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Iceland
Liechtenstein
Norway grants



Norway grants

NORWEGIAN FINANCIAL MECHANISM 2014-2021 AND
EEA FINANCIAL MECHANISM 2014-2021

GUIDE FOR BENEFICIARIES

Part 1.b: ABOUT THE PROGRAMME AND THE CALL FOR PROPOSALS

*PROGRAMME EDUCATION, SCHOLARSHIPS, APPRENTICESHIP AND YOUTH
ENTREPRENEURSHIP*

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List of abbreviations and acronyms

AIBA	National Agency for International Education Affairs, Liechtenstein
EEA FM	European Economic Area Financial Mechanism
eMS	Electronic Monitoring System
EU	European Union
GODC	Government Office for Development and European Cohesion Policy
HK-dir	Norwegian Directorate for Higher Education and Skills
NEET	Young people not in employment, education or training
NOR FM	Norwegian Financial Mechanism
RBM	results-based management
Regulations	Regulation on the implementation of the Norwegian Financial Mechanism 2014-2021 and Regulation on the implementation of the European Economic Area (EEA) Financial Mechanism 2014-2021

1 Introduction

1.1 Purpose of the Guide for Beneficiaries

The purpose of the *Guide for Beneficiaries* is to introduce the content and requirements of the programmes *Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation* and *Education, Scholarships, Apprenticeship and Youth Entrepreneurship* to potential applicants as well as to help them develop their project idea and project application. It also provides information on project selection, implementation, reporting and completion.

The *Guide for Beneficiaries* forms part of the documents relating to the call for proposals and consists of several thematic sections. The first Part provides information about the programme and the call for proposals. It is divided into Part 1 a which pertains to the programme *Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation* and Part 1 b which pertains to the programme *Education, Scholarships, Apprenticeship and Youth Entrepreneurship* (hereinafter: *Education programme*).

Information on project development and partnership requirements is given in the second Part of the *Guide for Beneficiaries*. Part 3 of the *Guide for Beneficiaries* provides information on the submission of applications and the evaluation of project proposals. Part 4 gives information on the eligibility of expenditure, while Part 5 describes the procedures and requirements regarding reporting. Information and communication requirements are presented in Part 6 of the *Guide for Beneficiaries*, while archiving and project completion is presented in Part 7.

Before submitting their project application, potential applicants should read the *Guide for Beneficiaries* carefully and in its entirety, with the same requirement applying also to all beneficiaries of the selected projects during project implementation. The information given in the *Guide for Beneficiaries* should be used for the preparation of the project application as well as for ensuring quality implementation of approved projects and reporting thereon.

This part of the *Guide for Beneficiaries* (Part 1.b) pertaining to the programme and the call for proposals (hereinafter document) provides information on the *Education programme*: the programme objectives, principles and programme areas as well as programme outcomes and outputs and information about the call for proposals.

The document is binding for all Project Promoters and Project Partners (hereinafter beneficiaries) submitting their project proposals under the call for proposals as well as for Pre-defined projects under the abovementioned programme.

The document is issued by Government Office of the Republic of Slovenia for Development and European Cohesion Policy (hereinafter GODC) acting as the Programme Operator of the programme *Education, Scholarships, Apprenticeship and Youth Entrepreneurship* (hereinafter Programme Operator).

If necessary, the document shall be subject to revision during project implementation which is why the beneficiaries must always use the last valid version of the document published on the website dedicated to the implementation of the Financial Mechanisms in the Republic of Slovenia, namely www.norwaygrants.si and www.eeagrants.si (hereinafter dedicated website) accessible at www.norwaygrants.si/en/calls/education.

Wherever used in this document, a pronoun in the masculine gender shall be considered as including the feminine gender in line with the principles of gender-inclusive language.

