



*National Focal Point
Slovak Republic*



Norwegian Financial Mechanism



EEA Financial Mechanism

**Call for proposals for an intermediary
for a block grant
in the framework of the**

Research Fund

**of the Norwegian Financial Mechanism
and EEA Financial Mechanism**

Call for proposals code: 0205

declared by the

**National Focal Point for
Financial Mechanisms**

*The Slovak Republic Government Office
Section for European Affairs
Department of Regional Development and EU Structural Actions*

7. 10. 2005

**The National Focal Point launches, in the framework of the
Norwegian Financial Mechanism and the EEA Financial Mechanism,
a call for proposals
for selection of a intermediaries for the *Research Fund***

1. Purpose of the call for proposals

The purpose of the call for proposals is the selection of two intermediaries responsible for the management and implementation of the Research Fund, which is established on the basis of the EEA Financial Mechanism and the Norwegian Financial Mechanism (hereinafter referred to as the Financial Mechanisms). The role of the intermediaries will be the provision of smaller grants to end recipients of this Fund.

The call for proposals is being issued in the framework of the Memorandum of Understanding on the Implementation of the EEA Financial Mechanism and the Memorandum of Understanding on the Implementation of the Norwegian Financial Mechanism.

2. Areas of support

The Research Fund will support activities in the priority areas defined in Annex B of the Memoranda of Understanding. The activities will include cooperation between EEA EFTA and Slovak researchers. The Research Fund is aimed at, in particular:

- I. the intermediary for a block grant for research areas:
 - nanotechnology,
 - biotechnology and food,
 - sustainable development,
 - renewable energy sources.

- II. the intermediary for a block grant for institution building in support of research:
 - integration of the Slovak Republic's research and development in the framework of the EEA with an emphasis on development of collaboration and building of relationships aimed at support of science, research and innovation with Norway, Iceland and Liechtenstein;
 - new approaches in knowledge and technology transfer (e.g. cluster, spin – offs and other).
 - support of knowledge and partnership network building in science, research and innovation;
 - support of information providing and platforms of programmes and projects of ERA (European Research Area) for example nanotechnology, biotechnology and in support of development in priority areas
 - support of research and development organisations of businesses and public organisations and support of research and development at universities.

3. Geographic scope

Implementation of the Research fund must be performed throughout the whole territory of the Slovak Republic without preferring any part of territory of the Slovak Republic. When distributing financial resources allocated in the framework of this Fund, the intermediary must respect the criteria leading to reduction of social and economic disparities in the Slovak Republic.

Applications for the intermediary may be submitted only by entities operating throughout the territory of the Slovak Republic and registered in Slovakia.

Sub-project supported by this Fund may be submitted only by entities registered in Slovakia.

4. Budgets allocated to the Research Fund

The total amount allocated to the call for proposals in the framework of the Research Fund is **EUR 1,652,000** from the EEA Financial Mechanism and from the Norwegian Financial Mechanism. A contribution from the state budget is provided up to the amount of **EUR 291,529** as a maximum.

- I. Block Grant for promotion of sustainable development: **EUR 826 000** from the Norwegian Financial Mechanism and EEA Financial Mechanism, and up to **EUR 145 765** from the state budget as a maximum.
- II. Block Grant for institutional building for research **EUR 826 000** from the Norwegian Financial Mechanism and EEA Financial Mechanism, and up to **EUR 145 765** from the state budget as a maximum.

Of the total amount of the non-repayable financial contribution (grant assistance), the intermediary is authorized to allocate 4% of eligible costs to the performance of intermediary's activities. This figure can be raised to 10% of eligible costs after decision by the EEA Financial Mechanism Committee and/or the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The NFP does not have any influence on the final figure. This final figure will be regulated in Grant Agreement.

5. Type of project assistance

5.1 Type of project assistance

Within this call, applicants submit applications for the intermediary position for a **block grant**; detailed information on block grants may be found in the Guidelines for Block Grants at www.eeagrants.sk.

5.2 Eligible final beneficiaries

The intermediary is obliged to provide the grant assistance to all final beneficiaries from the public sector, the non-profit sector and the private sector (such as private research institutions).

