



CALL FOR PROPOSALS

GRANTS FOR NATIONAL ORGANISATIONS TO DEVELOP AND IMPLEMENT THE COMMUNICATION CAMPAIGN AT NATIONAL LEVEL IN BULGARIA, GREECE AND ROMANIA

EQUIROM/2023/GRANTS/01

Project	Joint EU/CoE Programme “Equality and Freedom from discrimination for Roma“ (hereandafter EQUIROM)
Awarding entity	COUNCIL OF EUROPE Directorate General of Democracy and Human Dignity, Anti-Discrimination Directorate, Roma and Travellers Team
Funding	Joint EU/CoE Programme “Equality and Freedom from discrimination for Roma“ EQUIROM
Duration	Projects must be implemented by 31 October 2024. Reporting requirements shall be completed by 15 November 2024.
Estimated starting date	01 October 2023
Issuance date	31 July 2023
Deadline for applications	10 September 2023

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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** in English (See **Appendix I**)
- Attach a provisional budget in Excel (using the template reproduced in **Appendix II**)
- Attach the other supporting documents:
 - Document certifying the registration of the NGO/civil society organisation/entity with a courtesy translation in English ;
 - Bank /financial statements authorised by a financial officer of the NGO/civil society organisation /entity ;
 - CVs of the proposed coordinators and experts, in English, and clearly indicating the links with the organisation;
 - Contact details of two referees;
- Send these documents in electronic format (Word and/or PDF and a courtesy Excel spreadsheet for the budget) to the following e-mail address: equirom@coe.int. Emails should contain the following reference in subject: EQUIROM Grants – Call for Proposals [COUNTRY].

I. INTRODUCTION

This call for proposals is launched within the framework of the Council of Europe/European Commission EQUIROM Programme: “Equality and Freedom from Discrimination for Roma”. It aims to co-fund projects in three (3) implementation countries (one per country: Bulgaria, Greece, Romania) contributing to the implementation of the EQUIROM Programme (see Section II below), with the ultimate goal of developing and implementing the communication campaign at national level of each of the aforementioned three countries.

More information on the EQUIROM Programme is available at www.coe.int/equirom

Project proposals shall aim to produce an added value to the Council of Europe’s efforts in this domain, as set out further in Section IV below.

II. BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE PROGRAMME

The European Union/Council of Europe EQUIROM Programme aims to fight and prevent antigypsyism and discrimination and promote equality for Roma people, in accordance with the EU Roma Strategic Framework and [Council of Europe Strategic Action Plan for Roma and Travellers Inclusion 2020-2025](#). The Joint Programme is being implemented during a period of 24 months in Bulgaria, Greece, Italy and Romania, the countries covered by the Joint Programmes [JUSTROM, JUSTROM2 and JUSTROM3 \(2014-2022\)](#), where several tools and mechanisms have been already put in place during their implementation.

The Programme pursues the following objectives:

- Combatting stereotypes in the media, raising awareness about the history and culture of Roma and other ethnic minorities including Roma Holocaust and contributing to building positive narratives about Roma by journalists and other media representatives;
- Fostering closer co-operation and mutual understanding between Roma and pro-Roma civil societies, Roma communities and individuals, journalists and other media representatives;
- Empowering Roma people, in particular Roma women and young people, to become front-runners in the fight against antigypsyism and gender stereotypes.

The target groups of the Programme are the media, journalists, students of journalism, Roma communities and the general public in Bulgaria, Greece, and Romania, as well as other countries.

The Programme partners include the European Union, other international organisations, the European Platform of Regulatory Authorities, governmental and non-governmental institutions, media organisations, Roma and pro-Roma civil society organisations.

Implementing the communication campaign can only be effective if it is context-appropriate. Thus, a preliminary study on the *representation and portrayal of Roma in broadcasting* and country-based research studies on how Roma are portrayed by the broadcasting media are done in each country, where EQUIROM is being implemented. This draft document (<http://bitly.ws/LIAm>) has been made available to ease the designing of the communication campaign and its key messages and to further support the monitoring of the national adaptations of the campaign.

