Programme "Local Development, Poverty Reduction and Enhanced Roma Inclusion" (Local Development) is implemented by the Romanian Social Development Fund (RSDF), as Programme Operator (PO), in partnership with the Norwegian Association of Local and Regional Authorities (KS) (as Donor Programme Partner/ DPP) and Council of Europe (CoE) (as International Partner Organisation/ IPO) and is financed under the European Economic Area (EEA) and Norway Grants 2014-2021.

The overall objectives of the EEA and Norway Grants 2014-2021 are to contribute to the reduction of economic and social disparities in the European Economic Area and to strengthen bilateral relations between the Donor States (Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway) and the Beneficiary States.

The Local Development Programme is covering 5 out of the 23 programme areas targeted by the EEA and Norway Grants 2014-2021, respectively (1) Local Development and Poverty Reduction; (2) Roma Inclusion and Empowerment; (3) Human Rights - national implementation; (4) Children and Youth at Risk; (5) Good Governance, Accountable Institutions, Transparency. For more information on the portfolio of programmes funded in Romania through the EEA and Norway Grants 2014-2021 please visit <https://www.eeagrants.ro/>.

**1.2. Programme objectives and actions**

Following the objectives of the 5 programme areas, the Programme is aiming to enhance Roma inclusion & empowerment and social inclusion of children and youth at risk, to increase the use of social services by disadvantaged groups, to increase the knowledge of central and local government to enact good governance principles, and to increase the implementation of the recommendations made by the European Court of Human Rights for Romania.

The overall objective of the Local Development Programme is to actively contribute to strengthening the social and economic cohesion at national and local level in Romania. By facilitating cooperation and partnerships between entities from Romania and Donor States, the Programme will also contribute to strengthening bilateral relations between Donor States and Romania.

## **The Programme Local Development, Poverty Reduction and Enhanced Roma Inclusion funded by EEA and Norway Grants**

For achieving these objectives, 5 specific calls for project proposals are planned to be launched under the Programme, in the following areas: Local Development, Poverty Reduction, Children and Youth at Risk, Roma Inclusion, and Human Rights. Two other calls should be launched under the two Small Grant Schemes, respectively: Roma Inclusion and Access to Financing. Apart from the calls for project proposals, 3 pre-defined projects should be financed under the Programme, having as Project Promoters (PP) the National University for Physical Education and Sports (UNEPS) Bucharest, the General Secretary of the Government, and the Romanian Association of Communes (ACoR). For more information on the calls for project proposals launched and about the portfolio of projects funded by the Local Development Programme please visit <https://dezvoltare-locala.frds.ro/>.

The overall budget of the Programme is 82,352,941 Euro, out of which 70,000,000 Euro EEA and Norway Grants (25,000,000 Euro EEA Grants and 45,000,000 Norway Grants) and 12,352,941 Euro national contribution.

### **1.3. Bilateral relations under the Programme**

Strengthening bilateral relations between Donor States and Beneficiary States is a major interest of the EEA and Norway Grants 2014-2021 and therefore of the Programme. In this respect, the Local Development Programme encourages and provides support to entities in Romania and Donor States acting in the Programme areas in order to meet, share information and experiences, discuss/ agree about future cooperation, establish partnerships and develop donor partnership projects to be financed under the Programme.

In this respect, the Programme provides many opportunities for bilateral exchanges and cooperation, such as: calls and other facilities to access bilateral funds by eligible entities in Romania and Donor States (for details, please visit <https://dezvoltare-locala.frds.ro/prezentarea-relatiilor-bilaterale/>), seminars for identifying partners for donor partnership projects (matchmaking seminars), study visits in Romania and Donor States, meetings, trainings and international conferences, etc.

The present guide stipulates the way in which are submitted, evaluated and selected the application forms for Call 2 - call for proposals for bilateral initiatives aiming at facilitating the exchange/ transfer of information/ knowledge, technology, experience and good practices between Project Promoters and project partners from Romania, on one hand, and relevant entities from Donor States and/ or international organizations, on the other hand, in areas of interest and on topics specific to the projects financed under the Local Development Programme.