1.2 Legal bases

The *Education programme* is co-financed by the Norwegian Financial Mechanism 2014-2021 and the European Economic Area (hereinafter EEA) Financial Mechanism 2014-2021, and supported by Slovenian national co-financing, and complies with the following legal bases (the below-given list is not exhaustive):

- Decree on the Implementation of the Norwegian Financial Mechanism and the European Economic Area Financial Mechanism in the Republic of Slovenia for the period 2014-2021 (Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia, No. 160/20, dated 6. 11. 2020),
- Regulation on the Implementation of the European Economic Area (EEA) Financial Mechanism 2014-2021, published on www.norwaygrants.si/en/calls/education,
- Regulation on the Implementation of the Norwegian Financial Mechanism 2014-2021 published on www.norwaygrants.si/en/calls/education,
- Memorandum of Understanding on the Implementation of the EEA Financial Mechanism 2014-2021 between the Republic of Slovenia and Iceland, the Principality of Liechtenstein and the Kingdom of Norway with Annexes, published on www.norwaygrants.si/en/calls/education,
- Memorandum of Understanding on the Implementation of the Norwegian Financial Mechanism 2014-2021 between the Republic of Slovenia and the Kingdom of Norway with Annexes, published on www.norwaygrants.si/en/calls/education,
- Programme Agreement between the Financial Mechanism Committee, the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the National Focal Point for the financing of the Programme *Education, Scholarships, Apprenticeship and Youth Entrepreneurship*, published on www.norwaygrants.si/en/calls/education,
- applicable national and EU legislation, in particular legislation regulating public procurement, state aid, implementation of the state budget and public finances,
- guidelines adopted by the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the EEA Financial Mechanism Committee and the Slovenian national authorities.

2 About the programme *Education, Scholarships, Apprenticeship and Youth Entrepreneurship*

The *Education programme* is co-financed by the Norwegian Financial Mechanism 2014-2021, the EEA Financial Mechanism 2014-2021 (hereinafter Financial Mechanisms) and by the matching national contribution from the Republic of Slovenia.

The overall objectives of the Financial Mechanisms are to contribute to the reduction of economic and social disparities in the European Economic Area, and to strengthen bilateral relations between Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway (hereinafter Donor States) and the Beneficiary State, i.e. the Republic of Slovenia.

The objective of the programme *Education* is to improve human capital and knowledge base. The programme aims at strengthening human capital, supporting the development of 21st century skills, improving the relevance of education and training to the real environment, and

encouraging the development of measures supporting inclusion in life and work for the specific groups that are excluded or have limited access to support systems. Furthermore, the programme encourages the development of measures facilitating the reconciliation between work and family life at local level, and of measures strengthening the capacity of institutions for good governance, cross-sectoral and inter-ministerial cooperation.

The Programme focuses on the following three programme areas Education, Scholarships, Apprenticeship and Youth Entrepreneurship,

- Work-life Balance, and
- Good Governance, Accountable Institutions, Transparency.

The Norwegian Directorate for Higher Education and Skills (HK-dir) and the National Agency for International Education Affairs (AIBA) from Liechtenstein participate in the programme as Donor Programme Partners.

2.1 Eligible area

As a rule, the eligible area for the implementation of project activities shall be the territory of the Republic of Slovenia and the territory of the Kingdom of Norway. In general, the costs of any project activity implemented outside the abovementioned eligible area shall be deemed ineligible.

Exceptionally and in duly justified cases, a project activity may be implemented outside eligible area, but only upon prior approval by GODC as the Programme Operator. The exception must be duly justified in the project application. If a project application involving such an exception gets approval, then the implementation of a project activity outside the eligible area shall be automatically approved as well.

Regardless of where the project activities are implemented, their outcomes and outputs must always manifest in the Republic of Slovenia. Study visits are typical examples of a project activity implemented outside the territory of the Republic of Slovenia; the output of study visits are improved skills of Slovene experts.

2.2 Management structure

Implementation of the Financial Mechanisms in the Republic of Slovenia and of the *Education programme* shall involve numerous national and international bodies.

National Focal Point

GODC acts as the National Focal Point. The National Focal Point represents the Republic of Slovenia in its relations with the Donor States regarding the implementation of Financial Mechanisms in the Republic of Slovenia. The National Focal Point monitors the progress and quality of programme implementation and ensures that the programmes contribute to achieving the objectives of the Financial Mechanisms.

Programme Operator

GODC also acts as the Programme Operator for the programme *Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation* and the programme *Education, Scholarships, Apprenticeship and Youth*

Entrepreneurship. The Programme Operator is responsible for the preparation and implementation of both programmes in accordance with Article 1.3 of the Regulations.

