



REPUBLIC OF SLOVENIA
MINISTRY OF ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT AND TECHNOLOGY



Programme of Slovene Scholarship Fund EEA / NORWAY GRANTS

Guide for Applicants

Version 2013

This Guide contains additional information complementing the 2013 Call for proposals for the EEA/Norway Scholarship Fund in Slovenia and aims to help applicants better prepare their application forms.

1. General Overview of the Fund

The European Economic Area (EEA) Financial Mechanism and Norwegian Financial Mechanism main aim is to reduce social and economic disparities and strengthen bilateral relations with 15 Central and South European countries¹, including Slovenia. Among the main priority areas, financed by the Mechanisms and Slovenian national contribution, is also the field of education.

Therefore, the EEA/Norway Grants Scholarship Fund SLOVENIA intends to increase institutional cooperation between donor and Project Promoter states by supporting the educational institutions to establish inter-institutional agreements and based on that increase inter institutional cooperation in the form of student and staff mobility, study visits, exchange of experts or further networking.

Mobility as such for the individuals involved can improve their academic and professional knowledge and skills and therefore lead to better economic potential of an individual. This has been verified in a number of studies on Erasmus and Leonardo da Vinci mobility activities. It is as well established that mobility as an activity by itself improves social skills and basic competencies of an individual therefore it can improve individual's social potential. With improved social and economic potential of young people and academics the economic and social disparities can be reduced.

The objective of the Programme area is enhanced human capital and knowledge base in Slovenia. EEA/Norway Grants Scholarship Fund SLOVENIA supports activities where participants will directly enhance their own knowledge and skills either academically or professionally and therefore enhance the human capital and knowledge base in Slovenia. We believe the individuals spending a period of time in another country not only gain in knowledge but also gain a lot in social skills and competencies (risen self-awareness, self-confidence, language knowledge, intercultural and communicational skills, team work, work place experience, change of environment etc.) which by itself enhances human capital of the country.

1.1 Legal basis

The Programme »Slovene Scholarship Fund – SI04« is implemented on the basis of the following legal acts:

- Memorandum of Understanding on the Implementation of the EEA Financial Mechanism 2009 - 2014 between the Republic of Iceland, the Principality of Liechtenstein, the Kingdom of Norway and the Republic of Slovenia from 21 May 2011,
- Memorandum of Understanding on the Implementation of the Norwegian Financial Mechanism 2009 - 2014 between the Kingdom of Norway and the Republic of Slovenia from 10 May 2011,
- Regulation on the Implementation of the EEA Financial Mechanism 2009 – 2014 (hereinafter "Regulation")
- Regulation on the Implementation of the Norwegian Financial Mechanism 2009 – 2011 (hereinafter "Regulation NFM")
- Programme Agreement between The Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and The Ministry of Economic Development and Technology, representing Slovenia, for the financing of the Programme "EEA and Norwegian Scholarship Fund",
- Programme Agreement between The Financial Mechanism Committee established by Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway and The Ministry of Economic Development and Technology, representing Slovenia, for the financing of the Programme "EEA and Norwegian Scholarship Fund",

¹ The following 15 countries take part in the EEA and Norway Grants: Portugal, Spain, Malta, Greece, Hungary, Cyprus, Bulgaria, Romania, Slovakia, Check Republic, Poland, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia and Slovenia.

- Programme Agreement on the Implementation of the Programme »Slovene Scholarship Fund – SI04« between Centre of the Republic of Slovenia for Mobility and European Educational and Training Programmes and Ministry of Economic Development and Technology,
- the Decision of the Government of the Republic of Slovenia of 29 September 2011 and Article 8 of the Decision on Establishment of the Public Institution Centre of the Republic of Slovenia for Mobility and European Educational and Training Programmes designated the Centre of the Republic of Slovenia for Mobility and European Educational and Training Programmes as the Programme Operator (hereinafter PO).