## **2. Conditions for accessing funds for bilateral relations related to the Call 2**

### **2.1. Eligible applicants and participants at bilateral activities**

Are eligible to apply for funding under this call:

**The Programme Local Development, Poverty Reduction and Enhanced Roma Inclusion  
funded by EEA and Norway Grants**

- any PP that has implemented or implements projects financed through the Programme;
- any project partner (whether it is an entity from Romania or from the Donor States or an international organisation) involved in the implementation of the projects financed through the Programme.

Other entities from Romania or from Donor States or the international organisations, active in the Programme areas, that are not partners in the projects financed under the Programme, can benefit from financial support in order for their representatives to attend the bilateral activities proposed by the applicant. The costs related to the participation of the representatives of these entities in the proposed bilateral activities are eligible for financing only if they are included by the applicant in the budget of the application form for bilateral funds. If other entities than those directly involved, as partners, in the implementation of the funded project are proposed to participate, as sending organisations (the organizations that send people abroad, to attend the planned bilateral activities), then within the application form, the applicant has to provide a clear justification regarding the added value brought by their involvement in the proposed bilateral activities.

For each project funded under the Programme, the PO could provide bilateral funds for no more than two bilateral initiatives submitted to the Call 2. If the case, the second application may be submitted (by one of the organizations involved in the implementation of the respective project) only after the submission of the Report on Bilateral Activities related to the first application. The second application will target objectives different from/ complementary to those proposed/ achieved through the first bilateral initiative.

## **2.2. Eligible activities**

In accordance with the provisions of Article 8.8, point (c), of the Regulations and of the Bilateral Guidelines (Chapter 3.4.3) (documents available at <https://eeagrants.org/>) eligible activities will facilitate networking, exchange, sharing and transfer of knowledge, technology, experience and best practice between eligible entities in Romania and entities in Donor States and/or international organisations, in the Programme areas.

Example of eligible activities – participation at:

- meetings
- training sessions and workshops (including shadowing activities)
- study visits
- conferences and seminars
- networking activities

focused on topics relevant to the objectives/ activities of the project funded by the PO.

At least one entity from Donor States or an international organization have to be involved in the proposed bilateral activities.

**The Programme Local Development, Poverty Reduction and Enhanced Roma Inclusion  
funded by EEA and Norway Grants**

In the application form, the applicant will have to explain how the proposed bilateral activities will contribute to the improvement of the results of the projects (in which they are involved as PP or partners) and/ or to increasing the projects sustainability.

It is mandatory that the application includes also actions (not involving corresponding costs from the grant) related to communication and promotion of the bilateral initiative/ activities and/ or its results at least on the Beneficiaries' website and/ or on their own social media accounts. For example: press releases and/ or press articles and/ or announcements published on the sites/ social media accounts of entities participating in bilateral activities or on other relevant sites/ social media accounts, informative materials/ communication products, reports/ studies etc. elaborated/ used during the activities etc).

The duration of the travel(s) abroad of a participant at the planned bilateral activities should not exceed 5 days (including travel days). To justify the duration of the travel(s), the applicant will submit together with the application form the following information (in one or several documents):

- **letter of invitation** (may be in the form of an e-mail) from the receiving organisation/ organizers of the bilateral activity addressed to participants from abroad;
- **agenda** for the activity (per days and time intervals, if possible), to justify the proposed duration of the trip (may be in the form of an e-mail);
- **confirmation** from the participants from abroad that they will attend the bilateral activity (may be in the form of an e-mail).

Bilateral activities should be planned and organized before September 30th, 2024. Any decision to postpone this deadline will be published on the Programme's web page, <https://dezvoltare-locala.frds.ro/>.

### **2.3. Eligible costs**

In order to be authorized by the Programme Operator, expenses made by the beneficiaries of bilateral funds must comply with the provisions of Article 8.8 of the Regulations on eligible costs.

