

Approved by the Minister of Social Affairs on March 31, 2014 with degree no 71
„Norra finantsmehhanismist 2009-2014 rahastatud
programmi „Sooline võrdõiguslikkus ning töö- ja pereelu tasakaal“
väiketoetuskeemi avatud taotlusvooru korraldamise ja toetuse andmise tingimuste
kehtestamine“
Annex

Guidelines for Applicants Responding to the Small grant scheme Call for Proposals
under the Norwegian Financial Mechanism 2009-2014
“Mainstreaming Gender Equality and Promoting Work-Life Balance”

GUIDELINES

GENERAL PROVISIONS

General Framework Regulating the Financial Mechanism and Programme Area

- (1) The objectives of the Norwegian Financial Mechanism 2009-2014 are to contribute to the reduction of economic and social disparities in the European Economic Area and to strengthen relations between Norway and the Beneficiary States.
- (2) The objective of the Norwegian Financial Mechanism 2009-2014 programme EE09 “Mainstreaming Gender Equality and Promoting Work-Life Balance” is to promote gender equality and work-life balance in Estonia through raising awareness on both subjects, promoting research on gender issues, and improving balance between work, private and family life.
- (3) The *Programme Operator* is responsible for the preparation, implementation and for achieving the objective of the programme as agreed upon within the framework of the Norwegian Financial Mechanism 2009-2014. The Programme Operator of the programme “Mainstreaming Gender Equality and Promoting Work-Life Balance” is the Estonian Ministry of Social Affairs (MoSA).
- (4) A *Project Promoter* is a public or private entity, commercial or non-commercial, as well as a nongovernmental organisation, having the responsibility to initiate, prepare and implement a project.
- (5) A *Project grant* is a grant awarded by the Programme Operator to a Project Promoter to implement a project. A maximum project grant is 90% of the total eligible costs of a project in the case of NGO-s and 85% of the total eligible costs of a project in case of all other Project Promoters.
- (6) *Small grant scheme* is a published call for project proposals contributing to the programme objective. There is one call for proposals within the framework of EE09 corresponding to the objective of promoting gender equality and work, private, and family life balance.
- (7) A *Project Contract* is an agreement between the Programme Operator and the Project Promoter regulating the implementation of a particular project and the use of the project grant.

CURRENT STATE OF AFFAIRS

(1) What do we mean by Gender Equality?

Gender equality, according to the Gender Equality Act¹, refers to the equal rights, obligations, opportunities, and responsibilities of men and women with reference to their professional lives, their acquisition of education and participation in other areas of social life.

Gender equality is a matter of human rights, public welfare and democracy. Under the contemporary concept of human rights, the gendered stratification of society is not only viewed as a hindrance to human development but as a breach of human rights as well. One of the presuppositions of economic and democratic development is that all individuals have to have equal opportunities to function successfully within societies. *Gender equality in a general sense* refers to a situation in which all members of society are free to develop their capabilities and make choices that are not limited by traditional gender roles and stereotypes, nor the hierarchical relations of power between men and women.

Gender equality in a narrower sense refers to an area of policy that is attempting to balance the social relations (incl. relations of power) between two of the largest social groups – men and women.

The term gender refers to the social roles, responsibilities, and opportunities that are attributed to men and women, signifying cultural customs, norms and values that determine the provisions of being a *man* or a *woman*, i.e. the societal expectations and not the biological differences. Gender identity and gender roles are not innate, they are acquired and shaped over time by various social norms, customs and ideologies; therefore, gender identity is not a static concept, but changing and changeable over time.

(2) Situation in Estonia

The Educational System²

In the course of education and training, a person develops his/her identity, values, convictions, attitudes, and an understanding of the social functioning of society, incl. gender roles which greatly influence subsequent professional and career choices. Consequently, these values uphold the labour market segregation, which in turn affects the gender pay gap.