1.2 Glossary

- "Donor States": Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway.
- "Beneficiary State": Slovenia
- "Programme grant": the financial contribution from the Donor States to a programme
- "Programme Operator" (PO): Centre of the Republic of Slovenia for Mobility and European Educational and Training Programmes responsible for implementing the Programme »Slovene Scholarship Fund – SI04«
- "Programme partner": an entity actively involved in, and effectively contributing to, the implementation of a programme.
- "Project Promoter" (PP): an entity having the responsibility for initiating, preparing and implementing a project.

1.3 Programme Measures

The Scholarship Fund supports the following measures:

1. Preparatory visits;
2. Mobility projects in higher education;
3. Mobility projects in other educational institutions;
4. Inter-institutional cooperation projects between higher education institutions;
5. Inter-institutional cooperation projects in education and training.

1.4 Programme Outcomes

With the above mentioned activities, the Scholarship Fund is set to reach the following outcomes:

- Increased higher education student and staff mobility between Slovenia and Norway, Liechtenstein and Iceland;
- Increased and strengthened inter- institutional cooperation at all levels of education sector between Slovenia, Norway, Iceland and Liechtenstein;
- Increased mobility of education sector staff of education between Slovenia and EEA countries.

1.5 Project Promoters

Project Promoters in the Scholarship Fund are:

- Slovene higher education institutions, as defined by the participating countries;
- Slovene schools and other institutions providing primary, secondary general/vocational education and/or training.

1.6 Scholarship Fund Beneficiaries

Apart from the benefit that project promoters will gain from taking part in the EEA/Norway Grants Scholarship Fund, the following organizations and end users may also benefit:

- Students and trainees in all forms of tertiary education level education and training;
- Teachers, trainers, managers, leaders and other staff within higher education institutions;
- Pupils;
- Students in VET and general upper secondary schools;
- Doctoral students, post-doctoral fellows and researchers;
- Staff from enterprises involved in teaching/education/training activities;
- Enterprises, social partners and other representatives of working life cooperating with accredited educational institutions;
- Research centres and bodies concerned with lifelong learning issues;
- Bodies responsible for systems and policies in education and local, regional and/or national level;
- Manager, leaders, teachers, trainers, administrators and technical staff from eligible institutions.

1.7 Partners in the Scholarship Fund

The Programme Operator (PO) - organization, which will be responsible for the implementation of EEA/Norway Grants Scholarship Fund in Slovenia, is CMEPIUS, Centre of the Republic of Slovenia for Mobility and European Educational and Training Programmes. For successful realisation of the Programme and its activities, the Centre will work in cooperation with partner institutions in donor countries (Norway, Iceland and Liechtenstein).

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2. SUBMISSION AND SELECTION PROCEDURE

2.1 SUBMISSION OF THE GRANT APPLICATION

Grant applications for financial support must be submitted to the Programme Operator. The Programme operator carries out the selection and allocates financial support to the applicants selected.

Instructions for proper submission

- Applications under all Measures must be submitted according to the instructions published in the Call for proposal and National rules.
- For paper applications, compliance with the deadline will be checked using the postmark date. Thus, applicants are advised to obtain a receipt indicating the date of postage and the full sending address.
- Applicants cannot make any changes to their grant application after the submission deadline.
- For programme actions under which organisations can apply for grant support, such organisations must be legal entities in accordance with national legislation.
- Applications must contain the signature of a person legally authorised to represent that organisation (authorised signatory) in legal commitments.

Application forms for all Measures can be obtained:

- on the Programme Operator website: <http://www.cmepius.si/en/higher-education/eea-and-norway-grants.aspx>
- on the EEA/NO grants website: <http://eeagrants.org/>

2.1.1 PROCEDURE FOR THE ASSESSMENT AND SELECTION OF APPLICATIONS

The Programme Operator shall review the applications for compliance with administrative and eligibility criteria.

Each application that meets the administrative and eligibility criteria shall be reviewed by two experts appointed by the Programme Operator, who shall be impartial and independent of the Programme Operator and the Selection Committee. Applications under Measure 1 will be appraised only by one independent expert.