Eligible categories of expenditure are:

- the **travel costs** of the participants to the bilateral activities approved by the PO, namely the expenditure related to transport, accommodation and daily allowance;
- the **participation costs** for training sessions, workshops, seminars, conferences, if the case.

**Travel costs** (for accommodation, transport and daily allowance<sup>1</sup>) of participants in bilateral

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<sup>1</sup> daily allowance covers all the costs related to meals, local transport, travel insurance, phone calls, exchange rates, tariff differences etc.

**The Programme Local Development, Poverty Reduction and Enhanced Roma Inclusion  
funded by EEA and Norway Grants**

activities funded under the Call 2 will be calculated by the applicant based on the **lump sums** set out in the Order of the Minister of European Funds no. 348/2018<sup>1</sup>, approving the Rules for the application of lump sums for travel financed under the Fund for Bilateral Relations and the Fund for Technical Assistance of the EEA and Norwegian Financial Mechanisms 2014-2021 (published in the Official Gazette no. 429/ 21.05.2018), respectively:

Lump sums for traveling abroad:

- for external travel to Norway: 220 EUR/day + 600 EUR (transport)
- for external travel to Iceland: 245 EUR/day + 900 EUR (transport)
- for external travel to Liechtenstein: 175 EUR/day + 500 EUR (transport)
- for external travel to Romania: 160 EUR/day + 800 EUR (transport)
- for external travel to other Beneficiary Countries: 160 EUR/day + lump sum for transport (20 EUR for a distance between 10 and 99 km, 180 EUR for a distance between 100 and 499 km, 275 EUR for a distance between 500 and 1,999 km, 360 EUR for a distance between 2,000 and 2,999 km)
- for external travel to the headquarters/ offices of an international organisation: 220 EUR/day + 600 EUR (transport)

Lump sums for internal travel, in Romania:

- 110 EUR/day + lump sum for transport (20 EUR for a distance between 10 and 99 km or 180 EUR for a distance between 100 and 499 km or 275 EUR for a distance between 500 and 1,999 km)

To calculate no. of the kilometres spent in order to determine the amount for the transport both for internal and external travel, applicants will use the websites [http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/resources\\_en](http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/resources_en) or <https://www.viamichelin.com/>.

Please note that the daily lump sum is granted only for those days involving accommodation.

When lump sums are used, no other costs for participants related to travel, accommodation, meals and communications should be considered eligible. According to the provisions of Order no. 348/2018, lump sums shall be justified by documents proving the movement, respectively boarding passes (plane, train, bus, ship, receipt for fuel) and a travel report approved by the legal representative of the sending organization, and shall be authorized only if the expected results of the action are fulfilled - respectively if the travel was made according to the provisions of the financing contract.

In exceptional cases, where the Romanian beneficiary/ entity cannot apply the Order no. 348/2018, the travel expenses will be settled/ accepted on the basis of the provisions of HG 714/ 2018 and HG 518/ 1995, updated/ with the subsequent amendments and completions. In this situation, the travel costs will be settled/ accepted based on the real costs model,

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<sup>1</sup> see also the [Decision](#) of the board of directors of the PO no. 4 / XI / SO of November 14, 2019

**The Programme Local Development, Poverty Reduction and Enhanced Roma Inclusion  
funded by EEA and Norway Grants**

proved by the Romanian beneficiaries with proper supporting documents.

All costs declared ineligible or unauthorized by the PO will be supported by the Beneficiary and/ or its partners, as the case may be.

#### **2.4. The total financial allocation**

The total amount of funds allocated for bilateral initiatives to be financed under the Call 2 is 50,000 Euro.

Depending on the needs (number and value of applications submitted by applicants/ approved by the PO), the amounts allocated for the Call 2 may be revised. Any decision to revise the total amount allocated for the Call 2 will be published on the PO website, [www.frds.ro/](http://www.frds.ro/) <https://dezvoltare-locala.frds.ro/>.

#### **2.5. Grant size and grant rate**

The maximum amount of grant that can be allocated to an application is 5,000 Euro.

