



CALL FOR PROPOSALS

MEDIA REPORTING ON TRAFFICKING IN HUMAN BEINGS IN NORTH MACEDONIA

BH4682/G/2021/1

Project	EU/CoE Horizontal Facility II Preventing and Combating Trafficking in Human Beings in North Macedonia (HF29)
Awarding entity	COUNCIL OF EUROPE Directorate of Human Dignity, Equality and Governance Directorate General of Democracy
Funding	Total of 12,000 euros, max. 2,000 euros per project proposal
Duration	Projects shall be implemented by 15 October 2021. Reporting requirements shall be completed by 01 November 2021.
Estimated starting date	15 June 2021
Issuance date	11 May 2021
Deadline for applications	25 May 2021

TABLE OF CONTENTS

I. INTRODUCTION	4
II. BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE PROJECT	4
III. BUDGET AVAILABLE	4
IV. REQUIREMENTS	5
1. General objective	5
2. Means of action	5
3. Implementation period	5
4. Target stakeholders	5
5. Budgetary requirements	6
6. Further to the general objective, preference will be given to:	6
7. The following types of action will not be considered:	6
8. Funding conditions:.....	6
9. Reporting requirements:.....	6
V. HOW TO APPLY?.....	7
1. Documents to be submitted:.....	7
2. Questions.....	8
3. Deadline for submission.....	8
4. Change, alteration and modification of the application file.....	8
VI. EVALUATION AND SELECTION PROCEDURE	8
1. Exclusion criteria:	8
2. Eligibility criteria:	9
3. Award criteria	10
VII. NOTIFICATION OF THE DECISION AND SIGNATURE OF GRANT AGREEMENTS.....	10
VIII.INDICATIVE TIMETABLE	10
APPENDICES:	
- Appendix I - Application Form	
- Appendix II - Provisional budget (Template)	
- Appendix III - Template Grant Agreement (for information only)	

HOW TO APPLY?

- Complete and sign the **Application Form** (See **Appendix I**)
- Attach a provisional budget (using the template reproduced in **Appendix II**)
- Attach the other supporting documents:
 - Updated CV (s) of the journalist(s) and /or the media team member(s).
 - Registration certificate, only for applications submitted by media.
 - Authorisation of the legal representative to act on behalf of the applicant, only for applications submitted by media.
 - Bank statement confirming the existence of the bank account in the name of the applicant or the media.
 - Written sample work or a link to an excerpt from an audio or a video production or other piece of creative work.
 - Any additional information regarding implemented projects relevant to the call.
- Send these documents in electronic form (Word .and/or PDF) to the following e-mail address: <HF.THB.skopje@coe.int>. Emails should contain the following reference in subject: < Micro grants for Journalists >.
- Applications must be **received not later than 25 May 2021 (at 23.59 CET)**.

I. INTRODUCTION

This call for proposals is launched within the programmatic framework Horizontal Facility for the Western Balkans and Turkey II. The Action on Preventing and Combating Human Trafficking in North Macedonia (HF29) will fund 6 (six) project proposals of media, aimed to improve the public understanding of the phenomenon of trafficking in human beings. The financial support will take the form of micro-grants aimed to support and strengthen journalistic research, reporting and dissemination of investigative media stories on trafficking in human beings in North Macedonia.

Media (television, radio, print media, online media) play an important role in raising awareness of problems and informing the public. However, media articles on trafficking in human beings are rarely published and are mostly based on police bulletins. To contribute to the efforts of preventing and combating trafficking in human beings in North Macedonia, media are invited to make the voices of victims heard and report in a fact-based and gender-balanced manner on the situation, risks and forms of trafficking in human beings in North Macedonia.

The HF29 has already implemented two trainings for journalists on trafficking in human beings, has produced and distributed a Manual on trafficking in human beings and media reporting in Macedonian and Albanian language and has awarded 7 micro grants to journalists and media.

Project proposals shall aim to produce an added value to the Council of Europe efforts in this domain.

II. BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE PROJECT

The programmatic framework Horizontal Facility for the Western Balkans and Turkey II, co-funded by the European Union and the Council of Europe, and implemented by the Council of Europe, aims at assisting beneficiaries in South-East Europe to comply with relevant Council of Europe standards and European Union acquis in the framework of the enlargement process.