The experts shall separately score the project according to the selection criteria published with the call for proposals. For the purposes of ranking the projects, the average of the scores awarded by the experts shall be used. If the difference between the scores given by the two experts is more than 30% of the higher score, a third expert shall be commissioned by the Programme Operator to score the project independently. In such cases the average score of the two closest scores shall be used for the ranking of the projects.

The Programme Operator shall provide the Selection Committee with a list of projects ranked. The Selection Committee shall review the ranked list of projects. It may modify the ranking of the projects in justified cases. The Selection Committee shall submit the list of recommended projects to the Programme Operator.

The Programme Operator shall, based on the decision of the Selection Committee, make a decision on which projects shall be supported. If the Programme Operator modifies the decision of the Selection Committee, it shall inform the applicants affected and provide them with a justification.

The Programme Operator shall notify the applicants about the results of the selection process within a reasonable time and publicise the results.

The applicants can only complain against administrative and eligibility criteria, they cannot complain against content.

2.1.2 QUALITY ASSESSMENT

The selection of the projects will be based on the evaluation by external experts. Selection criteria will be as follows:

- a) Relevance of the project proposal (content eligibility criterion)
- b) Quality of
 - a. Goals/Aims
 - b. Work programme
- c) Expected outcomes
- d) Dissemination and use of results
- e) Economic and Social Sustainability of cooperation

2.2 PROJECT PARTNERS AND PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENTS

A project may be implemented in partnership with project partners. If a project is implemented in such a partnership, the Project Promoter shall sign a partnership agreement with the project partners. The partnership agreement shall contain the following:

- a) provisions on the roles and responsibilities of the parties;
- b) provisions on the financial arrangements between the parties, including, but not limited to, which expenditure the project partners can get reimbursed from the project budget;
- c) provisions on the method of calculating indirect costs and their maximum amount;
- d) currency exchange rules for such expenditure and its reimbursement;
- e) provisions on audits on the project partners
- f) a detailed budget, with itemised costs and unit prices; and
- g) provisions on dispute resolution.

The partnership agreement shall be in English if one of the parties to the agreement is an entity from the Donor States. The partnership agreement shall be submitted to the Programme Operator before the signing of the project contract. The Programme Operator shall verify that the partnership agreement complies with this article.

2.3 GRANT AWARDING AND REALLOCATION OF FUNDS

Project grants that have upon project closure not been fully utilised, as well as project grants that have been cancelled due to irregularities or for other reasons, may be reallocated to future calls for proposals within the same programme or to additional activities of already approved projects, provided that these additional activities contribute to the objectives of the projects receiving the additional funds. Any decision to reallocate project grants to already approved projects shall be based on recommendations by the Selection Committee. The Selection Committee shall base its recommendations on transparent and objective criteria. By applying these criteria, the Selection Committee shall ensure equal treatment of all Project Promoters but may in justified cases give priority to:

- a) certain geographical regions lagging behind; and
- b) a clearly defined group of less privileged (social, economically) project promoters.

The criteria shall be made available on the website of the Programme Operator no later than one month prior to any decision to reallocate funds. Project Promoters shall be informed in writing without delay when such criteria have been published on the website.

2.4 CHECKS OF PROJECT PROMOTERS

The checks to be undertaken by the PO in relation to Project Promoters consist of the following types:

- analysis of final reports;
- desk check of supporting material submitted by Project Promoters at final report stage;
- on the spot check during the implementation of a supported activity;
- on the spot check (audit) undertaken upon completion of a supported activity.

3. GENERAL FINANCIAL CONDITIONS

For each approved project a project contract shall be concluded between the Programme Operator and the Project Promoter.

The project contract sets out the terms and conditions of grant assistance as well as the roles and responsibilities of the parties. Each project may give rise to the award of only one grant from the EEA/NO budget. The grant may not have the purpose or effect of producing a profit for the Project Promoter. Grants may not be awarded retrospectively for activities already completed at the time of the submission of the grant application.

A grant is an incentive to carry out a project or measure which would not be feasible without the financial support of the EEA/NO and is based on the principle of co-financing. The Contract will lay down the arrangements and time limits for modification, suspension and termination of the Contract.

