Approved by the decree No \_\_\_\_\_of the Deputy Director of the Public institution Central project management agency on \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**GUIDELINES FOR APPLICANTS**

**OF THE CALL FOR TRAVEL SUPPORT**

**UNDER THE FUND FOR BILATERAL RELATIONS OF THE PROGRAMME „CULTURE“**

**OF THE EUROPEAN ECONOMIC AREA FINANCIAL MECHANISM 2014-2021**

1. **GENERAL PROVISIONS**
	1. Under this call awaited are applications for the travel support under the Fund for bilateral relations of the programme “Culture” (hereinafter - Programme) of the European Economic Area (hereinafter - EEA) financial mechanism 2014-2021.
	2. Guidelines have been drafted in conformity with:

2.1. Regulation on the implementation of the European Economic Area Financial Mechanism 2014-2021, adopted by the EEA Financial Mechanism Committee on 8 September 2016 (hereinafter - Regulation);

2.2. Rules on financing and administration of the Fund for Bilateral Relations of the European Economic Area and Norwegian financial Mechanisms 2014–2021, approved by the Order No 1K-389 of 12 November 2018 of the Minister of Finance of the Republic of Lithuania (hereinafter - FBR Rules).

3. The terms used in the guidelines:

3.1. Applicant - any entity, public or private, commercial or non-commercial and non-governmental organisation, established as a legal person in the Republic of Lithuania or in one of the Donor States. Legal residents of Liechtenstein.

3.2. Project – project aimed at improvement of the access to cultural, artistic and creative activities or fostering of the local cultural entrepreneurship, and planned to be implemented within the Programme.

4. Public institution Central Project Management Agency (hereinafter - CPMA) being Programme Operator (hereinafter – PO) shall perform evaluation and selection of the received applications.

5. The aim of the call is to help facilitating the establishment of bilateral partnerships between institutions or cultural actors of the Donor States (Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway) and Lithuania.

6. Total amount allocated for the call – 50 000 eur. Maximum grant for one application – up to 2 000 eur. In objectively justified case (e.g. when traveling to/from Northern Norway or Iceland (or any flight requiring an interchange in Oslo), higher amount might be requested. Need for higher travel costs and/or need for additional overnight and therefore bigger than 2000 eur grant has to be provided in the application form (part 4.3).

7. Travel must be finalised at least 5 days before the deadline to submit application within the respective Open call for project proposals launched within the Programme.

8. Before travelling, applicant needs to obtain written confirmation from the CPMA that the application has been approved.

9. Type of the call - continuous submission of applications. The call for travel support shall be closed once budget of the call is used, but not later than three weeks before closing the respective Open calls for project proposals launched within the Programme.

10. Under this call travel costs between Lithuania / Donor state and Donor state / Lithuania to visit partners in potential bilateral projects under the Programme and the development of such partnerships prior to or during the preparation of the Open call project application will be compensated.

11. Expenditure for travel to and from a foreign country by all types of vehicles (e.g. plane, train, boat and other public transport (except car and taxi)) and per diems (unit costs including accommodation, meals, local travel and sundry expenses), applicable for EC-funded external aid contracts (current edition <https://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/sites/devco/files/perdiems-2017-03-17_en.pdf>) shall be eligible.

12. Person traveling should be the employee of the applicant institution. This provision does not apply when application is submitted by individual, being Legal resident of Liechtenstein.

13.The same applicant can submit only one application for the travel support. All subsequent applications submitted by the same applicant will be rejected.

**II**. **APPLICANTS AND SUBMISSION OF APPLICATIONS**

14. Applicant shall be eligible if:

14.1. Is legal entity, established in the Republic of Lithuania or in one of the Donor States.

14.2. Is individual person being resident of Liechtenstein.

15. Applicant may not be the subject of bankruptcy or restructuring proceedings or be under liquidation.

16. Applicant must fill in application for travel support on a specific application form (Annex 1).

17. The applicant can sign the application and submit it to the CPMA in one of the following ways:

17.1. To sign it with a qualified electronic signature and send it with attachments by e-mail eeagrants@cpva.lt;

17.2. To sign the paper version of the application and its scanned copy with attachments send by e-mail eeagrants@cpva.lt.