Although an equal amount of boys and girls go through preschool and commence their further studies in the public education system, considerable differences appear in their further educational performance: more boys drop out of elementary schools, vocational and professional choices after both elementary and high-schools vary by sex, and a large gap in higher education between women and men prevails (to men's disadvantage). Even though the undereducated part of the population is predominantly made up of men (women are generally better educated), women are still at a disadvantage in the labour market and face many obstacles in attaining leadership positions in addition to economic independence.

¹The Gender Equality Act is available in English at:

<http://www.legaltext.ee/et/andmebaas/tekst.asp?loc=text&dok=X80041K2&keel=en&pg=1&ptyyp=RT&tyyp=X&query=soolise>

²Civil society has been the most active in the promotion of gender equality in the Estonian educational system.

For examples (in Estonian) refer to activities by the Estonian Women's Studies and Resource Centre (ENUT): <http://www.enut.ee/enut.php?id=278>; Activities (in Estonian) by the Estonian Women's Association Roundtable (EWAR): <http://www.enu.ee/haridus-ja-sugu/>

The rigid gender system, low awareness of both the principles of equal treatment and the intentions behind promoting gender equality have contributed to the development of a situation where prejudices, along with conservative and gender-stereotyped expectations on what is considered *gender-appropriate behaviour*, influence the decisions and choices of boys and girls (and men and women alike) not only in the field of education, but lead to differences in their socio-economic status and general well-being in their later lives as well.

Studies that have been conducted in Estonia show that stereotypical gender roles are being reproduced and determined not only through the attitudes and expectations of teachers and leaders in the field³, but also by curricula and study-materials along with shadow-curricula.⁴

Professional Life⁵

The horizontal segregation of the labour market

The current situation in the labour market reflects precisely the stereotype-based decision-making among members of society. Seeing as men and women are engaged in different fields of activity, we can safely conclude that clear division between so called *women's jobs* and *men's jobs* has developed (horizontal segregation). Women are the majority in fields that are considered important but which are not highly valued (social affairs, healthcare, and education). Men dominate in fields such as construction, energetics, and transportation. The negative side of this came into full effect during the economic recession that began in 2008 when the general employment rate started decreasing - more men lost their jobs than women since the recession had the strongest impact on fields in which men were and are overrepresented.

From the standpoint of gender equality, many other problems are associated with a horizontally segregated labour market. For example, common beliefs on what are *women's jobs* and what are *men's jobs* limit the self-actualization of men and women alike. This in turn indicates that society is losing a number of talents in various fields because the true potential of its members is not being utilized.⁶ The clear understanding of what job a man or a woman should and should not have influences the choices of future generations as well and in addition to limiting their career choices, sets limits on employers in trying to find highly qualified and educated labour.

The vertical segregation of the labour market

³Students – or boys and girls? A study into the preparedness of Estonian teachers and educationalist for gender sensitive teaching and upbringing. Collection of articles (in Estonian). Edited by Ü.-M. Papp. EWAR. Tallinn 2012. p 111. Available at: http://www.enu.ee/lisa/468_Kas_opilased_voi_poisid_ja_tydrukud_Artiklikogumik.pdf

⁴Gender roles in study materials. University of Tartu (2002) (in Estonian). Available at: [http://www.enut.ee/lisa/soorollid.pdf_\(14.01.2010\)](http://www.enut.ee/lisa/soorollid.pdf_(14.01.2010))

⁵Multiple activities have been conducted to promote gender equality in professional lives. Examples include: "Women to the top" <http://w2t.se/uk/index.htm>; EU Transition Facility 2006 programme project "Equality between Men and Women - Principle and Goal for Effective and Sustainable Enterprises" (in Estonian) <http://www.sm.ee/tegevus/sooline-vordoiguslikkus/toelu.html>; the Estonian ESF programme "Promotion of Gender Equality in 2008–2010" (in Estonian) <http://www.sm.ee/tegevus/sooline-vordoiguslikkus/soolise-vordoiguslikkuse-edendamise-programm-2008-2010.html> and the ESF programme "Promotion of Gender Equality 2011–2013"