3.1 TYPES FOR FINANCING

EEA/NO support may take the form of a lump sum, a flat-rate grant based on a scale of unit costs, or the reimbursement of a percentage of eligible costs. Depending on the grant type, a combination of all or some of these types of grant support is possible. The budget for a project has to be drawn up accordingly.

- In the case of grants awarded as a **lump sum**, the Project Promoter has to be able to prove that the activity for which grant support is awarded has really taken place, rather than the actual amount of expenditure. If the supported activity is realised in a satisfactory manner, the full grant amount is acquired. In the case of underperformance, reimbursement of (part of) the grant awarded will be normally required on the basis of the criteria laid down for each measure.
- In the case of **flat-rate grants** using scales of unit costs (for example maximum daily rates for subsistence), the Project Promoter does not have to justify the costs incurred but has to be able to prove the reality of activities resulting into the entitlement to a specific grant amount (for example the number of days spent abroad determine the maximum amount to which one is entitled for the stay).
- In the case of (the part of) a grant awarded on the basis of **real costs**, the Project Promoter shall keep and be able to produce upon request all proofs of expenditure related to the expense items based on real costs.

- Reimbursement of a **percentage of eligible costs**: the applicant will define his expenditure in terms of real costs (where maximum eligible rates may apply). EEA/NO financing will be calculated by applying a percentage to real eligible expenditure. The contribution will be reduced pro rata if, at final reporting stage, the project is not fulfilled or is only partially fulfilled or funds have been spent on ineligible expense items.

3.1.1 ELIGIBLE COSTS

Eligible expenditures of projects are those actually incurred by the Project Promoter, which meet the following criteria:

- they are incurred between the first and final dates of eligibility of a project as specified in the project contract;
- they are connected with the subject of the project contract and they are indicated in the estimated overall budget of the project;
- they are proportionate and necessary for the implementation of the project;
- they must be used for the sole purpose of achieving the objective(s) of the project and its expected outcome(s), in a manner consistent with the principles of economy, efficiency and effectiveness;
- they are identifiable and verifiable, in particular through being recorded in the accounting records of the Project Promoter and determined according to the applicable accounting standards of the country where the Project Promoter is established and according to generally accepted accounting principles; and
- they comply with the requirements of applicable tax and social legislation.

3.1.2 EXCLUDED COSTS

The following costs shall not be considered eligible:

- interest on debt, debt service charges and late payment charges;
- charges for financial transactions and other purely financial costs, except costs related to accounts required by the NMFA, the National Focal Point or the applicable law and costs of financial services imposed by the project contract;
- provisions for losses or potential future liabilities;
- exchange losses, except losses covered by a provision explicitly approved by the NMFA for each programme;
- recoverable VAT;
- costs that are covered by other sources;
- fines, penalties and costs of litigation; and
- excessive or reckless expenditure.

3.2 MOBILITY GRANTS AWARDED FOR INDIVIDUALS (MEASURE 1, 2 AND 3)

Mobility grants are based on various components of costs. The rates proposed below represent maximum amounts.

The budget for mobility activities is based on (a combination of) subsistence costs, travel costs and other costs. Where costs are based on scales of unit costs or on real costs, the general criteria for eligibility apply.

a) Subsistence Costs

For all mobility measures, the contribution to subsistence costs will be a flat-rate grant calculated on the basis of daily, weekly or monthly rates. Subsistence costs cover accommodation, meals, local travel, and cost of telecommunications, including fax and Internet, insurance and all other sundries.

Support to subsistence costs is calculated as a flat rate on the basis of scales of unit costs of the host country.

Persons with special needs may benefit from specific financing measures. Person with special needs is defined as a potential participant whose individual physical, mental or health-related situation is such that his/her participation in the project / mobility action would not be possible without extra financial support. The additional grant towards both subsistence and travel costs will be assessed case-by case and based on real costs incurred. In such case, the grant may provide for the subsistence and travel costs of an accompanying person if justified. The individual situation should be described and the particular needs and extra costs attached to it should be detailed in the application. Based on these explanations, on the availability of funding, the national rules and potential national priorities, the PO will then judge whether extra support can be granted

b) Travel Costs

Travel cost is based on real cost. PO will reimburse travel costs, on the basis of real costs incurred including any costs for entry/exit visas as required, either in total or in part only (by applying a ceiling or a maximum covering percentage). Any other costs related to the travel are ineligible.