Through this Call, as part of the implementation of the EQUIROM Programme, the Council of Europe aims to establish partnerships with Roma and pro-Roma civil society organisations for the development and implementation of a broad communication campaign to fight antigypsyism and anti-Roma discrimination.

Potential applicants should be prominent Roma NGOs or other civil society organisations and qualified entities with a very good track record in working with journalists and/or media representatives, have some expertise with developing communication campaigns, preferably on Roma-related topics like inclusion, community empowerment processes, working with vulnerable groups, public authorities at local and central level, and having adequately experienced and knowledgeable staff/experts within its structures.

The Organisations selected through this Call will be invited to participate in 2 workshops with different stakeholders of the Programme, relevant for the implementation and dissemination of the public campaign. The costs related to the participation of one coordinator/representative from each Organisation in these workshops will be borne by the Council of Europe.

III. BUDGET AVAILABLE

The overall indicative available budget under this Call for proposals is € 90,000 (ninety thousand Euros). The Council of Europe intends to award three grants (one per beneficiary country) having maximum amounts as follows:

Country	Maximum award
Bulgaria	€ 30 000
Greece	€ 30 000
Romania	€ 30 000

However, applicants may submit budgets for a lower amount.

Subject to availability of funds and extension of the Programme’s initial duration, 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 grants will fund proposals designed to foster the positive image of Roma in the media through implementing a broad communication campaign¹ at the national and local level in the countries of the Call.

Applicants should tailor their project proposals to target the countries of their respective registrations, ensuring that all campaign-related activities are included.

The projects should aim to foster active participation from partner organisations, Roma individuals and representatives of Roma communities at all stages, ultimately empowering them to become the forefront leaders of the campaign.

A: Objectives of the grants:

- fight antigypsyism and anti-Roma discrimination;
- build positive narratives about Roma;
- raise awareness about Roma history and culture, as well as the Roma Holocaust, including on the matters of gender equality and diversity dimension;
- raise awareness on the needs and priorities regarding the improvement of living conditions of the Roma communities.

¹ including its design and adaptation to the national context.

2. Means of action

The Grantee is required to prepare, design and implement *a communication campaign and its awareness-raising related activities*, in line with the Programme objectives and target groups (as stated under II) and grant objectives (see IV.1), in close coordination with the EQUIROM Secretariat.

The proposal needs to analyse instances of antigypsyism and anti-Roma discrimination and construct human rights-based narratives and messages, to create online campaign content, supported by activists and graphic designers. Tools developed by the [No Hate Speech Movement](#), such as [Bookmarks](#) and [We CAN manuals](#) should be explored and could be used in the proposed design of the campaign.

The submitted projects should include an advocacy and communication plan for the campaign. Modalities of ensuring visibility at national and local level should be specified.

The campaign should ensure participation of different organisations, Roma and pro-Roma civil society organisations, Roma women activists and Roma youth activists, Roma individuals and representatives of Roma communities, engaging them in activities and empowering them for further dissemination of outcomes and multiplication of results. This participation should further help the Grantee identify key issues and sub-topics to be addressed nationally and locally. The stakeholders / participants involved should have diverse backgrounds and educational levels. In this respect, the use of diverse approaches and methods is important.

Indicatively, a minimum 4000 people are expected to be targeted by the campaign (including videoclip viewers, online materials readers, websites visitors, campaign materials recipients, podcasts viewers etc.)

3. Implementation period

The implementation period of the project should start on 1 October 2023 (see indicative timetable under VIII. below) and should not extend beyond 31 October 2024.

Reporting requirements shall be completed by 15 November 2024 **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 local and national media representatives, journalists, Roma and pro-Roma civil society organisations, and Roma communities in Bulgaria, Greece and Romania.

5. Budgetary requirements

Project proposals shall be accompanied by a draft budget (See **Template Budget, in Appendix II**) amounting to a maximum of € 30,000 (thirty thousand Euro). The estimated budget must be consistent, accurate, clear, complete and cost-effective, in 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.