⁶Järviste, L, "Gender Equality and Inequality: Attitudes and Situation in Estonia in 2009", Policy analysis series of the Ministry of Social Affairs, 3/2010 ENG, p 5, available at: http://www.sm.ee/fileadmin/meedia/Dokumendid/V2ljaanded/Toimetised/2010/series_20103eng.pdf

Men and women have not only applied themselves in different fields of activities, but in different occupations and levels as well (vertical segregation). According to data from 2012, 32.7%⁷ of executives in Estonia were women. The proportion of women in executive roles in the largest quoted companies was 26% and the proportion of women in highest decision-making bodies (supervisory boards or board of directors) was a meagre 8%.⁸ The first female president of an executive board began her term on 15 May 2013.⁹

Causes for this have to be looked for among general stereotyped attitudes. According to the 2013 Gender Equality Monitoring, only 48% of Estonians agreed with the statement that the inclusion of women to leadership positions would be beneficial to organizations. More than a third of the respondents (37%) completely disagreed with that statement.¹⁰ At the same time, the Monitoring demonstrated that in cases where people had had positive experiences with women in leadership positions, they were much more positively inclined to the notion of including women to leadership positions.¹¹ We may conclude that increasing the number of women among top executives is a crucial step in the gradual improvement of all women's career opportunities.

Problems regarding balancing professional and private lives may also be considered as hindrances to women's ability to move upward on the career-ladder in addition to achieving a better balance between men and women in decision-making positions. As a result of problems accompanying the balancing of professional and private lives, employers often view women as unreliable and as less dedicated workers. The lack of role models for women, a lack of mentoring programmes and a lack of experience in some spheres hinder women's opportunities to make a career.

Pay gap

The horizontal and vertical segregation of the labour market is one of the many reasons why the gender pay gap is so high in Estonia (30% in 2012¹²).

An extensive study of the nature, extent and reasons for the gender pay gap was commissioned by the Estonian Ministry of Social Affairs in the years 2009-2010 within the framework of the European Social Fund programme "Promotion of Gender Equality 2008-2010"¹³. The study was carried out by two independent research centres, Praxis and

⁷ Statistics Estonia, Estonian Labour Force Survey

⁸ Data by the European Commission, available at http://ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/gender-decision-making/database/business-finance/executives-non-executives/index_en.htm

⁹ More information available at:
<https://newsclient.omxgroup.com/cdsPublic/viewDisclosure.action?disclosureId=545191&messageId=671942>

¹⁰ Faktum ja Ariko (appear soon). Soolise võrdõiguslikkuse monitooring 2013

¹¹ Ibid, p 10

¹² The average in the European Union in 2011 was 16.2 %. Information available at:
<http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/tgm/table.do?tab=table&init=1&language=en&pcode=tsdsc340&plugin=0>

¹³ Articles about empirical analysis and policy recommendations parts of this survey are available in English at:
http://www.sm.ee/fileadmin/meedia/Dokumendid/V2ljaanded/Publikatsioonid/2011/Gender_pay_gap_Estonia_analysis.pdf and
http://www.sm.ee/fileadmin/meedia/Dokumendid/V2ljaanded/Publikatsioonid/2011/Gender_pay_gap_Estonia_recommendations.pdf

CENTAR, who, besides studying the nature of the gender pay gap, made policy recommendations on how and with what means to proceed when attempting to reduce the gender pay gap. The study showed that, taking real wages as the basis, the general gender pay gap between the years 2000 and 2008 was on average 28.6%, with the unexplained wage difference forming approximately 85% of this figure. According to the same survey, between 2000–2008, both the general and the unexplained pay gap increased.

According to the results of the survey, the Estonian gender pay gap itself is a result of many different problems and numerous interrelated aspects affect it. Such aspects include general prevailing attitudes and stereotypes in society, the level of knowledge of policy makers regarding gender equality and its mainstreaming, women's career breaks, the possibilities offered to balance work and family life and the gender segregation in the labour market.

*Parents' employment*¹⁴

Gender disparities manifest themselves in the general employment rate as well. According to Eurostat, the employment rate of men in the age group 20-64 was 72.2% in 2012 and that of women was 69.3%.