The Action on Preventing and Combating Human Trafficking in North Macedonia (HF29) aims to assist the beneficiary institutions to follow up on the recommendations of the Council of Europe Group of Experts on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings (GRETA) provided in the second country-evaluation report (GRETA (2017)39). The HF29 Action focuses on the following areas of intervention: *i*) improving anti-trafficking responses and victim protection measures mainly through capacity building and awareness raising of key stakeholders, including journalists; *ii*) improved detection and identification of and assistance to victims of human trafficking for the purpose of labour exploitation; *iii*) improved detection and identification of and assistance to child victims of human trafficking; and *iv*) improved access to compensation for victims of trafficking.

Project partners include National Commission for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings and Illegal Migration, the Ministry of Interior, the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, the State Labour Inspectorate, the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of Health, the Bureau for Development of Education as well as civil society organisations and trade unions.

III. BUDGET AVAILABLE

The indicative available budget under this call for proposals is 12,000 Euros (twelve thousand Euros). 6 (six) project proposals on investigative journalism in the area of trafficking in human beings in North Macedonia,

submitted by journalists of the television, radio, print media, online media, will receive a micro-grant not exceeding 2,000 Euros (two thousand Euros) each.

The Council of Europe reserves the right not to award all available funds, and/or to redistribute the available funds in a different manner depending on the project proposals received and on the outcome of the call for proposals.

IV. REQUIREMENTS

1. General objective

The micro-grants are aimed to support and strengthen journalistic research, reporting and dissemination of investigation into trafficking in human beings in North Macedonia from the media perspective. The micro-grants will fund project proposals aimed to improve public understanding of the phenomenon on trafficking in human beings through a fact-based, gender-balanced and victim-oriented journalistic reporting, on the situation, risks and forms of trafficking in human beings in North Macedonia.

2. Means of action

The reporting material may be produced in the form of written article(s), video or audio reportage(s). Any other mean may be considered, if compatible with the values of the Council of Europe.

The reporting material may be based on communication with victim(s) and/or their legal representatives, on communication with professionals (police, prosecutors, judges) on court proceedings and judgments, on communication with authorities (ministries, inspectorates, bodies) and professionals (national referral mechanism, civil society organisations).

The reporting material may address issues related to either internal or cross-border trafficking in human beings. Ethical reporting and protection of privacy of trafficking victims are required.

The reporting material/the story on human trafficking shall be produced in English or Macedonian or Albanian language.

Each proposal shall provide a theme of the project, a methodology (steps that will be taken to investigate, including planned sources of information), a timeline and a dissemination plan of the information.

3. Implementation period

The implementation period of the projects shall start on 15 June 2021 (see indicative timetable under VIII. below) and shall not extend beyond 15 October 2021.

Reporting requirements for the use made of the micro-grants shall be completed by 1 November 2021 **at the latest**.

Projects completed prior to the date of submission of the applications will be automatically excluded. As regard projects started prior to the date of submission of the applications, or prior to the date of signature of the grant agreement, only those costs incurred after the date of submission of the grant application could be eligible (provided the agreement concerned so provides).

4. Target stakeholders

Projects should target in particular the following key stakeholders:

- general public,
- persons from disadvantaged communities (e.g., Roma), persons from vulnerable groups such as children,
- presumed or identified victims,
- professionals such as police officers, prosecutors, judges,
- authorities such as representatives of ministries, inspectorates, other governmental bodies/agencies
- civil society organisations, first responders to trafficking in human beings.

The above list is not exhaustive and projects may propose to target other relevant stakeholders, while keeping in mind the general objective.

5. Budgetary requirements

Project proposals shall be accompanied by a draft budget (See **Template Budget, in Appendix II**) amounting to a maximum of 2, 000 Euros (two thousand Euros). The estimated budget must be consistent, accurate, clear, complete and cost-effective, in the light of the activities proposed.

Each Grantee shall also be required to contribute to the project either by way of its own resources or by contribution from third parties. Co-financing may take the form of financial or human resources, in-kind contributions or income generated by the action or project.

In-kind contribution may encompass, but are not limited to the costs for telephone communication, internet, travel, office supplies, equipment needed for the project.