**III. EVALUATION OF APPLICATIONS**

18. Applications will be evaluated on the basis of their priority (the earliest applications will be evaluated first). Evaluation will be based on the principles of good governance, transparency, equality, efficiency and zero tolerance of corruption.

19. Travel support will be awarded if the application fulfils following criteria:

19.1. applicant is eligible;

19.2. application and/or additional information is submitted within the set deadline;

19.3. all parts of the application form are filled in correctly, in one language - Lithuanian or English;

19.4 the planned activities are within the aim of this call for travel support;

19.5. the purpose of the travel is directly linked to one or more of the Programme outcomes listed in the call for proposals;

19.6 all planned activities and costs are eligible (listed in the point 11).

20. During the evaluation of received applications, CPMA can request the applicant in writing to submit additional information.

21. CPMA shall perform evaluation of application within 10 working days from the date of receipt of the properly filled application.

22. Applicant shall be informed about the results of the evaluation (selection or not selection) within 3 working days from completion of the evaluation.

23. If during the evaluation it is determined that the applicant has presented information in the application which is not true, or the applicant or persons related to the application seek information that the PO considers confidential, or attempted to influence persons evaluating the applications, the CPMA will reject the application.

24. There will be no written agreement for the financing of the travel support signed by the CPMA and project promoter.

**IV. DISBURSEMENT OF FUNDS AND REPORTING PROCEDURE**

25. 100 percent of the eligible costs of the preparatory travel can be financed from the Fund for bilateral relations. All the payments to the selected travel support applicants will be made in two payments each (i. e. from two sources - 47,7485 % eligible amount shall be paid from the EEA financial mechanism 2014-2021 and 52,2515 % - from Norwegian financial mechanism 2014-2020).

26. Compensated shall be only eligible expenditure.

27. Up to 80 percent of total allocated grant can be paid to the applicant as advance payment (if requested in the application form). Respective amount shall be paid to the selected applicant within 10 working days after the decision on selection of the travel support application was taken by the CPMA.

28. The payments to the applicant shall be based on the principle of reimbursement of expenditure paid with or without advance payment. In case applicant does not request an advance payment, it shall mean that the applicant covers its expenditure from its own funds until the travel is completed and the applicant asks CPMA for reimbursement of expenditure incurred.

29. Expenditure for travel (except for travel to and from a foreign country) shall be reported and paid on a simplified basis using per diem rates (unit costs including accommodation, meals, local travel and sundry expenses) applicable for EC-funded external aid contracts.

30. Expenditure for travel (transport) to and from a foreign country (e.g. for tickets) shall have to be justified by supporting documents and proves of payments.

31. Within 10 working days from the completion of the travel, the applicant shall submit to the CPMA the Payment claim for compensation of the travel expenditure (form – Annex 2), which shall include:

31.1. information on the travel, including brief description of the activities carried out, the results achieved, further plans and conclusions;

31.2. copies of documents proving travel expenditure (copies of invoices and proves of their payment);

31.3. copies of documents proving the achievement of the quantitative outcome of the project, e.g. proving number of visit participants.

32. The CPMA shall pay the eligible costs incurred by the applicant within 15 working of receipt of the duly completed documents referred to in point 31 of the Guidelines.

**V. FINAL PROVISIONS**

33. Information about the Programme, events, calls for proposals and other information relevant for applicants shall be published on websites [www.eeagrants.lt](http://www.eeagrants.lt) and [www.cpva.lt](http://www.cpva.lt) .

34. The applicant may lodge an appeal against the CPMA's decisions within 14 days of the date on which the applicant learned or ought to have known of the CPMA's acts or omissions, in accordance with the FBR rules.

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