Iceland Liechtenstein Norway grants

EEA Grants **Portugal**
Mecanismo Financeiro do Espaço Económico Europeu
European Economic Area Financial Mechanism
Unidade Nacional de Gestão
National Focal Point

Call for proposals

Bilateral Fund Open Call #1

OC #1

Bilateral Fund
EEA Grants 2021-2028 Portugal

The purpose of this call

The Bilateral Fund Open Call #1 aims to support initiatives that contribute to the strengthening of bilateral relations between Portugal, and Iceland and Norway in the areas of defence, security and foreign policy, including joint research and public engagement on topics such as hybrid threats, critical infrastructure, cybersecurity, maritime security and the future of European defence cooperation.

Basic information

Programme Operator	National Focal Point
Announcement of call	10th April 2026
Start date for submission of applications	11th May 2026, 9:00 UTC+1
Deadline for submission of applications	15th September 2026, 17:00 UTC+1
Information sessions for applicants	Weekly, Thursdays, 11:30 – 12:30 UTC+1 (https://teams.microsoft.com/meet/370970298384959?p=00vytu6SPnwxOdG3gn)
Eligible applicants	Any entity, public or private, commercial or non-commercial, including any civil society organization such as non-governmental organizations, established as a legal person in Portugal, Norway or Iceland are considered eligible bilateral activity promoters.
Eligible partners	Any public or private entity, commercial or non-commercial, as well as any civil society organization such as non-governmental organizations established as a legal person either in the Donor States, in Portugal or in the other Beneficiary States or any international organization or body or agency thereof, actively involved in, and

	effectively contributing to, the implementation of a project, are considered eligible project partners.	
Total amount available	EUR 500 000	
Minimum grant amount	EUR 10 000	
Maximum grant amount	EUR 50 000	
Maximum grant rate	90% for all initiatives	
Minimum co-financing requirement	10% for all initiatives	
Duration of projects	Minimum 6 months	Maximum 24 months

Specific objectives and expected results

Objective of the EEA Grants

The EEA Grants contribute to the reduction of economic and social disparities in the European Economic Area and to the strengthening of relations between Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway and Portugal.

The EEA Grants promote the European green transition, democracy, rule of law and human rights and social inclusion and resilience.

Support from the EEA Grants is based on the common values and principles of respect for human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law and the respect for human rights including the rights of persons belonging to minorities. All activities funded by the EEA Financial Mechanism 2021-2028 shall be consistent with respect for these values and principles.

Objective of the programme

The EEA Grants supports initiatives aiming at strengthening bilateral relations between Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway (Donor States) and Portugal through the Bilateral Fund. This Fund at national level is operated by the National Focal Point (NFP) and this call is launched under this scope.

Through the Joint Committee of the Bilateral Fund (JCBF) the Donor States and Portugal jointly establish the bilateral ambitions and identify priority areas for bilateral cooperation and discuss how these can be best addressed with the support of the BF. The identified priority areas and objectives for the BF are listed in the Work Plan, available online at:

https://eeagrants.org/sites/default/files/group/42/2026-02/bf-work-plan-portugal-2021-2028.pdf

Framework, objective and focus of this call

The rules-based international order is experiencing unprecedented challenges, with a visible impact on Europe in general, and Portugal and the Donor Countries in particular, and a significant increase in hybrid threats. The Russian invasion of Ukraine and the process of burden-shifting within NATO place increased responsibilities on European states. In this situation, cooperation between experts and researchers from Southern and Northern Europe to ensure a common understanding of the security situation and develop joint responses, is valuable.