6. Further to the general objective, preference will be given to:

- Projects/actions proposed by journalists who completed one of the CoE trainings on trafficking in human beings and media reporting, but have not received a grant from HF 29 action.
- Projects/actions that address the gender dimension of trafficking in human beings.

7. The following types of action will not be considered:

- Projects/actions providing financial support to third parties (re-granting schemes);
- Projects/actions concerning only or mainly individual scholarships for studies or training courses;
- Projects/actions supporting political parties.

8. Funding conditions:

The funds for each grant should in principle be distributed as follows:

- 80 % will be paid to the Grantee or the Lead Grantee in case of a consortium when the Grant Agreement between the Parties is signed;
- the balance will be paid to the Grantee or the Lead Grantee in case of a consortium based on actual expenditures incurred, and after the presentation and acceptance by the Council of Europe of the final narrative and financial reports for the Grant implementation.

9. Reporting requirements:

- **narrative reporting** requires a full narrative report on the use made of the grant and a copy of the register of the persons present during each of the activities, including names and signatures of participants;
- **financial reporting** requires in particular a statement in the currency in which the Grant Agreement will be concluded (Euros or local currency), in English, stating the payments made for the implementation of the activities, certified by the responsible financial officer of the Grantees, accompanied by “appropriate original supporting documents” (see below). The Council of Europe reserves the right to ask for summary translations of invoices into English. If for legal reasons the original documents must be retained by the Grantees, certified copies must be submitted with the financial statement.

“Appropriate original supporting documents” refers to signed contracts, invoices and acceptances of work (for all transactions), payment authorisation for all transactions should also be provided in case the Grantees use such practice, and reliable evidence of payment (authorised payment order and bank statement).

As regards round tables / conferences, presenting “appropriate original supporting documents” requires presentation of a programme indicating the title, dates, venue, and agenda of the event; the names of persons facilitating the event, a signed list of participants, the contracts with the owner of venue of the event (e.g. hotel) for the rent of premises, food and beverages of participants, invoices from the owner of the venue of the event for the above services, and a report on the results of the event (see narrative reporting above).

As regards consultancy services, presenting “appropriate original supporting documents” requires presentation of evidence of the outputs produced, contracts with experts and consultants containing a specific description of services to be carried out, invoices produced after the works have been performed and delivered (the specialities of the consultants shall correspond to the nature of activities for which they are contracted).

As regards travel fees / lodging of experts and participants, presenting “appropriate original supporting documents” requires presentation, where relevant, of contracts with a travel agency for travel fees and lodging, invoices of the travel agency indicating destinations, dates, ticket costs, and names of the travelling persons, a programme of the event indicating the names of the experts and signed lists of participants.

The above description is not comprehensive. Any doubt regarding the interpretation of the notion of “appropriate original supporting documents” should lead the Grantee or the Lead Grantee in case of a consortium to consult the Council of Europe.

V. HOW TO APPLY?

1. Documents to be submitted:

Each application shall contain:

- the completed and signed **Application Form** (See **Appendix I**);
- a provisional budget (using the template reproduced in **Appendix II**);
- the other supporting documents:
 - Updated CV (s) of the journalist(s) and /or the media team member(s).
 - Registration certificate, only for applications submitted by media.

- Authorisation of the legal representative to act on behalf of the applicant, only for applications submitted by media.
- Bank statement confirming the existence of the bank account in the name of the applicant or the media.
- Written sample work or a link to an excerpt from an audio or a video production or other piece of creative work.
- Any additional information regarding implemented projects relevant to the call.

Applications that are incomplete will not be considered.

2. Questions

General information can be found on the website of the Council of Europe: <https://pjp-eu.coe.int/en/web/horizontal-facility/news> and <https://www.coe.int/en/web/skopje>.

Other questions regarding this specific call for proposals must be sent **at the latest one week before the deadline for the submission of proposals**, in English language, and shall be exclusively sent to the following address: HF.THB.skopje@coe.int with the following reference in subject: Question about Micro-grants for Journalists.

3. Deadline for submission

The application form, **completed and signed**, together with the supporting documents, must be submitted in electronic form (Word and/or PDF) to the following e-mail address: HF.THB.skopje@coe.int Emails should contain the following reference in subject: **Micro grants for Journalists**.