There are noteworthy differences in the participation in the labour market between men and women with children under the age of 3 as well. According to Statistics Estonia, the employment rate of women with small children was 45-55% between 2000 and 2009. Only 30,6% of women (compared to 90% of men) whose household included children under 3 years of age were employed in 2012. The percentage of employment among women was remarkably higher (76,4%) in households which included children between the ages of 3-6¹⁵.

As of 31 December 2013, less than six percent of persons on parental leave or receiving parental benefits were men¹⁶. Hence, only a marginal share of fathers takes primary responsibility for raising small children. Furthermore, part time work which would allow focusing strongly on other capacities besides professional work is not widely spread among men.

In comparison to men, women are engaged in part-time work more frequently. The difference is especially striking in households with children under the age of 3. 54%¹⁷ of women who work part-time have reported the need to fulfill care responsibilities as the reason for doing so. Additionally, women have cut working hours and taken days off to take care of children remarkably more often than men. Therefore, as a result of perceiving childcare as solely a woman's job in Estonia, women experience longer career-

¹⁴We recommend reading the Development plan for Children and Families (in Estonian):
<http://www.valitsus.ee/et/valitsus/arengukavad>

¹⁵Krusell, S. Reconciling work and family life as a task for women?, in Statistics Estonia publication "Man`s Home is the World, Woman`s World is Her Home", Tallinn 2011, p 74, available at:
http://www.stat.ee/publication-download-pdf?publication_id=25640

¹⁶Estonian National Social Insurance Board (2013) Explanatory letter to the reports „Määratud vanemahüvitised liikide lõikes“ (31 December 2013) and „Määratud vanemahüvitised sotsiaalmaksuga maksustatava tulu lõikes“ (01 January 2014) available in Estonian at: <http://www.sotsiaalkindlustusamet.ee/2013a-vanem/>

¹⁷Krusell, S. Reconciling work and family life as a task for women?, in Statistics Estonia publication "Man`s Home is the World, Woman`s World is Her Home", Tallinn 2011, p 68, available at:
http://www.stat.ee/publication-download-pdf?publication_id=25640

breaks which have a negative impact on their future careers opportunities and choices, economical independence, incomes and pension.

The described differences are mostly contingent upon the unequal division of care burdens between women and men, partly by shortages of affordable and high-quality childcare possibilities, and partly by inadequate opportunities (offered by the employers) to reconcile work, family, and private life.

The above mentioned problems influence not only employment rates but the opportunities for men and women to parenting and take part in society as well as their ability to achieve complete self-fulfilment.

Policy Formulation and Enforcement¹⁸

According to the Gender Equality Act, all state and local government agencies are required to promote gender equality systematically and purposefully. Their duty is to change the conditions and circumstances that hinder the achievement of gender equality. While planning, implementing and assessing national, regional, and institutional strategies, policies, and action plans, these agencies have to take into account the different needs and social status of men and women and consider how different measures affect the situation of men and women.

In December 2012, the Government of Estonia adopted a new methodology for impact analysis¹⁹ for officials who are actively involved in formulating policies, developing area-specific development plans, taking official stances in matters concerning the EU or the transposition of EU legislation to perform an impact analysis. The objective of the methodology is to improve and unify the capabilities of various government offices in the process of developing and implementing government policies.

The low awareness of government officials on the various manifestations and effects of the principles and strategies of the promotion of gender equality as well as a lack of other related competencies, inhibit the efficient enforcement of laws and procedures as well as the full promotion of gender equality.

To change this, it would be of utmost importance to provide those employed in the public sector with much needed additional policy knowledge and skills, as well as advice, in order to support them in the processes of policy formulation and enforcement.