It is within this context that the present call is launched. Its specific objectives related to the areas of defence, security and foreign policy, including joint research and public engagement on topics such as hybrid threats, critical infrastructure, cybersecurity, maritime security and the future of European defence cooperation, of the BF Open Call #1 are:

- To stimulate bilateral interests;
- To promote joint initiatives with clear bilateral value and concrete, tangible results;
- To foster sustainable cooperation through the support of impactful bilateral initiatives;

Funding is made available to initiatives that demonstrate a clear bilateral aim (active involvement of partners from both countries, joint design and implementation, mutual benefit and knowledge exchange) between Portugal and Norway and/or Iceland in areas of mutual interest related to the areas described in the previous paragraph.

All bilateral initiatives funded by EEAFM 2021-2028 should follow a Results Based Management approach that implies the definition of objectives, of measures to achieve the objectives and the measurement of progress to achieve the desired results.

The expected results of the supported bilateral initiatives should be translated into tangible products/activities (outputs) that promote cooperation between national entities and entities of the donor countries (outcome), thus contributing to the reinforcement of bilateral relations (impact).

The sustainability of the bilateral cooperation promoted by the proposed bilateral initiatives will also be valued.

We strongly recommend the submission of applications ensuring a balanced representation of women and men in the initiative team.

Expected results

The initiatives under this call are expected to strengthen and consolidate bilateral relations between Portugal, and Norway and Iceland within the areas of defence, security and foreign policy, including joint research and public engagement on topics such as hybrid threats, critical infrastructure, cybersecurity, maritime security and the future of European defence cooperation.

To achieve this, initiatives are expected to organize joint events (e. g., workshops, conferences, work meetings) and opportunities for technical cooperation, technical exchanges and study visits in Portugal and Norway and/or Iceland. Further results expected within this call are: internships or training, intensive courses, joint studies, publications and campaigns.

(Check Annex 5 – List of indicators.)

Eligible applicants and partners

Eligible applicants	Any entity, public or private, commercial or non-commercial, including any civil society organization such as non-governmental organizations, established as a legal person in Portugal, Norway and Iceland, are considered eligible bilateral activity promoters. Natural persons are not eligible under the BF Open Call #1. To submit an application all applicants must be registered at Balcão dos Fundos platform: https://balcaofundosue.pt To access this platform, promotors from Donor States (Norway and Iceland) they must complete prior registration to be able to apply. The entities from Donor States **must register until 14 August 2026**, by filling in the registration form available here: https://forms.office.com/e/eNpz9bpCbX?origin=lprLink0.
Eligible partners from Norway, Iceland and Portugal	Any public or private entity, commercial or non-commercial, as well as any civil society organization such as non-governmental organizations established as a legal person either in Norway or Iceland, in Portugal or in the other Beneficiary States are considered eligible initiative partners. **Only applications with at least one from Norway or Iceland (or Portugal, if the promotor is Norwegian or Icelandic) will be accepted**. Natural persons are not eligible under the BF Open Call #1.
Eligible partners from other eligible countries, international organisations	Any international organization or body or agency thereof, actively involved in, and effectively contributing to, the implementation of an initiative, is considered an eligible initiative partner, provided there is also at least one other partner from Norway or Iceland.

Partnership

Who is a partner?	A partner is an entity actively involved in, and effectively contributing to, the implementation of an initiative. It shares with the promoter a common economic or social goal which is to be realised through the implementation of that initiative. In this regard, a consultant, contractor, supplier or service provider is not considered a partner. All partners must be registered at Balcão dos Fundos platform: https://balcaofundosue.pt Partners from the Donor States (Norway and Iceland) must complete prior registration on the Balcão dos Fundos platform before the promoter submits an application. The Donor States entities **must register until 14 August 2026**, by filling in the registration form available here: https://forms.office.com/e/eNpz9bpCbX?origin=lprLink0.