Audit Authority

The Budget Supervision Office of the Republic of Slovenia, a body within the Ministry of Finance, acts as the Audit Authority. The Audit Authority ensures that audits are carried out to verify effective implementation of the Financial Mechanisms in the Republic of Slovenia (effective functioning of the system at the national level and effective functioning of the programmes).

Certifying Authority

The Ministry of Finance of the Republic of Slovenia acts as the Certifying Authority. The Certifying Authority is responsible for submitting to the Donor States certified financial reports, receiving payments made by the Donor States under Financial Mechanisms for programmes and performing other tasks.

Irregularities Authority

The Ministry of Finance of the Republic of Slovenia acts as the Irregularities Authority. Irregularities Authority is responsible for reporting to the Donor States any irregularities and measures taken in order to prevent, detect, investigate and eliminate such irregularities. Irregularities Authority also performs other tasks.

Control Unit

GODC acts as the Control Unit. The Control Unit checks the expenditure incurred in the framework of the implementation of individual programmes and projects.

Selection Committee

The Selection Committee is responsible for the evaluation of the call for proposals procedure and for the selection of projects submitted under the call for proposals. The Selection Committee consists of the representatives from Slovenia (GODC and line ministries) and representatives of Donor Programme partners as voting members and observers coming from the Financial Mechanism Office and the National Focal Point.

Donor Programme Partners

Donor States designated Donor Programme Partners that advise on the preparation of the programme and the call for proposals and are included in the selection of projects which are eligible for programme funding, and advise on the implementation of the programme and/or participate in the implementation of the programme.

The Donor Programme Partners participating in the programme *Education*, are as follows:

- Norwegian Directorate for Higher Education and Skills (HK-dir), and
- National Agency for International Education Affairs (AIBA), Liechtenstein.

Cooperation Committee

The Cooperation Committee for the programme *Education* provides advice on the preparation and implementation of the programme in the Republic of Slovenia.

The Programme Operator establishes a Cooperation Committee consisting of representatives from the Programme Operator and representatives from the Donor States. Representatives from the ministries responsible for the areas addressed by the programme *Education*, and representatives from the National Focal point may also be invited to participate as observers.

Other structures involved in Financial Mechanisms implementation

Other Donor State institutions are also involved in the implementation of the Financial Mechanisms and the programme *Education* in the Republic of Slovenia.

Financial Mechanism Office (Brussels): the office assisting the Donor States in managing the Financial Mechanisms. The Financial Mechanism Office is responsible for the day-to-day implementation of the Financial Mechanisms and serves as a contact point between the Donor States and the Beneficiary States.

Donor States may, without prejudice to audits carried out by the Audit Authority, organise on-the-spot audits and verifications of programmes and projects in order to verify the effectiveness of the Beneficiary State management and control systems. Audits are performed by organisations authorised by Donor States.

2.3 Electronic monitoring system (eMS)

For the programme *Education* the eMS monitoring system shall be used to monitor project implementation, including the process of project application, reporting on project implementation and the expenditure incurred. eMS is a system with a communication portal that enables the submission of an application, its review and approval, as well as project management, monitoring and reporting. The system enables collecting all information on the submitted applications and approved projects, their evaluation, implementation and achievements, as well as project changes and completion.

2.4 Programme objective, areas, outcomes and outputs

As mentioned earlier in section 2, the objective of the programme *Education, Scholarships, Apprenticeship and Youth Entrepreneurship* is to improve human capital and knowledge base. This flagship objective is achieved through the implementation of projects in the three programme areas, through the achievement of the programme outcomes and the corresponding programme outputs. Each programme outcome further contains a set of programme outputs as well as outcome indicators and output indicators. The indicators identified to check the progress of the programme are monitored at both programme and project level.

The Programme focuses on the following three programme areas:

- Education, Scholarships, Apprenticeship and Youth Entrepreneurship,
- Work-life Balance, and
- Good Governance, Accountable Institutions, Transparency.