Applications must be received **not later than 25 May 2021 (at 23.59 CET)**. Applications received after the above-mentioned date will not be considered.

4. Change, alteration and modification of the application file

Any change in the format, or any alteration or modification of the original application file, will cause the immediate rejection of the application concerned.

VI. EVALUATION AND SELECTION PROCEDURE

The projects presented will be assessed by an Evaluation Committee composed of staff members of the Council of Europe.

The procedure shall be based on the underlying principles of grant award procedures, which are transparency, non-retroactivity, non-cumulative awards, not-for-profit, co-financing and non-discrimination, in accordance with [Rule 1374 of 16 December 2015 on the grant award procedures of the Council of Europe](#).

The applicants, and their projects, shall fulfil all of the following criteria:

1. Exclusion criteria:

Applicants shall be excluded from the grant award procedure where they or, in the case of legal persons, their owner(s) or executive officer(s):

- a. have been sentenced by final judgment on one or more of the following charges: participation in a criminal organisation, corruption, fraud, money laundering, terrorist financing, terrorist offences or offences linked to terrorist activities, child labour or trafficking in human beings;
- b. are in a situation of bankruptcy, liquidation, termination of activity, insolvency or arrangement with creditors or any like situation arising from a procedure of the same kind, or are subject to a procedure of the same kind;
- c. have received a judgement with res judicata force, finding an offence that affects their professional integrity or constitutes a serious professional misconduct;
- d. do not comply with their obligations as regards payment of social security contributions, taxes and dues, according to the statutory provisions of the country where they are established;
- e. are or if their owner(s) or executive officer(s), in the case of legal persons, are included in the lists of persons or entities subject to restrictive measures applied by the European Union (available at www.sanctionsmap.eu).

By signing the Application Form, applicants shall declare on their honour that they are not in any of the above-mentioned situations (See **Appendix I, Item 12**).

The Council of Europe reserves the right to ask applicants at a later stage to supply the following supporting documents:

- for the items set out in paragraphs a), b) and c), an extract from the record of convictions or failing that an equivalent document issued by the competent judicial or administrative authority of the country where the applicant is established, indicating that these requirements are met;
 - for the items set out in paragraph d), a certificate issued by the competent authority of the country of establishment;
1. for the items set out in paragraph e);
 1. for natural persons, a scanned copy of a valid photographic proof of identity (e.g. passport)
 2. for legal persons, an extract from the companies register or other official document proving ownership and control of the applicant.

2. Eligibility criteria:

In order to be eligible for a micro grant, an applicant must:

- be legally constituted as television, radio, print or online media in North Macedonia, for applications submitted by media only;
- be entitled to carry out journalism/media activities described in its project proposal;
- have been active for at least two years in the field of journalism;

- have sufficient financial capacity (stable and sufficient sources of funding) to maintain its activity throughout the period for which the grant is awarded and to participate by way of its own resources (including human resources or in-kind contributions);
- have sufficient operational and professional capacity, including staff, to carry out activities described in its project proposal;
- have a bank account.

Multiple applications are not allowed and shall lead to the exclusion of all applications concerned.

3. Award criteria

Applications will be assessed against the following criteria:

- the relevance and added value of the project with regard to the objective of the call (30%)
- the extent to which the action meets the requirements of the call (30%);
- the quality, accuracy, clarity, completeness and cost-effectiveness of the application and the estimated budget (20%);
- the relevance of the experience of the applicants and staff (20%).

VII. NOTIFICATION OF THE DECISION AND SIGNATURE OF GRANT AGREEMENTS

On completion of the selection process, all applicants will be notified in writing of the final decision concerning their respective applications as well as on the next steps to be undertaken.

The selected Grantees will be invited to sign a Grant Agreement (See Appendix III, for information only), formalising their legal commitments. **Potential applicants are strongly advised to read the draft contract, in particular its requirements in terms of payment and reporting.**

VIII. INDICATIVE TIMETABLE

Phases	Indicative timing
Publication of the call	11 May 2021
Deadline for submitting applications	25 May 2021
Information to applicants on the results of the award procedure	14 June 2021
Signature of the grant agreements	15 June 2021
Implementation period	15 June – 15 October 2021

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