Partnership with Norwegian and Icelandic entities	For Portuguese applicants, partnership with a partner from Norway or Iceland is mandatory under this call. For Norwegian or Icelandic applicants, partnership with a partner from Portugal is mandatory under this call. Under this call, the donor country shares are allocated as follows: • Norway: 450 000€ up to 500 000€ (90 to 100%), and • Iceland: up to 50 000€ (up to 10%). Applications involving donor partners shall be considered in light of these allocations. The applicant and the potential partner/s are expected to plan and agree on their responsibilities, including costs and schedule of their contributions and submit a signed **letter of intent** with the initiative application. To formalize the partnership at application level, a letter of intent must be submitted (see Annex 6 – Letter of Intent template). If an application is successful, a partnership agreement (see the Partnership Agreement template available in the Bilateral Fund Manual) shall be drawn up and signed between the partners and submitted along during the signing of an initiative contract.

Eligible activities

Thematic scope of activities	The range of activities eligible for support under the BF is broad, involving cooperation, networking, exchange, sharing and transfer of knowledge, technology, experience and best practices between Norwegian, Icelandic and Portuguese Entities.
Geographic scope of activities	The Bilateral Initiatives may take place in Portugal and/or in the Donor States.
Activities eligible for support	Activities that can be supported by the BF Open Call #1 could be, as examples: matchmaking events; technical cooperation and exchange of experts; short-term internships; training actions; workshops and seminars on topics of common interest; study and field visits; collection of data, reports, studies and publications, campaigns, etc.
Activities not eligible for support	Funding will be made available only to Bilateral Initiatives that demonstrate a clear bilateral aim with tangible results and bilateral outcomes.

Eligible expenditure and forms of grant

Start and final dates of eligibility of expenditure	Expenditures are eligible as of the date of the National Focal Point's final notification to award the project grant. The final date of eligibility of expenditure shall correspond to the final implementation date of the initiative as set out in the Acceptance Agreement which shall be no later than the date referred to under paragraph 2 of Article 4.7 of the Regulation[1] (30 April 2032).
Eligible expenditure	The allocation of funding and the eligibility of expenditure is subject to the existence of a clear bilateral profile of the activities to be financed. Activities must undoubtedly serve the tangible purpose of strengthening bilateral relations between Donor States and Portugal in the specific areas of this Open Call. Eligible expenditures are those actually incurred within the activity, which meet the following criteria:

[1] Any reference to 'the Regulation,' this should be understood as the Regulation on the implementation of the European Economic Area (EEA) Financial Mechanisms 2021–2028 (see Annex 1 – EEA FM 2021-2028 Regulation and Annexes).

- incurred between the first and final dates of eligibility of the approved Bilateral Initiative as specified in the Acceptance Agreement signed by the Promoter;
- connected with the subject of the approved Bilateral Initiative and they are indicated in the detailed budget in the Acceptance Agreement;
- proportionate and necessary for the implementation of the approved activity;
- used for the sole purpose of achieving the objectives of the approved Bilateral Initiative and the expected outcomes, in a manner consistent with the principles of economy, efficiency and effectiveness;
- identifiable and verifiable, in particular through being recorded in the accounting records of the Bilateral Initiative Promoter and/or Partner and determined according to the applicable accounting standards of the country where the Bilateral Initiative Promoter and/or Partner is established and according to generally accepted accounting principles; and
- comply with the requirements of applicable tax and social legislation.

Non-eligible expenditure

Indirect costs and costs of staff will not be considered eligible. The cost of purchasing new or second-hand equipment is not considered eligible. Only in exceptional cases, duly approved in the application or subsequent modifications, will the amounts of depreciation of equipment corresponding to the duration of the project or its effective use for the purposes of the initiative be considered eligible. (Check Annex 2 - Bilateral Fund Manual for more detail.)

Forms of grant

For this call, the forms of grants allowed are: actual incurred costs and two simplified cost options (lump sums and unit costs), and the combination thereof.

Different types of costs apply depending on the nature of the activity and its geographical scope.

The budget must be activity-based:

- all costs must be directly linked to the activities described in the application;
- the budget must be structured according to those activities, and
- travel activities must be budgeted separately from other activities.

Each activity must present a clear and justified set of costs.