The call for proposals is open only to project proposals that fall under THE FIRST TWO PROGRAMME AREAS, i.e. **Education, Scholarships, Apprenticeship and Youth Entrepreneurship** and **Work-life Balance**. Therefore, this document provides a detailed description only of these two programme areas and of the corresponding programme outcomes and outputs.

The programme *Education* pursues a clear objective, and a set of clearly defined outcomes and outputs in each programme area. The projects contribute to the successful achievement of the programme objective, outcomes and outputs.

Programme area: area eligible for financial support from the Donor States that is defined jointly by the Donor States and the respective Beneficiary State in order to tailor the support to the state on the basis of its needs, priorities and capacity. The Donor States defined 23 programme areas, each of them pursuing and contributing to a particular objective. The programme *Education* covers three programme areas and contributes to the flagship objective of improving human capital and knowledge base.

Impact: the long-term effects or changes of an intervention on society or the environment.

Outcome: the (short and medium-term) effects of an intervention's outputs on the intermediaries or end beneficiaries.

Output: the products, capital goods and services delivered by an intervention (project or programme) to the target group. Outputs are easy to attribute directly to the resources used and the activities performed.

Table 1: Relation between programme areas, programme outcomes and programme outputs¹

PROGRAMME AREA	OUTCOME	OUTPUT
EDUCATION, SCHOLARSHIPS, APPRENTICESHIP AND YOUTH ENTREPRENEURSHIP	I.1: Improved institutional cooperation at all levels of education (formal and informal)	I.1.1: New teaching and learning practices for work and life developed AND I.1.2: Knowledge and good practices shared on advancing skills and competencies in education
	I.2: Education and social environment to support disadvantaged groups improved	I.2.1: Support services for the NEETs (young people not in employment, education or training) established OR I.2.2: Support to youth provided OR I.2.3: Support environment for precarious workers provided
WORK-LIFE BALANCE	I.3: Improved work-life balance	I.3.1: Local systems that support work-life balance established OR I.3.2: Organisational culture of work-life balance and gender equality generated

¹ Table 1 shows the specific part of the programme with the programme areas that are relevant for the projects selected under the Call for Proposals.

Additional information on how to develop project intervention logic and establish links between the project and the programme is given in Part 2 of the *Guide for Beneficiaries*.

3 Subject of the Call for Proposals and selection of projects

From the date of publication of the Call for proposals in the Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia, the Call for proposals and its Application Pack shall be available on the following websites: www.eeagrants.si in www.norwaygrants.si, accessible at www.norwaygrants.si/en/calls/education.

The Application Pack consists of:

- Guide for Beneficiaries
- template of the Declaration by the Project Promoter
- template of the Declaration by the Project Partner (in Slovene and English language);
- template of the Declaration on the consultants involved in the preparation of the project application;
- sample of the Project Contract;
- sample of the Partnership Agreement (in Slovene or English language).

The Programme Operator invites Project Partners from the Republic of Slovenia and the Kingdom of Norway, to submit applications in the frame of this Call for Proposals.

3.1 Subject of the Call for Proposals

The aim of this Call for Proposals is to provide funding to selected project proposals under the programme *Education*. The selected project proposals shall be supported by the Norwegian Financial Mechanism 2014-2021 and shall receive national co-financing (hereinafter grant). The projects shall pursue the overall objectives of the Norwegian Financial Mechanism 2014-2021 (hereafter: Norway Grants) as follows:

- contribute to the reduction of economic and social disparities in the European Economic Area, and
- strengthen bilateral relations between the Kingdom of Norway (hereafter: Norway) and the Republic of Slovenia.

Funding under this call for proposals shall be available for the projects selected in the relevant programme areas to support them in achieving the outcomes and outputs identified in an individual programme area as follows:

a) Programme area: **EDUCATION, SCHOLARSHIPS, APPRENTICESHIP AND YOUTH ENTREPRENEURSHIP**

- **Outcome I.1: Improved institutional cooperation at all levels of education (formal and informal)**
 - Output I.1.1: New teaching and learning practices for work and life developed
 - Output I.1.2: Knowledge and good practices shared on advancing skills and competencies in education
- **Outcome I.2: Education and social environment to support disadvantaged groups improved**