¹⁸ A number of activities have been carried out to promote gender mainstreaming in Estonia. Examples include: a Phare Twinning Project "Development of Administrative Capacity of National Authorities in the Field of Gender Mainstreaming" was implemented in 2004-2005 between German and Estonian partners <http://gender.sm.ee/index.php?097923740>; "Gender Impact Assessment as a Core Measure for Gender Mainstreaming" <http://www.ut.ee/gender/pdf/GM%20impact%20analysis%20Est.pdf>; "Gender Mainstreaming Strategy. A manual" http://www.sm.ee/fileadmin/meedia/Dokumendid/V2ljaanded/Publikatsioonid/2006/SV_strateegia.pdf; "Gender Equality Act. Commented edition" http://www.sm.ee/fileadmin/meedia/Dokumendid/Sotsiaalvaldkond/sooline_v6/Soolise_vordoigusliikkuse_seadu_s_Kommenteeritud_valjaanne.pdf; "Equality for local development: gender mainstreaming in municipalities" <http://digar.nlib.ee/digar/show/?id=35976>; project "Mainstreaming gender perspective into state budget" <http://www.sm.ee/tegevus/sooline-vordoigusliikkus/programm-progress.html> and the manual that was published in the same framework "State budget for men and women. Need-based budgeting in the public sector" http://www.svv.ee/failid/RNJM%20VEAS_2012_final_bookmargid25012012.pdf

¹⁹Ministry of Justice

<http://www.just.ee/orb.aw/class=file/action=preview/id=57830/m%F5jude+hindamise+metoodika.pdf>

Role of media in reflecting masculinities and femininities

As a rule, mainstream media is rather conservative in perpetuating cultural stereotypes. The ways of depicting men and women serve the interests of an androcentric gender system by putting men and women in unequal positions²⁰. Within the editorial staff, men are usually the decision-makers highlighting “hard” topics like politics, economics, and crime where men dominate, and neglect “softer” areas like culture, the social sphere, education and caretaking where women are predominantly active.

In theoretical literature, two problems have been pointed out in connection to depicting women in the media. Firstly, the media depicts women less than men which indicates that the media does not reflect the activities of women – considering their activities irrelevant. Secondly, there is a problem with the way of depicting women: even women who are celebrities are portrayed with a focus on home and private life affairs²¹.

Nevertheless, the media has the potential to contribute to adjusting gender roles by reflecting life not only by reiterating cultural stereotypes but also by communicating to its readers and viewers the various and changing ways of being a man or a woman in a manner which is as balanced as possible²².

RULES CONCERNING THE PRESENT CALL FOR PROPOSALS

Overall Objective and Expected Outcomes

- 1) The call for proposals under the small grant scheme is designed to support activities aimed at promoting gender equality and/or contributing to the reconciliation of work, family and private life through enhancing the capacity of organisations and networks with the aim of improving the gender balance in society. Above all, grant will be awarded to initiatives which demonstrate sustainability and do not duplicate activities financed through the earlier open calls and pre-defined projects under the same programme²³.
- 2) As a result of implementing projects which promote gender equality, the capacity of organisations supporting gender balance has improved. The organisations have a greater influence in policy development, changing public attitudes, awareness raising, and knowledge building in the area of gender equality. Cooperation between various organisations has improved and measures for gender mainstreaming are being developed.
- 3) As a result of implementing projects which support the balance of work, family and private life, the organisations have a greater capacity to influence the working environment and quality of life through raising the awareness of

²⁰ Pilvre, B. (2011) Naiste meediapresentatsioon Eesti ajakirjanduskultuuri ja ühiskonna kontekstis. Tartu University. See: http://dspace.utlib.ee/dspace/bitstream/handle/10062/17921/pilvre_barbi.pdf?sequence=1

²¹ Tuchman, G. (1978). The symbolic annihilation of women by the mass media. O. Boyd-Barrett & C. Newbold. Approaches to media: A reader. London: Arnold, pages 406–419.

²² See for example Malmberg: Malmberg, K. (2005/2006). Meeste meediakujutise muutus 1996. ja 2004. aasta Eesti Päevalehe ja Postimehe nädalalõpulisade näitel. Ariadne Lõng, 1/2, 25–34.