The funding rate is 100%. The applicant does not have to contribute financially (to provide a contribution, co-financing, etc.) for the implementation of the approved bilateral activities, but only to cover those costs that exceed 5,000 Euro, as well as the costs declared ineligible, if any.

In the budget of the application for bilateral funds, the applicant will include only the amounts requested to be covered by the PO. In the elaboration of the budget, the applicant will use only the standard values of the corresponding lump sums (not fractions), as explained under the 2.3 Eligible costs of current guidelines.

Please elaborate the budget of the bilateral initiative bearing in mind that the duration of the trip(s) abroad of a participant at the planned bilateral activities should not exceed 5 days (including travel). In this respect, the budget will cover the travel costs for no more than 5 days/ person, meaning no more than 4 nights of accommodation.

#### **2.6. Submission of the application form**

Funds available under the Call 2 will be awarded exclusively on the basis of an application form written in English, using the standard form presented in the Annexes. Only the applications submitted by eligible entities will be considered for approval.

Eligible applicants can apply for funding under Call 2 starting with **July 6, 2020**. The call is continuous and shall be closed on May 1<sup>st</sup>, 2024. In case of a large number of bilateral initiatives received that meet the financing conditions and exceed the financial allocation of the call, the PO may close the call before this date or may supplement the financial



**The Programme Local Development, Poverty Reduction and Enhanced Roma Inclusion  
funded by EEA and Norway Grants**

allocation. If the case, any decision to supplement the financial allocation and/ or to change the call deadline/ close the call earlier will be published on the Programme's web page, <https://dezvoltare-locala.frds.ro/>.

Application file will contain all the following documents:

- application form, written in English, using the standard form published by the PO;
- letter of invitation (may be in the form of an e-mail) from the organizers of the bilateral activity addressed to participants from abroad;
- agenda for the activities (per days and time intervals, if possible), to justify the proposed duration of the trip (may be in the form of an e-mail);
- confirmation from the participants from abroad that they will attend the bilateral activity (may be in the form of an e-mail).

The documents that are part of the application file will be submitted by e-mail, at [bilaterale@frds.ro](mailto:bilaterale@frds.ro):

- either in scanned form, after original printed documents, or
- in electronic form, signed with an extended electronic signature based on a certified digital certificate, issued according to the applicable national legal provisions.

Please mention the following text at the e-mail Subject: Application file for Call 2 - name of the applicant.

After the submission of the application, the applicant cannot amend or revise the application at its initiative but only if the PO requests its revision, through a request for clarification.

The applicant may choose to withdraw the application file from the competition at any time.

PO will make public the awarded applications and the allocated amounts on <https://dezvoltare-locala.frds.ro/>.

The proposed bilateral activities shall be implemented by the beneficiaries in maximum 3 months from the signing of the contract, but not later than September 30<sup>th</sup>, 2024. If necessary, a modification of this date will be publicly announced by the PO, on the Programme's web page (<https://dezvoltare-locala.frds.ro/>).

## **2.7. Evaluation and selection of the applications**

Bilateral initiatives submitted under Call 2 will be evaluated and approved on the basis of the "first come, first served" principle, as far as they meet administrative and eligibility conditions as well as a minimum set of content criteria.

The evaluation and approval of the bilateral initiatives submitted under Call 2 involves the following three steps:

**The Programme Local Development, Poverty Reduction and Enhanced Roma Inclusion  
funded by EEA and Norway Grants**

**1. Administrative and eligibility verification**

Application file submitted will be assessed by PO, in order to verify if it meets all the administrative and eligibility criteria, respectively if:

