Norwegian Financial Mechanism 2014-2021
Business Development, Innovation and SMEs Programme Bulgaria
Fund for Bilateral Relations

Call for Travel Support

1. Background information
The Programme “Business development, Innovation and SMEs Bulgaria” has the objective to increase value creation and sustainable growth in Bulgarian business sector. Further, the Programme will seek to stimulate and develop long-term business cooperation between Norway and Bulgaria based on business development and innovation. “Business development, Innovation and SMEs Bulgaria” is encouraging bilateral project partnerships in all two focus areas of the Programme:

1. **Green Industry Innovation** targets initiatives for development and/or application of innovative green technologies, development of innovative products, services and solutions that directly or indirectly improve the environment, greener production processes, more efficient handling of resources and technological systems, material efficiency activities and waste management;

2. **Welfare Technology** targets initiatives by private businesses for development of products/services related to: a). systems for medical care; b). products/technologies of smart houses; c). physical electronic devices and other IT solutions; d). telemedicine services, technological solutions that are mainly used by and support the staff that deliver or carry out welfare services, etc.

The Programme “Business development, Innovation and SMEs Bulgaria” is a part of the Norwegian Financial Mechanism that has two overall objectives:

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

2. Objective of the Travel Support facility
The **objective** of the Travel Support is to facilitate establishment of bilateral partnerships between Norway and Bulgaria with the intent to participate in the upcoming call(s) under the Programme.

The allocated budget for this call is **EUR 15’000**.
3. Modalities of the Travel Support
The support from the Fund for Bilateral Relations is a travel grant awarded as a lump sum (meaning one standard rate). The following is available for applicants:

- A lump sum Travel Support per entity per country of EUR 1,000 for Norway/Bulgaria.
- Consecutively assessment/award of grant (until depletion of the budget).

4. Procedure for submission of applications
All applications shall be submitted in English. Innovation Norway will apply a simplified application procedure. The instructions presented at the below indicated web link should be followed.

- Applications shall be completed online at the following web link: www.innovationnorway.no/BgBusinessTS
- All sections of the online application must be filled in with clear details as follows:
  - Entity name, contact person, telephone, e-mail and website;
  - The entity registration number;
  - Main line of business / economic sector;
  - Main purpose of the travel and meetings: description of the project idea/concept to be pursued;
  - The expected outcome of the visit to Bulgaria/Norway;
  - Meeting agenda in Bulgaria / Norway, list the entities, location, contact details and person that the company will meet.
- Written approval must be obtained from Innovation Norway before traveling. Confirmation in writing will be sent to each applicant from the official Programme e-mail address bg.business@innovationnorway.no.

5. Deadline for submission of applications
Applications for travel support will be handled on a consecutive basis and shall be submitted to Innovation Norway at any time, but not later than:

- 18 September 2020 – for the Green Industry Innovation component;

6. Eligible applicants
Entities from Bulgaria and Norway can apply for funding. The applicants must be constituted as legal entities in Bulgaria or in Norway.

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

- **From Bulgaria:**
  - Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), as defined by Commission recommendation 2003/361/EC, and large companies with less than 25 % public ownership, functioning in accordance to enforced Bulgarian legislation on commercial companies.
From Norway:
Private or public entities legally established in Norway (SMEs, NGOs, research institutes etc.).

7. 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;
- The applicant company should demonstrate that it has an eligible project idea and that it will be involved either as a promoter or a partner performing substantial tasks in the project. The travel must be conducted by the entity awarded the grant;
- Travel Support is awarded per entity and not per person.

8. Disbursement of funds and reporting
- Grant assistance shall be given as reimbursement of already incurred documented costs. The applicant shall cover the expenditures from own funds and ask for reimbursement from Innovation Norway after the travel.
- The reimbursement request will be composed of the following documents: (a) Travel Report, (b) Financial Identification Form and (c) De minimis aid declaration (the templates for these three documents are available at www.innovationnorway.no/BgBusinessTS, (d) proof of travel (copy of boarding passes).
- The documents mentioned at items (a)-(d) should be sent stamped, signed and scanned at the Programme’s official email address - bg.business@innovationnorway.no, within maximum one month after the travel took place.
- In case of Bulgarian applicants: the entities should also submit a copy of an official document mentioning the name of the legal representative:
- The costs are reimbursed to the entity that has incurred the expenses and not to a physical person.

9. Selection criteria
Selection criteria Travel Support will be awarded if all of the following criteria are fulfilled:
- the applicants having the relevant competence/experience;
- all sections of the online application are filled in correctly;
- the planned activities are within the objective of this Travel Support;
- the applicant and partner(s) are eligible;
- the purpose of the travel and the meetings are directly linked to one of the focus areas listed under “Background Information” in this document;
- planned activities/costs are eligible;
- the company/entity should be in a sound financial situation.

Applications for Travel Support are assessed and awarded by Innovation Norway on a continuous basis, until the depletion of the available budget. For eventual clarifications, send e-mail to: bg.business@innovationnorway.no.