²³ <http://www.sm.ee/norra-programmi-uldleht/soolise-vordoiguslikkuse-ning-too-ja-pereelu-tasakaalu-programm/avatud-taotlusvoorud.html>

employers and employees in regards to the importance of the reconciliation of work, family and private life. Furthermore, employers support the facilitation of the reconciliation of work, family and private life.

Supported Types of Activities

Promoting gender equality through enhancing the capacity of organisations and networks, and developing measures which foster the reconciliation of work, family and private life and hence promote gender equality.

We support the initiatives of various organisations and networks which improve the effectiveness of their work in awareness raising and changing public attitudes to achieve a more favourable public opinion on gender equality. Priority is given to projects in the areas of education and working life, policy making and implementation, and media. We are looking for projects which would continue to have an impact after the end of the project, for instance, those foreseeing training of specialists and enhancing the training capacity of organisations, sharing of experience and gaining of new knowledge (incl. acquisition of knowledge based on research and its adaptation to Estonian settings), and establishment and development of cooperation networks.

➤ These actions may include but are not limited to:

- 1..i. development and piloting of measures for improving the competence of policy makers and policy implementers of central and local governments in the area of gender equality;
- 1..ii. development and piloting of measures for improving the gender balance among the executives and top executives in the private and public sector (incl. mentoring programmes, support networks, etc.);
- 1..iii. development and piloting of a system (incl. competitions, labels) for recognising and amplifying media coverage which supports gender balance and equality;
- 1..iv. development and piloting of measures supporting compliance with the principle of equal pay for women and men for the same work and work of equal value (incl. gender-sensitive system for valuation and comparison of work, guidelines, cooperation networks, etc.);
- 1..v. development and implementation of measures supporting cooperation between non-governmental and other organisations for the purpose of achieving more effective implementation of the Gender Equality Act (e.g. conferences, seminars, analyses);
- 1..vi. development and piloting of measures which support re-entering the labour market after parental leave and the preservation of employment identity and/or individual development of parents staying at home;
- 1..vii. development and piloting of measures which recognise and foster paternal identity and active fatherhood by employers.

Application Deadline and Period of Eligibility

- (1) The deadline for submitting applications is **Monday, June 2, 2014 at 12:00 PM (EET)**. All calls are open for two months from the date on which they are officially announced by MoSA. All applications must be submitted on the proper form together with all relevant annexes.
- (2) The eligibility of activities and costs starts from the date on which the decision to allocate support to a project is made.

- (3) Maximum duration of the Projects is 18 months. All eligible activities must be finished by March 31, 2016 at the latest.

Size of Grants

- (1) The total amount to be distributed is 370 000 EUR.
 - the minimum amount of one grant is 5 000 EUR and the maximum amount 50 000 EUR.
- (2) The maximum grant rate for non-governmental organisations is 90% of total eligible expenditure and 85% of total eligible expenditure for all other applicants. This means that the minimum co-financing rate for non-governmental organisations is 10% of total eligible expenditure and 15% of total eligible expenditure for all other applicants.
- (3) The grant given may be considered to be de minimis aid as specified in Commission Regulation (EC) nr. 1407/2013. Before adopting the decision to grant de minimis aid, the Programme Operator will notify the beneficiary of the aid of the planned grant of de minimis aid. De minimis aid given from different sources shall not exceed a ceiling of 200 000 EUR over any period of three years. Information on de minimis aid previously granted to Estonian applicants shall be checked from the relevant register under the Estonian Ministry of Finance (<http://www.fin.ee/riigiabi>).

APPLICATION PROCESS. ELIGIBILITY OF APPLICANTS AND PROJECTS

Submitting an Application

- (1) All applications should be signed digitally and sent to MoSA via email at info@sm.ee. The subject of the email should read: "Norway Grants, small grant scheme - Mainstreaming Gender Equality and Work-Life Balance". All applications must be submitted on or before the deadline set forth in these guidelines. Information on how to sign documents digitally is available on the homepage of the Certification Centre at <http://www.id.ee/>.
- (2) In the case that a digital signature is not obtainable, an application may be submitted in the form of a hard copy (2 copies: one signed and marked as "the original") by mailing it or bringing it in person to MoSA (address: Gonsiori 29, 15027 Tallinn). Nonetheless, an electronic version of the application must be submitted as well.
- (3) All applications submitted after the deadline will be disregarded and will not be evaluated. Applications that arrive past the deadline due to a server failure of the applicant or that carry postal stamps of the deadline day, but arrive to MoSA later than the set time, will be disregarded as well.
- (4) Guidelines for the Call for Proposals including the application form (together with all relevant annexes) are available at <http://norra.sm.ee>.