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

- Projects/actions proposed by Roma or pro-Roma civil organisations with experience in organising similar projects;
- Projects/actions proposed by applicants with experience in working on Roma topics such as how Roma communities are portrayed in the media and in society, challenges Roma people face in the fields of employment, education, housing, health, etc.;
- Projects/actions proposed by applicants with expertise in working with media representatives and journalists at local and national level;
- Proven experience from involvement in similar Programmes implemented by CoE or/and by EU or other intergovernmental organisations.

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 the grant should in principle be distributed as follows:

- 40 % will be paid when the Grant Agreement between the two parties is signed;
- 40 % representing a second instalment after the submission and acceptance by the Council of Europe of the first interim financial report after six months of implementation;
- the balance of 20 % will be paid based on actual expenditure 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** (maximum 15 pages) to be submitted at the end of the implementation period 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;
 - **an interim narrative report** (after six months of implementation) to be submitted to the CoE Secretariat / EQUIROM.
- **Financial reporting** requires:
 - **an interim financial report** in Excel format and including the appropriate supporting documents for the first six months of the implementation, in compliance with the deadline as stated in the grant agreement;
 - **a final financial report** to be submitted at the end of the implementation period (by 15 November 2024).

Financial reporting requires in particular a statement in the currency in which the Grant Agreement will be concluded (Euro), in English, stating the payments made for the implementation of the activities, certified by the responsible financial officer of the Grantee, 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 Grantee, 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 Grantee uses 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 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** in English (See **Appendix I**) please also provide a copy of this document in Word format;
- a provisional budget (using the template reproduced in **Appendix II**). Please also provide a copy of the provisional budget in Excel;
- a document certifying the registration of the NGO/civil society organisation/entity with a courtesy translation in English;
- bank /financial statements authorised by a financial officer of the NGO/civil society organisation/entity;
- CVs of the proposed coordinators and experts, in English, and clearly indicating the links with the organisation;
- Contact details of two referees.

If any of the documents listed above are missing, the Council of Europe reserves the right to reject the application.

2. Questions

General information concerning the EQUIROM Programme and the work of the Council of Europe on Roma issues can be found on the following websites: www.coe.int/equirom and <http://www.coe.int/roma>.

Other questions regarding this Call for proposals must be sent, at the latest one week before the deadline of projects submission, in English, to equirom@coe.int, with the following reference in the subject line: **EQUIROM Grants – Questions**.

3. Deadline for submission

The application form, **completed and signed**, together with the supporting documents (including the provisional budget in Excel), must be submitted in electronic form (Word, Excel and/or PDF) to the following e-mail address: equirom@coe.int. Emails should contain the following reference in subject: **EQUIROM Grants – Call for Proposals [Country]**.

Applications must be received **before 10 September 2023 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 three Council of Europe staff members.

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:

- 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 an entity created to circumvent tax, social or other legal obligations (empty shell company), have ever created or are in the process of creation of such an entity;
- f. have been involved in mismanagement of the Council of Europe funds or public funds;
- 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 14**).

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),c) and f), 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;
- 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 grant, an applicant must:

- be legally constituted as a NGO/civil society organisation/entity in Bulgaria, Greece or Romania;
- be entitled to carry out activities described in its project proposal;
- have been active for at least three years in the field of Roma inclusion, Roma communities, policies and social inclusion;
- have experience in designing and/or implementing public campaigns, particularly in the area of hate speech, anti-racism, fighting antigypsyism, minority rights, anti-discrimination, equality;
- 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 Euro 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, having regard in particular to the applicant's already established contacts and relations with media representatives and journalists, Roma communities and other stakeholders which may facilitate implementation and further EQUIROM programme development as outlined previously in Part IV. Requirements, Section 4. Target Stakeholders (50%);
- the extent to which the action meets the requirements of the Call, in particular with regards to the EQUIROM Project scope (20%);
- the quality, accuracy, clarity, completeness and cost-effectiveness of the application and the estimated budget (10%);
- the relevance of the experience of the applying organisation(s) and its 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 Grantee 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	31th July 2023
Deadline for submitting applications	10 September 2023
Information to applicants on the results of the award procedure	22 September 2023
Signature of the grant agreements	29 September 2023
Implementation period	01 October 2023 – 31 October 2024

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