Travel costs are allocated on the basis of real costs.

(1) Travel costs for staff taking part in the project are allowable, provided that they are in line with each partner's usual practices on travel costs.

(2) Costs may be claimed only for journeys directly connected to specific and clearly identifiable project-related activities.

(3) The travel cost for a journey should include all costs and all means for travel from the point of origin to the point of destination (and vice versa) and may include visa fees, travel insurance and cancellation costs.

(4) Reimbursement is based on real costs, independent of the means of travel chosen (rail, bus, taxi, plane, hire car). Partners are required to use the cheapest means of travel (e.g. use best value for money tickets for air travel and take advantage of reduced fares, where this is not the case then a full explanation should be provided).

(5) Expenses for private car travel (personal or company cars), where substantiated and where the price is not excessive, will be refunded as follows (whichever is the cheapest):

- either a rate per km in accordance with the internal rules of the organisation concerned up to a max of 0,22 EUR;
- or equivalent to the price of a rail, bus or plane ticket (see point (3) above). Only one ticket shall be reimbursed, independently of the number of people travelling in the same vehicle.

(6) For hire cars (maximum category B or equivalent) or taxis: the actual cost where this is not excessive compared with other means of travel (also taking account of any influencing factors such as time, large

volume of luggage due to the nature of the project). Reimbursement takes place independently of the number of people travelling in the same vehicle.

Table 1: Travel and subsistence – Maximum rates (in EUR) per host country and duration of stay for staff

| Host country | Total amount – first week | | | | | | | Additional amount for second week* | Additional amount per week (weeks 3–6)* | Maximum amount for travel |
|---------------|---------------------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|------------------|------------------------------------|---|---------------------------|
| | 1 day | 2 days | 3 days | 4 days | 5 days | 6 days | One week (7days) | | | |
| Island | 180 | 360 | 540 | 720 | 900 | 1.080 | 1.260 | 504 | 202 | 950 |
| Liechtenstein | 260 | 520 | 780 | 1.040 | 1.300 | 1.560 | 1.820 | 728 | 291 | 450 |
| Norway | 260 | 520 | 780 | 1.040 | 1.300 | 1.560 | 1.820 | 728 | 291 | 800 |
| Slovenia | 160 | 320 | 480 | 640 | 800 | 960 | 1.120 | 448 | 179 | |

*For weeks from 2-6, additional full weeks are calculated on the basis of rates in column Additional amount for second week and Additional amount per week (weeks 3-6). The calculation method for partial week is the number of additional days multiplied by 1/7 of the amount listed in column Additional amount per week (weeks 3-6).

When calculating the grant the applicant shall be bear in mind additional day reserved for traveling. For example: programme lasts from Monday morning to Friday afternoon; the applicant shall take half day for departing and half day for arriving back, in total 1 day (meaning all together 5 programme days and 1 for the travel, equals 6 days).

c) Other costs

In addition to the grants for travel and subsistence referred to above, grants to help cover other costs will be available under certain measures of the programme, as follows:

Course or seminar fees: A contribution may be granted on the basis of real costs, up to a maximum fixed of 200 € per day.

3.3 GRANTS FOR STUDENTS (MEASURE 2)

Table 2: Student Mobility – Travel and subsistence - Maximum rates (in EUR) per host country

| Country of destination | Monthly subsistence rate (for Measure 2 only) | Max travel costs |
|------------------------|---|------------------|
| Iceland | 1.200 | 950 |
| Liechtenstein | 1.200 | 450 |
| Norway | 1.200 | 800 |

In the case where beneficiary (student) has already been awarded Erasmus grant for study or placement the difference to maximum monthly rate can be awarded from Slovene scholarship Fund.

