



CALL FOR PROPOSALS

GRANT FOR ORGANISATIONS TO SUPPORT DEMOCRATIC PARTICIPATION AND ROMA INCLUSION AT LOCAL LEVEL IN BULGARIA

RTT/2022/11

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| Project | Supporting democratic participation and promoting public trust and accountability |
| Awarding entity | COUNCIL OF EUROPE DIRECTORATE GENERAL OF DEMOCRACY AND HUMAN DIGNITY Roma and Travellers Team |
| Funding | Council of Europe |
| Duration | Projects shall be implemented by 01 November 2022. Reporting requirements shall be completed by 15 January 2023. |
| Estimated starting date | 01 November 2022 |
| Issuance date | 07 October 2022 |
| Deadline for applications | 24 October 2022 |

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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** (See **Appendix I**)
- Attach a provisional budget (using the template reproduced in **Appendix II**)
- Attach the other supporting documents:
 - Document certifying the registration of the NGO
 - Bank /financial statements authorised by a financial officer of the NGO
 - CVs of staff members who will be involved in project implementation
 - Contact details of referees
- Send these documents in electronic form (Word .and/or PDF) to the following e-mail address: romact@coe.int. Emails should contain the following reference in subject: Grants - Call for proposal Bulgaria
- Applications must be received **before 24 October 2022 (at 23:59 CET)**

I. INTRODUCTION

This call for proposals is launched in the framework of the Council of Europe Strategic Action Plan for Roma inclusion (*Priority 2- Supporting democratic participation and promoting public trust and accountability*). It aims to co-fund national projects aimed at assisting with the implementation of the ROMACT methodology in two (2) target countries (see Section II below), with the ultimate aim of building up political will and understanding of Roma inclusion at local level.

Project proposals must use the ROMACT methodology.

The ROMACT methodology handbook can be found using this link [here](#).

Council of Europe reserves the right not to take into consideration projects which do not use ROMACT methodology in their proposals.

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

II. BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE PROJECT

The purpose of the Project is to build up political will and understanding of Roma inclusion at local and regional level by building the capacity of local authorities to develop and implement plans and projects for Roma inclusion and aim to promote the integration of Roma at local level. The projects pursue the following objectives: improving local democracy, accountability, inclusiveness and responsiveness towards Roma citizens and thereby improved delivery of services.

In particular, it aims to they aim to support regional and local authorities and Roma communities focusing on:

- capacity building;
- establishment and enforcement of mechanisms and processes promoting and ensuring good governance standards and ownership by local authorities of effective integrated development efforts covering education, employment, healthcare, housing, urban development and culture;
- equipping local authorities with tools, knowledge and skills to overcome the challenges and barriers in regard to the needs of the Roma;
- improving the efficiency, effectiveness and sustainability of local policies, measures and delivery of services; and
- supporting cooperation between municipalities willing to design and implement jointly concrete integration measures and projects.

Project partners include the European Union, national governmental and non-governmental institutions and organisations dealing with Roma issues.

The Projects' activities take place in **2 (two) countries: Bulgaria and Romania, in a number of municipalities in each country.**

In each country, a National Support Team (“NST”), consists of coordinators (designated by the Council of Europe, according to the need, e.g.: National Project Officer, National Facilitators’ Coordinators) and a number of facilitators. Together with support of other consultants contracted by the Council, they will work as a team towards achieving the objectives of ROMACT methodology.

Through this Call, the Council of Europe intends to select one organisation (hereafter “support organisation”), which shall primarily, but not only, propose activities for the work of facilitators in each municipality targeted by the action, assist the NST in terms of organisational and logistical support, enabling the smooth running of all activities, in a way which adds value to the Project. Further details on the type of activities eligible for financial support is set out below under “Means of action”.

III. BUDGET AVAILABLE

The indicative available budget under this call for proposals is 25,000.00€ (twenty-five thousand Euros). However, applicants may submit budgets for a lesser amount. The Council of Europe intends to award one grant of a maximum amount of 25,000.00€ (twenty-five thousand Euros).

Subject to availability of funds and extension of the Project 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

The grants will fund projects which target the implementation of the ROMACT methodological steps, by proposing activities for facilitation at each municipality to be targeted by the action. The proposals of activities will include organisational and logistical support for every action.