- the Application File has been submitted in time (within the announced deadline) and under the required conditions (using the standard form published by the PO, with all the applicable sections completed and elaborated in English, scanned/ signed with an extended electronic signature, sent by e-mail at [bilaterale@frds.ro](mailto:bilaterale@frds.ro));
- the letter of invitation from the organizers of the bilateral activity addressed to participants from abroad, the agenda for the activity, and the confirmation from the participants from abroad that they will attend the bilateral activity are attached to the application form;
- the applicant is eligible;
- for the same project, no other bilateral initiatives were previously submitted under the Call 2, for which the evaluation and contracting process has not been completed;
- for the same project, no funding was received for bilateral initiatives submitted under Call 2 or only one grant for bilateral activities was received. In the latter case, the current bilateral initiative was submitted after the submission of the Report on Bilateral Activities related to the first bilateral initiative funded and targets objectives different from/ complementary to those proposed/ achieved through the first bilateral initiative;
- the proposed bilateral activities are eligible under the Call 2;
- no representative of the project has previously participated in the same or similar kind of activities (1) organized by the PO or other entities, (2) planned within the approved project or (3) carried out under a previous bilateral initiative – activities financed through the Bilateral Fund at Programme level. PO will allocate funds to the applicant only if the bilateral activities proposed do not overlap with (1) bilateral activities organized directly by the PO and in which representatives of the project participated/ will be involved (2) the objectives and activities of the project already funded or (3) of a previous bilateral initiative, approved and financed through the Bilateral Fund at Programme level;
- at least one entity from the Donor States or an international organization (not necessary the project partner) is involved in the proposed bilateral activities;
- the costs proposed for the implementation of the bilateral activities are eligible;
- the requested amount (grant value) falls within the maximum ceiling of 5,000 Euro;
- bilateral activities are planned and shall be finalised not later than September 30th, 2024 or another date subsequently established by the PO and publicly announced.

All these criteria must be met so that the application form passes the administrative and eligibility stage. The Administrative and Eligibility Verification Grid is presented in the Annexes.

**The Programme Local Development, Poverty Reduction and Enhanced Roma Inclusion  
funded by EEA and Norway Grants**

During the administrative and eligibility verification, the PO may ask the applicant for further clarifications information or/and documents. The applicant shall reply to the PO request for clarification in no more than 5 working days.

The results of the administrative and eligibility verification will be communicated by the PO to the applicant within 10 working days after the registration of the application form. If clarifications have been requested, this period may be extended by the number of days necessary to receive the clarifications requested by the PO.

The applicant may appeal in writing on the rejection of the application form within a maximum of 30 working days from the date on which it was notified of the results of the administrative and eligibility verification. The appeal must be justified. The final result of the administrative and eligibility verification will be communicated by the PO to the applicant in writing, within 3 working days after the registration of the appeal to the PO and will be published on the PO's website.

## 2. Content evaluation

All the applications that pass administrative and eligibility verification will be evaluated on the basis of content criteria such as:

- the correlation between the general objective of the proposed bilateral activities and the objectives of the Programme;
- the relevance of the proposed bilateral activities, from the perspective of their immediate implications on the project progress or development in order to contribute to increased quality of project results and/ or benefits on the target groups/ final beneficiaries/ community members, during project duration;
- the relevance of the proposed bilateral activities, from the perspective of their contribution to the sustainability of the project and the use/ multiplication of its results, after its completion;
- the expertise and experience of the entities participating in the bilateral activities;
- the medium and long-term impact of the bilateral relations developed in terms of strengthening bilateral cooperation after the completion of the bilateral activities;
- appropriateness of the team(s) composition/ human resources involved in the proposed bilateral activities;
- the need and efficiency of the planned costs.

The Content Evaluation Grid for Call 2 is presented in the Annexes.

An application may be proposed for approval only if, following the content evaluation, it receives at least 60 points.

## 3. Approval

**The Programme Local Development, Poverty Reduction and Enhanced Roma Inclusion  
funded by EEA and Norway Grants**

The decision on the approval or rejection of the applications submitted under the Call 2 is taken by the Cooperation Committee (CC) established at the Programme level, after analysing the results of the content evaluation. Cooperation Committee is a body consisting of representatives from Programme Operator (RSDF), Donor Programme Partner (KS) and International Partner Organisation (CoE). Representatives of National Focal Point and Financial Mechanism Committee/ Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs participate as observers.

In case of approval of an application, the CC may, if necessary, amend the budget proposed by the applicant and set conditions to be met by the Beneficiary. If the CC proposes the conditional approval of the application, the PO will notify the applicant in writing of these conditions and will only issue the financing decision if the applicant fulfils all the conditions required by the CC.