3.4 GRANTS FOR ORGANISATIONS IMPLEMENTING MOBILITY (MEASURE 2 AND MEASURE 3)

In the case of mobility measures, the mobility activities are organised by institutions/organisations, such as for example higher education institutions, VET / adult education organisations or consortia. These mobility measures require the clear commitment from the sending or hosting organisation to ensure quality in all dimensions (pedagogic as well as logistic) of the mobility period. These organisations are responsible for

managing the mobility grants to the individuals. The levels and rules for the grants for participants are described above. Additionally, the organisations receive a contribution to the costs for organising the mobility activities. This support is given for the organisation, not the individual.

Grant to sending institutions/consortia for the Organisation of Mobility (Measure 2 and Measure 3).

A maximum scale of unit costs applies to calculate the grant to sending institutions/consortia for the Organisation of Mobility. Scales are defined per group of outgoing persons. For the first 25 persons out of the total concerned mobilities scale 1 applies, then the next scale for the 26th to 100th person etc.

Table 3: Maximum scale of unit costs to apply to calculate grants to higher education institutions and placement consortia to ensure quality of the mobility arrangements for students and staff

| Scales of unit costs | EUR/Project Promoter – for students and staff (Measure 2) | EUR/Project Promoter – for staff (Measure 3) |
|-------------------------------|---|--|
| Scale 1 (1st to 25th person) | 200 | 150 |
| Scale 2 (26th to 50th person) | 150 | 100 |
| Scale 3 (> 51st person) | 100 | 50 |

3.5 GRANTS FOR INTER-INSTITUTIONAL COOPERATION PROJECTS ORGANIZING INTENSIVE PROGRAMMES IP (MEASURE 4)

Minimum amount per one Intensive programme is 30.000 EUR.

Maximum lump sum for organising one Intensive Programmes (IP) in Slovenia is 7.000 EUR.

Subsistence costs – Maximum rates (in EUR) per host country and duration of stay for staff – see Table 1 above (except for students)

Student Mobility –Subsistence costs for students attending Intensive programme is 40 EUR per day. Teachers and students from the co-ordinating HEI are not eligible to receive a contribution towards subsistence, if the IP takes place in the town where the co-ordinating HEI is located. Minimum duration of one IP programme is 10 consecutive working +days.

Travel costs for incoming students and staff are based on real costs and may not exceed 700 EUR. Travel costs for Slovene students and staff are based on real costs and may not exceed 120 EUR.

The allocated grant will not cover more than 90 % of total eligible costs.

3.6 GRANTS FOR INTER-INSTITUTIONAL COOPERATION PROJECTS IN EDUCATION/TRAINING (MEASURE 5)

Partnerships are inter-institutional bilateral or multilateral cooperation between institutions and organisations engaged in education in donor and beneficiary states on topics relevant for basic, secondary and vocational education

The activities of Partnerships consist of local activities in a partner's own organisation (learning activities, fieldwork, research, etc) and mobility activities to visit partner institutions abroad (project meetings, study visits, staff exchanges, class exchanges, learning exchanges etc.).

Lump sums

The grant is awarded as a lump sum amount. Minimum amount per one partnership is 30.000 EUR. Project promoter receives a project grant in the form of a lump sum as a contribution towards all its project costs: travel and subsistence during mobility periods and costs linked to local project activities. The Project Promoter redistributes the partnership grants to its partners.

Grants are defined on the basis of a minimum number of “mobilities” that the participating institutions intend to carry out during the contracts period. One “mobility” corresponds to one trip abroad carried out by one person in the framework of the Partnership. The Grant Contract defines the types of eligible mobility activities. At Final Report stage, Project Promoter is not requested to submit proofs of expenditure, but will need to provide evidence that the activities foreseen in their application have been carried out in a full and satisfactory manner.

Table 4: Maximum lump sum amounts for Inter-institutional cooperation projects

| Partnership Type | Minimum number of mobilities per partner | Maximum lump sum grant per partner |
|--|---|---|
| Inter-institutional cooperation projects (based on estimated nr. of mobilities) | 4 | 10.000,00 |
| | 8 | 16.000,00 |
| | 12 | 20.000,00 |

The allocated grant will not cover more than 90 % of total eligible costs.