Eligible Applicants and Project Partners

- (1) Any entity, public or private, commercial or non-commercial and non-governmental organisations*, established as legal entities in Estonia as well as inter-governmental organisations operating in Estonia are all considered eligible applicants.
- (2) An applicant must possess knowledge, skills and experience as well as administrative capacity to implement the project for which the grant is applied for. The application must provide proof of the existence of a competent project

manager, a realistic time schedule and appropriate activities that should all contribute to achieving the expected results.

- (3) Any entity, public or private, commercial or non-commercial, as well as non-governmental organisations, all of whose primary locations are either in Norway, Estonia, other Beneficiary States (Latvia, Lithuania, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Slovenia, Poland, Hungary, Bulgaria, Romania, Cyprus or Malta), Russia or any inter-governmental organisation, actively involved in and effectively contributing to the implementation of a project are considered eligible partners for the projects. The partner shares a common economic or social goal with the applicant which is to be realised through the implementation of the project. The Project Promoter is obligated to sign Partnership Agreements with all of the Project Partners before the contracts between the Project Promoter and MoSA can be signed. The Project Promoters' expenditures will be compensated on the account of charges incurred (i.e. expense receipts), similarly to the Project Promoters'. The Project Partner may not be considered as an organization that provides services. Nonetheless, as one of the objectives of the Norwegian Financial Mechanism is the strengthening of bilateral relations between Norway and the beneficiary states, projects that contribute to the accomplishment of that goal will be favoured in the evaluation process. Partnership projects with Norwegian and with Estonian organizations, institutions, and experts are particularly encouraged. To raise the effectiveness of the projects, MoSA can submit a proposal to the applicants requesting cooperation in executing similar or equal activities.
- (4) An applicant must not have national tax liabilities, including social security contribution obligations as of the time of submitting the project (source: electronic database of the Tax and Customs Board).
- (5) The applicant as well as the partner organisation(s) may not be under liquidation procedures or bankruptcy, the operation of the organisation may not be put to a halt and none of the people associated with the project (at any level) may be convicted of professional misconduct, fraud, money laundering, corruption, involvement in criminal organisations or in some other illegal operations.

* In the framework of this Call for Proposals, *Non-governmental organisations* (NGOs) are considered to be non-profit voluntary organisations established as legal entities, having a non-commercial purpose, independence of local, regional and central government, public entities, political parties and commercial organisations. Religious institutions and political parties are not considered NGOs.

Eligibility of an Application

- (1) Applications must be presented on the proper form (Annex 1 "Application form") and include the following documents:
 - a detailed budget (Annex 1A "Project Budget");
 - CVs of team members, experts and the project manager;
 - in case of the existence of project partners, a letter of consent by the partner (Annex 4 "Project Partner Statement").
- (2) An application is eligible when:
 - the activities listed in the application correspond with activities supported in the current call for proposals (Promoting Gender Equality and/or Promoting Work-Life Balance);
 - the amount of the applied grant corresponds with the minimum and maximum grant rate requirements set forth in the current Call for Proposals;
 - minimum duration of the project is 1 month and maximum 18 months;

- the applicant foresees co-financing of the project in correspondence with the requirements for co-financing that have been set forth in the current call for proposals;
- eligible project activities have not begun before MoSA has made the official decision to allocate a grant to an applicant and activities are planned to end by March 31, 2016 at the latest;
- the information presented in the application is complete and correct;
- the application complies with the administrative eligibility check-list (Annex 2 "Administrative eligibility check-list");
- the application and all other relevant documents are signed by an authorised person.