If the CC decide to unconditionally approve or to reject the application, the PO will inform the applicant within 5 working days of the date of the CC decision.

All documents/ results related to the evaluation process of applications submitted under Call 2 will be confidential until the final decision is taken.

If necessary, the CC may also approve reserve lists, with applications that could be approved if available funds will be identified.

The PO will be able to reject or withdraw funding for an application at any time, if it proves that double funding principle has been breached (the Beneficiary has already received/will receive a funding for planned/ realized bilateral activities, fully or partially, irrespective of the source of their funding). If double funding is discovered after approval and financing of the application, the Beneficiary will return the entire amount transferred by the PO, including the related penalties, if the case.

In the case of applications rejected by the CC there is no appeal procedure.

The PO will publish information on the bilateral initiatives financed under Call 2 and the value of the allocated grants on <https://dezvoltare-locala.frds.ro/>.

## **2.8. Reporting and payments**

As beneficiaries, the entities whose bilateral initiatives have been approved under the Call 2 will sign with the PO a financing contract (the template of which is presented in the Annexes).

The contract sign with the PO will refer to applicable financing model/models: pre-financing model and/or the reimbursement model. To Romanian public entities the pre-financing model shall apply.

**The Programme Local Development, Poverty Reduction and Enhanced Roma Inclusion  
funded by EEA and Norway Grants**

In the case of other beneficiaries (NGOs) or entities from Donor States/ international organisations, PO will usually apply the reimbursement model. To ensure the flexibility on initiative implementing, for Romanian beneficiaries, other than public entities, both models could be applied (if the type of the initiative require it)<sup>1</sup>. Irrespective of the financing model applied, NGOs or entities from Donor States/ international organisations may be granted an advance payment of up to 60% of approved grant.

Please note that, if the case (if the application file was not submitted in electronic form, signed with an extended electronic signature based on a certified digital certificate, issued according to the applicable national legal provisions), during the contracting stage all the applicants will have to provide the PO with the original or marked as original version of all the documents (if they were submitted initially by email, in scanned form); this is a mandatory condition for signing the contract. This documentation will be archived by the PO and will not be returned to the applicant/ beneficiary.

Any modification regarding the implementation of the approved bilateral activities will have to be notified to the PO, for approval.

In order to carry out the approved bilateral activities, upon request (see Payment Request presented in the Annexes), the public entities in Romania, as beneficiaries, will be able to receive as pre-financing an advance payment of up to 100 % of the approved grant.

The other beneficiaries (NGO in Romania, entities from Donor States, international organisations) will be able to receive an advance payment of up to 60% of the approved grant amount. Depending on the applicable funding model, the difference of up to 100% of the approved grant value will be granted to them as follows:

- in the case of applying the pre-financing model: the difference will be granted before the expenses related to the difference are incurred but after the Beneficiaries have submitted the Financial Intermediate Report (FIR) and an (interim) Payment Request (see the FIR and Payment Request templates in the Annexes), respectively after the approval of the report and the authorization by the PO of the expenditures declared in the report (incurred from the received advance). The calculation of the final balance will be carried out after the fulfilment of the reporting obligations stipulated in the contract, within the limits of the expenses authorized by the PO;
- in the case of applying the reimbursement model: the difference will be granted after the Beneficiaries have made the expenses and after they have submitted the Report on Bilateral Activities and a Payment Request (using the form presented in the Annexes), respectively after the approval of the report and only within the limit of the expenses incurred, declared by the Beneficiary and authorized by the PO.