5.3 Intermediary duties

The block grant intermediary will be responsible for selection of sub-projects (pursuant to a call for proposal), their approval, their ex ante and interim performance control, as well as financial management. An integral part of selecting the intermediary will be based on the description of its management system, including but not limited to description of activities and procedures in the area of programming, monitoring, financial management, publicity, ex ante and interim performance control, on the spot checks (including procedures of verification delivered goods and services), archiving, as well as procedures for ensuring public procurement compliance.

The system that the applicant will determine and describe in the application must ensure efficient competition, transparent decisions in connection with individual subprojects and ensure that different needs from geographic point of view are taken into consideration in selection of individual subprojects. The intermediary for a block grant must comply with all conditions listed in the document *Manual for Applicants of grant assistance* available at www.eeagrants.sk

6. Eligible intermediaries

- Interest associations of legal entities (Section 20(f) of the Civil Code),
- Civil associations (Act No. 83/1990),
- Foundations (Act No. 34/2002),
- Universities (Act No. 131/2002),
- State administration authorities,
- Public budgetary organisations (Act No. 523/2004),
- Public allowance organisations (Act No. 523/2004),
- Chambers established by a special law, (for example Act No. 9/1992).

7. Eligible expenditures

Eligible expenditures in the framework of financial mechanisms are indicated in the *Guideline for eligibility of expenditures for the EEA Financial Mechanism and for the Norwegian Financial Mechanism*, which is available at www.eeagrants.sk.

8. Deadline for submission of applications

The deadline for submission of applications is 5.12.2005, 4.00 P. M.

9. Duration of the block grant implementation

The intermediary will obtain the funds from the Financial Mechanisms and the corresponding percentage in the framework of co-financing from the state budget in tranches for the entire programming period of 2005 – 2009. Performance of activities in the framework of the block grant must be completed before 30 April 2011.

10. Method of paying out the non-repayable financial contribution (NFC grant assistance)

a) principle of financing – disbursement of the NFC (grant assistance)

The disbursement of the NFC grant assistance will be performed in the form of down payments from the state budget.

More detailed information on disbursement of the NFC (grant assistance) is given in the *Manual for applicants of grant assistance* at www.eeagrants.sk.

b) provision of the non-repayable financial contribution (grant assistance) by the intermediary to the final beneficiary

The intermediary will be providing funds from the Financial Mechanisms to entities from public, private, and third sectors.

The intermediary may provide final beneficiaries from the public and third sectors with the non-repayable financial contribution (grant assistance) up to the maximum amount of 95% of eligible costs of the project, the amount of the non-repayable financial contribution (grant assistance) from the Financial Mechanisms constituting 85.5% - 80.75% of the eligible costs of the project and the state budget contributing to the maximum of 14.25% of eligible costs of the project. The final beneficiary has to provide minimum amount of 5% of eligible costs of the project (allowing for in-kind contributions).

The intermediary may provide the final beneficiaries from the private sector with the non-repayable financial contribution (grant assistance) in the form of *de minimis*, with the amount of the contribution not exceeding 60% of the total eligible costs. The intermediary is in performer position of *de minimis*.

The minimum amount of the non-repayable financial contribution (grant assistance) provided to the final beneficiary under an intermediary, as a rule, must not be less than the 50,000 euro.

The maximum amount of the non-repayable financial contribution (grant assistance) provided to the final beneficiary under an intermediary, as a rule, must not exceed the equivalent of 150,000 euro.

c) currency used

Budget in the application will be drafted and expenditures will be calculated and refunded in EUR. More detailed information on payments is given in the *Manual for applicants of grant assistance* at www.eeagrants.sk.

11. The application and its appendices

The applicant is obliged to fill in, besides the **application** for an intermediary itself, also the **appendices**. For some appendices, forms have been established. The forms are available at www.eeagrants.sk. Some appendices do not have a prescribed form. Appendices, for which there are no forms, will be prepared by the applicant as deemed appropriate.