For budget design and implementation guidelines, check Annex 3.

For selected applications, the Term of Agreement will contract the forms of grants and activities to be executed.

For more general information, check Annex 1 - EEA FM 2021-2028 Regulation and Annexes, and Annex 2 - Bilateral Fund Manual.

Financing conditions and reporting

Forms of payment

Payment of the project grant may take the form of advance payments, interim payments and a final payment.

The advance payment may be requested following the signature of the term of agreement contract and partnership agreement.

Further payment requests are linked to the initiative reporting schedule.

Reporting

Project Promoters shall report on the progress of their initiative via interim reports and a final report upon the completion of the initiative. Reporting deadlines shall be set in the initiative contract.

(Check the Annex 2 - Bilateral Fund Manual for more detail.)

Initiatives under 20 000€ or 1 year	% of project grant	Condition of payment	Deadline for payment
Advance payment	60%	Signature of initiative term of agreement and partnership agreement, and verification of no debt to the tax authorities and social security	Maximum 30 working days
Final payment	Up to 40%	Approval of project final report, and verification of no debt to the tax authorities and social security	Maximum 30 working days

Initiatives over 20 000€ or 1 year	% of project grant	Condition of payment	Deadline for payment
Advance payment	40%	Signature of initiative term of agreement and partnership agreement, and verification of no debt to the tax authorities and social security	Maximum 30 working days
Interim payments	30%	Approval of initiative interim report	Maximum 30 working days
Final payment	Up to 30%	Approval of initiative final report, and verification of no debt to the tax authorities and social security	Maximum 30 working days

State aid

State aid regime applied for the call

This call for proposals is subject to the de minimis state aid rules. In accordance with current regulations, beneficiaries of this scheme may receive a maximum of €300,000 per company over a period of three financial years on a rolling basis. This limit is intended to ensure compliance with state aid rules and promote transparency and fairness in the allocation of funding.
In Portugal, entities granting de minimis aid are responsible for monitoring the accumulation of state aid granted under the de minimis rule, and this is carried out through an information system for the central register of de minimis aid, known as SircaMinimis.
The Agency for Development and Cohesion, I.P., is responsible for establishing and maintaining the Central Register of De Minimis Aid under the terms of its Organic Law, as well as for monitoring the accumulation of financial and tax support granted under this scheme.
Further information can be found at: https://www.adcoesao.pt/fundos/portugal-2020/principios-e-politicas-horizontais/auxilios-de-minimis/

Information requested related to state aid

In the case of Portuguese applicants, if the applicant is a company, a declaration of a single company (Annex 7) or of an autonomous company (Annex 8) must be submitted, as applicable.

Submission of applications

Form and content of project applications	Project applications shall be prepared in English by filling in the application form, the budget, and providing further information, including the disclosure of any consultant involved in the preparation of the project application.
Method of submission	Project applications shall be submitted via Balcão dos Fundos platform before the deadline specified under the Basic Information section of this call. Applicants from the Donor States (Norway and Iceland) must complete prior registration in the Balcão dos Fundos platform before submitting an application. Applicants are advised to complete this step in advance, as validation may take a few days. The Donor States entities **must register until 14 August 2026**, by filling in the Registration Form available here: https://forms.office.com/e/eNpz9bpCbX?origin=lprLink0. The date and time of the submission of the Project Application is identical to the date and time of the registration of its receipt by the server of the Balcão dos Fundos platform. The platform is only available in Portuguese.
Limitations on the submission of applications	Each applicant may only submit one grant application under this call as promoter. In case more applications are submitted, only the first application registered as submitted will be considered. Further ones will be rejected. Entities that share the same tax registration number but are administratively, financially and/or scientifically independent will be considered separate entities, to be assessed on a case-by-case basis during the administrative eligibility check.

