

Call for Travel Support "Business Development and Innovation Croatia"

Guidelines for the Travel Support Scheme

Norwegian Financial Mechanism 2014-2021

The **objective** of the Travel Support is to facilitate establishment of bilateral business partnerships between the Donor State Norway and Croatia with the intent to participate in the calls under this Programme. The third calls are expected to be published in October 2022.

Introduction

The Programme "Business Development, Innovation and SMEs in Croatia" has the objective to increase value creation and sustainable growth in the Croatian business sector. Further, the Programme will seek to stimulate and develop long-term business cooperation between Norway (hereafter referred to as "the Donor State") and Croatia based on business development and innovation. **The Programme** is encouraging bilateral project partnerships in the focus areas of the Programme, i.e.:

1. **Green Industry Innovation** targets initiatives for development and/or application of innovative green technologies, development of innovative products and solutions, greener production processes, more efficient handling of resources and technological systems, material efficiency activities and waste management;
2. **Blue Growth** targets initiatives for development and/or application of innovative technologies, processes, solutions, products or services based on blue resources from the sea, inland waters and rivers, islands and coastal areas.

The Modalities used for this Programme will be based on open calls and competition. One call is planned for the Individual Project Scheme and one for the Small Grants Scheme. Both calls will cover both focus areas.

Innovation Norway is the Fund Operator for the Programme on behalf of the Programme Operator the Financial Mechanisms Office (FMO). All applications or queries should be addressed to the Fund Operator at the following official Programme e-mail address CRO.Innovation@innovationnorway.no

The Programme is a part of the EEA (European Economic Area) and Norwegian Financial Mechanisms 2014-2021 that have two overall objectives of equal importance:

- Contributing to the reduction of economic and social disparities in the European Economic Area; and
- Strengthening bilateral relations between the Donor States and the Beneficiary States.

These guidelines will give the ruling criteria for **this CALL for Travel Support**.

What is offered?

The support from the Fund for Bilateral Relations is a travel grant awarded as a lump sum (meaning one standard rate). The following are available for applicants:

- A lump sum **Travel Support per entity** of **EUR 1,200** for **Norway/Croatia or Croatia/Norway.**
- Continuous submission of applications (until depletion of the budget).
- The **Travel Support** is awarded as **de minimis aid** under "COMMISSION REGULATION (EU) No 1407/2013 of 18 December 2013 on the application of Articles 107 and 108 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union to de minimis aid" as published in the Official Journal L 352, 24.12.2013, pages 1-8".
- **Remaining budget available** for this CALL for Travel Support is **EUR 18,671**.

How to apply?

The Programme language is **English**. Therefore, all applications shall be submitted in English! Innovation Norway will apply a simplified application procedure. Please follow the instructions presented at the weblink indicated below.

- Applications shall be completed online at *Travel support form* link at the bottom of the main Programme [website](#), or directly at the [following web link](#)
- It is important to **fill in all the sections** of the online application with clear details as follows:
 - Entity name, contact person, telephone, e-mail, year of establishment and website;
 - The entities registration number (for Croatian enterprises) from the Court Register;
 - Main line of business / economic sector;
 - Main purpose of the travel and meetings;
 - Focus area(s) targeted by the future partnership project;
 - Expected outcome of visit to Croatia / Norway;
 - Meeting agenda in Croatia/ Norway; List the entities, location, contact details and person that the company will meet.

- Before traveling you need to obtain Innovation Norway's written approval. A confirmation will be sent you by email from the official Programme email CRO.Innovation@innovationnorway.no

Who can apply?

Entities from Croatia and the Donor State (Norway) can apply for funding. The applicants must be constituted as legal entities in Croatia or in Norway.

The following entities are eligible for financial support under this CALL for Travel Support:

- **From Croatia:**

- Small and medium size enterprises (SMEs), as defined by Commission recommendation 2003/361/EC, and large enterprises with less than 25 % public ownership, functioning in accordance to enforced Croatian legislation on commercial companies, respectively: Law NN 152/2011 (Croatian Companies Act).

NOTE: Entities active in the following sectors are **excluded** from financing in this CALL (in line with provisions of COMMISSION REGULATION (EU) No 1407/2013¹):

- fishery and aquaculture sector;
- primary production of agricultural products;
- processing and marketing of agricultural products.

Croatian enterprises, that are expected to play the role as applicants in the future calls of this Programme, shall be established as follows:

- projects under Individual Project Scheme: the entity must be established for at least 3 years at the date of the deadline of the future Call for all focus areas.
- projects under Small Grant Scheme: the entity must be established for at least 1 year at the date of the deadline of the future Call for all focus areas.

- **From Donor States:**

Private or public entities legally established in Norway (e.g. SMEs, large enterprises, NGOs, research institutes etc.).

Eligible activities and expenditures

- Travel costs in connection to/or associated with the search for partners for donor partnership projects and the development of such partnerships;
 - A partnership project must constitute of at least one entity (SME or large enterprise with less than 25 % public ownership from Croatia and one entity from one of the Donor State;

¹ For more details, please see: http://ec.europa.eu/competition/state_aid/legislation/de_minimis_regulation_en.pdf

- Partnership projects must be developed within one of the focus areas of this Programme;
- Travel Support is awarded per entity and not per person;
- The travel should take place **no later than 20 December 2022**;
 - Eligible expenditures are travel costs (flight tickets, train etc.), accommodation costs (hotel) and meals. The applicant should **present** an eligible project idea for the future calls of the Programme “Business Development and Innovation Croatia”, and that they **intend to be** involved either as an applicant (Project Promoter) or as a bilateral project partner performing substantial tasks in the project. The travel has to be performed by the entity awarded the travel grant. For more information about the eligibility of project ideas, please consult the Programme web-site

Disbursement of funds and reporting

- Reimbursement principle (you cover the expenditures from own funds first and ask for reimbursement from Innovation Norway after the travel).
- The reimbursement request shall be composed of the following documents:
 - (a) Travel Report;**
 - (b) Financial Identification Form (Legal Declaration of the Applicant’s bank account);**
 - (c) De minimis aid declaration;**
(templates for these three documents are available at the web-site of the Programme, under section *Travel Support Scheme: Information*);
 - (d) Proof of travel (i.e. confirmation of completed travel from travel agent/airline company, ticket/boarding pass or similar).**
- **Reporting is the responsibility of the applicant.** The reporting documents mentioned at letters (a)-(d) should be sent **scanned** (stamped and signed) to the Programme’s official email address - CRO.Innovation@innovationnorway.no, within maximum **one month** after the travel took place.
- In case of Croatian applicants: the entities should also submit a copy of an official document mentioning the name of their legal representative:
Certificate of commencement of business activity by the relevant tax authority with all recent amendments (from Court Register);
- The costs are reimbursed to the applicant entity that has incurred the expenses and not to a natural person.

Selection criteria

- Applications for Travel Support are assessed and awarded by Innovation Norway on a continuous basis (until the depletion of the available budget);
- In order to be awarded Travel Support the following criteria must be fulfilled:
 - All sections in the online application is filled in correctly – in English;
 - The planned activities are within the objective of this Travel Support;
 - Applicant and partner(s) are eligible as mentioned above;
 - The purpose of the travel and the meeting have to be within one of the focus areas of this Programme;
 - Planned activities/costs are eligible as mentioned above.

For possible clarifications, send e-mail in English to: CRO.Innovation@innovationnorway.no.