All appendices need to be presented signed, in printed form, to the Slovak Republic Government Office along with the submitted application. The appendices do not need to be presented in electronic form.

More detailed information on the appendices can be found in the *Manual for applicants of grant assistance* available at www.eeagrants.sk.

12. Documents necessary for correct preparation of the application

To have the application form filled in correctly and to have all necessary documents attached to the application, it is advisable to consult, before preparation of the application itself, the manuals, guidelines and rules available at www.eeagrants.sk.

13. Place of delivery of the application

The application can be delivered in person, by registered mail or by courier to the following address:

The Slovak Republic Government Office
Section for European Affairs
Department of Regional Development and EU Structural Actions
Námestie slobody 1
813 70 Bratislava

The application must be presented both in **printed** and **electronic** form (diskette or CD carrier in Word, Excel or PDF format) in Slovak and English languages; the appendices need to be presented **in printed form only in Slovak and English languages** in a sealed envelope marked with the **PROJECT TITLE**, inscription “**DO NOT OPEN**”, call number “**0205**” and “**Financial mechanism EEA and Norwegian financial mechanism**”.

The hard copy should be **UNBOUND** and all pages must be on **A4** paper.

ALL PAGES INCLUDING ANNEXES MUST BE NUMBERED CONTINUOUSLY, that means that the first page of the first Annex will be numbered as 23 (it is recommended to attach the list of all supporting documents and other annexes) **AND ALL PAGES MUST BE SIGNED BY THE STATUTORY REPRESENTATIVE**.

The application must be confirmed with a signature of the applicant’s statutory representative. By signing the application, the applicant accepts the conditions of the call for proposals and, at the same time, confirms the correctness of information included.

The application with the appendices must be presented in 1 original and 3 copies in the Slovak language and 1 original and 2 copies in the English language.

The applicant must present the application including all prescribed appendices both **in the Slovak language and in the English language**. The binding version is the English version.

Call validity period call for proposals: from 7.10.2005 to 5.12.2005, 4.00 PM. In case the applications are sent by post, the latest acceptable post mark is on the closing date of this call.

In case of personal delivery, the applications are accepted from 29.11.2005 to 5.12.2005, 4.00 PM.

14. Assessment and selection of applications submitted

Missing or incomplete documents do not constitute a reason for rejection of the application. Expert assessment of applications will be performed by assessment commissions. The Slovak Republic Government Office approves projects at the national level. Final decisions on approval/rejection of applications are issued by the Financial Mechanism Committee in case of the EEA Financial Mechanism and by the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs in case of the Norwegian Financial Mechanism.

The process of assessment is estimated to last approximately 7 calendar months from close of the call for proposals until issue of the final decision by the EEA Financial Mechanism Committee/Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of Norway.

After the signing of the Grant Agreement the applicant is obliged, within 30 calendar days, make an agreement with the National Focal Point on provision of the non-repayable financial contribution (grant assistance).

The list of approved applications shall be published on the website www.eeagrants.sk. The list of approved applications will show: the intermediary's name, the block grant name, the date of approval of the application for block grant, the amount of approved grant assistance, and the presumed start date of implementation of the block grant. The applicant will be informed on approval/disapproval of the application (including reasons) in writing.

More detailed information on the assessment process is available in the *Manual for applicants of grant assistance* at the website www.eeagrants.sk.

Note for the applicant:

Before approval of the application and signature of the agreement, there is no legal title to provision of the non-repayable financial contribution (grant assistance).

15. Detailed information

You can send questions concerning this call for proposals to the contact below. The receipt of questions will be closed 5 calendar days before deadline.

The Slovak Republic Government Office
Section for European Affaires
Department of Development of Regions and EU Structural Actions

address: Štefánikova 2
813 70 Bratislava
E-mail: eeagrants@vlada.gov.sk
Fax: ++421 2 57 255 553
Telephone: ++421 2 57 295 537

Note for the applicant:

Answers provided to the applicants over the phone are not binding and the applicant cannot base its claims thereon.

An archive of frequently asked questions and other important information can be found at www.eeagrants.sk and www.eeagrants.org.

All applicants are recommended to monitor the above website for regular information.