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<sup>1</sup> if until the completion of the steps regarding the issuance of funds related to the intermediate payment within the pre-financing model (opening of account, receiving advance/ drawing up and verification of FIR, authorization of expenses) the beneficiary can bear the expenses from his own funds, then he can opt for the reimbursement model during the implementation of the initiative

**The Programme Local Development, Poverty Reduction and Enhanced Roma Inclusion  
funded by EEA and Norway Grants**

In the case of applying the pre-financing model, the authorization of the expenditure declared as being made from the amount received as advance payment is made following the financial verification of the FIR, as follows:

- in the case of the amounts approved based on the lump sums method, the authorization is made on the basis of documents proving the payment of the lump sums to persons designated to participate in the approved bilateral activities (the accounting records related to the grant – an accounting document that reflects in accounting the revenues/ receipts and the expenses/ payments per participant, in accordance with the national legislation);
- in the (exceptional) case of amounts approved based on the real cost method (when the beneficiary applies HG 714/ 2018 and/or HG 518/ 1995, but also for the participation costs), authorization is made on the basis of the supporting documents regarding all the expenses declared in the report.

Within maximum 30 days after the completion of all approved bilateral activities, the Beneficiary will submit to the PO the Report on Bilateral Activities (its template is presented in the Annexes), accompanied by the following supporting documents:

- for the travel costs in Romania and abroad, calculated using the lump sums, also the beneficiaries from Romania and Donor States or the International Organisations will provide documents attesting the movement (boarding passes for all flights, train/ bus/ ship/ tickets, travel orders of each participant – in case of Romanian participants/ receipt for fuel - in the case of traveling by car, etc.), travel report approved by the legal representative of the sending organization, and the accounting records related to the grant – an accounting document that reflects in accounting the revenues/ receipts and the expenses/ payments per participant, in accordance with the national legislation;
- for the travel costs in Romania and abroad, calculated using the real cost method, but also for the participation costs, the (Romanian) beneficiaries will provide a report on procurements and the procurement files (if applicable), invoices, receipts, transport tickets, tax vouchers, account statements/ payment arrangements, other documents.

The Report on Bilateral Activities and all the supporting documents will have to be submitted in original or marked as original:

- either in printed form – submitted personally/ by post or courier, at Fondul Român de Dezvoltare Socială (FRDS), str. Eugeniu Carada nr. 1, etaj 3, sector 3, București, cod poștal 030057, or
- in electronic form, signed with an extended electronic signature based on a certified digital certificate issued according to the applicable national legal provisions – submitted by e-mail, at [bilaterale@frds.ro](mailto:bilaterale@frds.ro).

If the documents will be submitted in printed form, then the Beneficiary will have to send them also in electronic form (scanned) at [bilaterale@frds.ro](mailto:bilaterale@frds.ro).

**Attention:** the report will have an OPIS/ list of documents. The documents attached to the

**The Programme Local Development, Poverty Reduction and Enhanced Roma Inclusion  
funded by EEA and Norway Grants**

report have to be organized on the main sections (technical, financial, procurement etc.) and their pages have to be numbered in order specified in the OPIS/ list of documents!

Each Beneficiary has the obligation to record in his own accounting the financial operations of the grant, according to the generally accepted accounting principles and to keep analytical accounting for this grant. Analytical accounts shall be coded in such a way as to allow easy identification of the accounts.

In case of using the real costs method, on each original supporting documents that involve payments (e.g.: invoices, tax bills, receipts, expense statements), the Romanian beneficiaries will apply the following phrases: (1) "Funded by the Local Development Programme - bilateral initiatives, contract no. ... from the date of ... " and (2) „Endorsed for payment for the amount of.....”, name, surname and signature of the responsible person (with these attributions) designated by the Beneficiary.

On each copy of a supporting document attached to the Report the beneficiaries will apply, in original, the term «According to the original», the signature of the legal representative of the organization.

Beneficiaries will also attach to the Report on Bilateral Activities any other relevant document showing how the approved bilateral activities were implemented and promoted (as detailed under 2.2 Eligible activities).

The promotion of the bilateral activities/ initiatives and/ or the dissemination of their results, at least on the Beneficiaries' website and/ or on their own social media accounts, is mandatory and should be documented in the Report on Bilateral Activities. Failure to do so may result in withdrawal of funding/ unauthorizing the expenses.