Selection procedure

General information	The National Focal Point shall be responsible for initiative selection and the award of grants, upon decision made by the Joint Committee for the Bilateral Fund.
Administrative and eligibility checks	The National Focal Point shall review all submitted applications against the defined administrative and eligibility criteria, including any exclusion criteria. Applications that are deemed not to have met the administrative and eligibility criteria will be rejected and excluded from further assessment. The applicant whose application is rejected at this stage may appeal against the decision within 10 working days after receiving the decision on the rejection of the application.
Assessment and Selection Procedure	Applications that meet the administrative and eligibility criteria shall be reviewed and scored against the selection criteria for assessment (check Annex 4 - Selection criteria and scoring for assessment) by the JCBF. Given the technical specificity of the areas covered by this call, the JCBF may be supported by independent external experts in the assessment of applications. Such experts shall be selected on the basis of their relevant expertise and shall comply with the principles of impartiality, independence and absence of conflict of interest. JCBF will approve the applications and their allocations for funding to be contracted by the NFP and the rejection of applications with insufficient evaluation profile. When approving an application for funding, the JCBF may set conditions or require modifications subject to confirmation from the applicant.

Grant award decision

The entities will be notified by the NFP of the final decision on the application. In the case of the entities whose applications are not approved, they will be given by the NFP the deadline of 10 working days to comment, in accordance with the Code of Administrative Procedure.

Initiative contracts

Based on the grant award decision, the National Focal Point shall conclude an initiative contract (Acceptance Agreement available in Annex 2 – Bilateral Fund Manual) with the Initiative Promoter setting out the terms and conditions of the grant and the roles and responsibilities of the parties.

Provisional timeline

Deadline for Norwegian and Icelandic entities to register at Balcão dos Fundos platform	14 August 2026
Deadline for submission of applications	15 September 2026
Administrative and eligibility checks	October 2026
Assessment of applications	November 2026
Decision on the award of grants	November 2026 – December 2026
Signature of project contracts	January 2027

Further information, contacts for queries and the complaint mechanism

Further information

For further information please consult the following documents:

EEA Financial Mechanism 2021-2028 Regulation and Annexes

(https://eeagrants.org/sites/default/files/eea-fm-21-28-regulation-and-annexes.pdf)

Bilateral Fund Agreement

(https://eeagrants.org/sites/default/files/group/42/2026-02/bf-agreement-portugal-2021-2028_09.10.2025-1.pdf)

Bilateral Fund Manual

(*https://eeagrants.org/sites/default/files/group/42/2026-04/bilateral-fund-manual-2021-2028-en-vf.pdf*)

Contact for queries

Any queries concerning the call may be directed to the appropriate channel within Balcão dos Fundos https://www.digitalfundos.pt/balcao/LinhaDosFundos.

Bear in mind that NFP cannot guarantee that queries submitted close to the deadline shall receive an answer before the call ends. A written response shall be sent up to 10 working days of the receipt of the query.

Frequently asked questions and answers will be published on the website of the call.

Contact to file a complaint	To file a complaint please address it to the following e-mail: alerta@eeagrants.gov.pt

Contact to Donor Countries

Iceland	**Norway**
Embassy of Iceland in Paris	Norwegian Embassy in Lisbon
paris@utn.is	Emb.lisbon@mfa.no
+33 1 44 17 32 85	+351 21 300 9100
www.mfa.is/paris	https://www.norway.no/pt/portugal/

Annexes to the call for proposals

Annex 01	EEA FM 2021-2028 Regulation and Annexes
Annex 02	Bilateral Fund Manual
Annex 03	Guideline for Budget implementation
Annex 04	Selection criteria and scoring chart for assessment
Annex 05	List of indicators
Annex 06	Letter of intent template
Annex 07	Declaration of Single Company (for Portuguese companies)
Annex 08	Declaration of Autonomous Company (for Portuguese companies)
Annex 09	Instructions for registration at *Balcão dos Fundos* platform and submitting an application (for Norwegian and Icelandic entities)