The objectives and results to be obtained with the financial support provided are as follows:

Objective(s) (outcomes):

- strengthen the capacity of local authorities to perform their roles and responsibilities in an effective and efficient manner, by helping them to design and implement more inclusive plans, policies and projects and to access resources that would support the active inclusion of Roma at local level;
- support the establishment and enforcement of mechanisms and processes promoting and ensuring good governance standards and ownership by relevant stakeholders for effective integrated development efforts covering fields in which action is necessary (education, employment, healthcare, social protection, housing, urban development etc.);

Results (outputs):

- Getting local authorities committed to include their Roma population
- Getting Roma community mobilised
- Defining the needs and priorities to improve living conditions of Roma community
- Translating the priorities into action plans
- Funding, implementing and monitoring

1. Means of action

Projects may include the following activities, which the support organisation will, amongst other things, set up, organise and follow up, in cooperation with the relevant NST, based on its proposed plan of activities, in accordance with ROMACT methodology:

- Establishment of Community Action Groups (CAGs) and other relevant working groups at municipal level (e.g.: Task Force for Roma Inclusion);
- Organisation of workshops, meetings, conferences, training sessions, seminars, coaching sessions and similar events primarily at national, regional and local level;
- Organisation of working visits to Roma communities and municipalities;
- Organisation of bilateral meetings with Roma communities, local authorities and other relevant stakeholders;
- Organisation and conducting of surveys, mapping, research (for example Community needs assessment, Local authorities capacity needs assessment, baseline surveys, needs for expert support, assessment of funding opportunities etc.);

- Necessary communication in order to achieve the results and steps of ROMACT methodology, including and not limited to: appointment of contact persons from the side of municipalities, signing of letters of commitment by local authorities, establishment of working groups etc.
- Drafting and developing joint plans of action, concrete actions, priorities lists, project proposals;
- Visibility actions;
- Support daily activities of the NSTs by ensuring logistical and organisational support;
- Any other action pursuing the above Objectives and Results or related to the CAG's list of priorities.

2. Implementation period

The implementation period of the projects should start on 1 November 2022 (see indicative timetable under VIII. below) and shall not extend beyond 31 December 2022

Reporting requirements shall be completed on 15 January 2023 **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).

3. Target stakeholders

Projects should target local administrations and Roma communities in the following municipalities, depending on which NST is proposing to support: Antonovo, Dalgopol, Kameno, Perushtitsa, Petrich, Provadiya, Rakovski, Razlog, Ruzhintsi, Targovishte, Velingrad, Bratsigovo, Tsenovo, Berkovitsa, Stamboliyski.

The above list is not exhaustive, and projects may propose to target other relevant stakeholders, while keeping in mind the general objective of the Project. The Council of Europe reserves the right to add or remove municipalities from the above list and will inform the successful applicant about any such change prior to the signature of the grant agreement and, if needed, request an adjustment of the budget. Up to 20 municipalities will be selected throughout the implementation of the project

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

4. Budgetary requirements

Project proposals shall be accompanied by a draft budget (See **Template Budget, in Appendix II**) amounting to a maximum of 25,000.00€ (<twenty-five 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.

The proposed co-financing should be set out in the Application Form (Appendix I), and in the table at the top of the Draft Budget (Appendix II).

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

- Projects/actions that include a maximum number of the municipalities, including those listed under Section IV paragraph 4 above.

6. 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.

7. Funding conditions:

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

- 70 % 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.

8. 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:
 - Document certifying the registration of the NGO;
 - Bank /financial statements authorised by a financial officer of the NGO;
 - CVs of staff members who will be involved in project implementation;
 - Contact details of referees.

Applications that are incomplete will not be considered.

2. Questions

General information can be found on the website of the Council of Europe: <http://coe-romact.org>.

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 and shall be exclusively sent to the following address: romact@coe.int with the following reference in subject: Grant Bulgaria – QUESTIONS.

3. Deadline for submission

The application form, **completed and signed by all Grantees**, together with the supporting documents, must be submitted in electronic form (Word and/or PDF) to the following e-mail address: romact@coe.int. Emails should contain the following reference in subject: Grants - Call for proposal Bulgaria.

Applications must be received **before 24 October 2022 (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 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 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 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.

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), 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.

2. Eligibility criteria:

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

- be legally constituted as a non-governmental organisation in Bulgaria;
- be entitled to carry out the activities described in its project proposal;
- have been active for at least 5 years in the field of Roma inclusion, Roma communities, policies, public administration, access to funding, and social inclusion;
- have sufficient financial or human capacity to contribute by way of its own resources (including financial, 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, having regard in particular to the applicant's already established contacts and relations with Local Authorities and Roma Communities and other stakeholders¹ which may facilitate implementation and further programme development, in particular in the municipalities where ROMACT methodology is being implemented (<30>%);
- the extent to which the action meets the requirements of the call, in particular with regards to the use of the ROMACT methodology (<20>%);
- the quality, accuracy, clarity, completeness and cost-effectiveness of the application and the estimated budget (<30>%);
- the relevance of the experience of the applying organisation(s) and staff, including in particular experience working with Roma Communities and Local Authorities, and experience working with the ROMACT and ROMED methodologies (<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 | 07 October 2022 |
| Deadline for submitting applications | 24 October 2022 |
| Information to applicants on the results of the award procedure | 27 October 2022 |
| Signature of the grant agreements | 31 October 2022 |
| Implementation period | 01 November – 31 December 2022 |

¹Authorities at national and local level in the country and with local Roma communities, key national entities related to Roma issues for example National contact points for National Roma Inclusion Strategies, National Managing Authorities of European Social Funds and other EU funds.