If the bilateral activities involve one or more meetings, to justify the grant the Beneficiary will attach to the Report, together with the final agenda of activities and meetings (justifying the funded duration of the trip abroad), also the signed participants lists for each meeting.

If any other deliverables are made during the bilateral activities (for example, a letter of intent/ agreement for future cooperation etc.), whether they are in a final or intermediate form, should also be attached to the Report on Bilateral Activities.

For more details on reporting and payment terms, please read the contract template, attached to this guide.

**The Programme Local Development, Poverty Reduction and Enhanced Roma Inclusion  
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If, within a maximum of 60 calendar days from the completion of all planned bilateral activities, the beneficiary does not submit to the PO the Report on Bilateral Activities and, if applicable, the Payment Request for reimbursement, the PO may unilaterally decide to cancel/ terminate the financing contract, the possible costs advanced/ realized by the beneficiary for carrying out the approved bilateral activities thus becoming ineligible. If the beneficiary in this situation has received an advance, it will have to reimburse the amounts advanced by the PO, the interests and other costs related to the grant, within maximum 15 calendar days from receiving the notification of cancellation.

The verification of the report submitted by the beneficiary is done by the PO within a maximum of 45 working days from the date of its submission to the PO. The PO may suspend or extend the above term, notifying the beneficiary that the Report cannot be approved until further verification or clarification is carried out. Payment will be made by the PO within a maximum of 10 working days from the date of approval of the Report and acceptance of the payment request.

The PO may ask the beneficiary for further clarifications or documents to be submitted to the PO within the term mentioned in the notification. The deadline for the verification of the Report is automatically extended with the time period during which the PO waited for the beneficiary to provide the requested clarifications.

The report and its annexes must be completed in Romanian by the Romanian beneficiaries and in English by the beneficiaries from the Donor States or international organisations, using the template published by the PO. Documents and reports of any kind drawn up in another language will be presented together with their translation into Romanian.

If, after verifying the Report on Bilateral Activities and the documents demonstrating the movement, the supporting documents etc., the PO will approve eligible expenses whose value is lower than the advance granted, the beneficiary will return the difference within a maximum of 15 calendar days, in the accounts indicated by the PO.

### **3. Other useful information**

#### **3.1. Facilitation of partners identification**

The PO encourages entities with relevant experience in Programme areas, from Romania, Norway, Iceland and Liechtenstein and international organisations to initiate/ participate in exchanges financed under this call, in order to improve the implementation and results of the projects financed under the Programme. The following information might be useful in finding partners in Norway and Iceland:

#### **Exchanges with Norwegian NGOs**



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If you are interested in exchanges with Norwegian NGOs, we recommend you to access the database available on the [NGO Norway](#) portal and, using the contact details available, contact directly that organization that best matches the profile you are looking for.

**Exchanges with local authorities from Norway or Iceland**

If you are interested in exchanges with local authorities from Norway or Iceland, we recommend that you identify such partners by accessing the web pages of:

- The Norwegian Association of Local and Regional Authorities - <https://www.ks.no/om-ks/ks-in-english/>
- Icelandic Association of Local Authorities - <https://www.samband.is/english/>

**3.2. Help-desk services**

During the period when the Call 2 will be opened, potential applicants may receive, on request, help desk services through which the PO will respond to requests for information and clarification received directly at its headquarters in Bucharest, by phone or e-mail.

Those who are interested may send questions about bilateral funds allocated to Call 2 no later than 30 working days before deadline for applications announced. The PO will address these requests immediately (for example, in case of a phone call), or if a more elaborate response is needed, within 3 working days after receiving the question/ request for clarification.

Any entity interested in obtaining more details on bilateral funds allocated to Call 2 can contact PO:

- by e-mail, at [info@frds.ro](mailto:info@frds.ro)
- by phone, from Monday to Friday, based on the help desk programme posted on the PO website (<https://dezvoltare-locala.frds.ro/>)

**4. Annexes**

1. Application form
2. Administrative and eligibility verification grid
3. Content evaluation grid
4. Financing contract
5. Payment Request
6. Financial Intermediate Report
7. Report on Bilateral Activities