EVALUATION PROCESS

Administrative Compliance of the Applicants and Applications

- (1) An e-mail confirming the submission of an application will be sent by the Chief Program Specialist to the contact person named in the application.
- (2) MoSA will check the administrative and eligibility criteria of the application (Annex 2 "Administrative eligibility check-list") and then draw up minutes with the decision on which applications qualify for the evaluation process and which do not.
- (3) In the case that an application does not pass the administrative and eligibility criteria check, the Chief Program Specialist will set a deadline for the Applicant to eliminate the shortcomings. If the shortcomings are eliminated by the set deadline, the application will be directed into the process of evaluating its content. If the shortcomings are not eliminated within the set deadline, the application will be excluded from the evaluation process. The Applicant has the right to contest the decision in the Administrative Court within 30 calendar days after the decision is made.

Evaluation of Applications and Casting a Financing Decision

- (1) Every application that meets the administrative and eligibility criteria will be evaluated by two independent experts who will separately evaluate the quality of each proposed project according to the selection criteria/evaluation grid (Annex 3 "Evaluation grid"). If the difference between the scores given by the two experts is more than 30%, a third expert will be commissioned to conduct an independent evaluation. In such cases the average of the two closest scores shall be used in the ranking of the applications.
- (2) The ranking of applications by their average scores will thereafter be forwarded to a Selection Committee.
- (3) The Selection Committee is a committee established by MoSA, consisting of at least three persons all of whom possess relevant expertise. At least one of them shall be external to MoSA. The Selection Committee will review the ranking of applications. It may modify the ranking in justified cases or make the decision that a project will receive funding on the condition that activities that have been deemed unreasonable by the expert evaluators or the Selection Committee will be removed from project. The justification for modifications in the ranking and other amendments shall be detailed in the minutes of the meeting of the Selection Committee.
- (4) The Selection Committee will approve the ranking and submit the list to MoSA.

Approving or Disapproving an Application

- (1) Based on the decision of the Selection Committee, MoSA will make a decision on which projects will receive the grant.
- (2) Applications scoring on average less than 59 points out of 90, will not be awarded a grant.
- (3) The Chief Program Specialist will inform applicants of the evaluation results via e-mail within two weeks after the financing decision has been made. The information will also be published on MoSA's website for the Norwegian Financial Mechanism 2009-2014. Applicants who do not receive a grant will receive feedback on the shortcomings and weaknesses of their applications.
- (4) MoSA will sign project contracts with all Project Promoters who will receive financing through the Norwegian Financial Mechanism. The project contracts are contracts under public law, signed in accordance with the Administrative Procedure Act.

Modification and Termination of the Project Contract

- (1) MoSA or the Project Promoter may launch an amendment procedure of the project contract if it becomes clear – through monitoring activities or through other relevant sources – that changes are needed to assure the achievement of a project's objectives.
- (2) MoSA may launch the amendment or termination procedure of a project contract if it becomes clear that an awarded grant is no longer justified.
- (3) Modifications that do not affect the objective, outcomes, outputs, indicators or targets of a project do not call for a project contract amendment provided that changes have been confirmed with MoSA in advance and that the cumulative transfers between budget headings are less than 10% of total eligible expenditures. However, this excludes the request to change management costs.

PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

Eligibility of Expenditures

- (1) The period of eligibility of a project is fixed in the project contract and limits the timeline when eligible project activities can take place and relevant costs may incur.
- (2) The eligibility of activities and costs starts from the date on which the decision to allot a grant to a project is made by MoSA and ends on March 31, 2016.
- (3) Eligible expenditures of projects are actually incurred by the Project Promoter and meet the following criteria:
 - they have been 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 shown 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 by being recorded in the accounting records of the Project Promoter and determined in accordance with applicable accounting standards of the country where the Project Promoter is established and are in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles;

- they comply with the requirements of applicable tax and social legislation.
- (4) Expenditures are considered to have been incurred when the cost has been invoiced, paid and the subject matter delivered (in case of goods) or performed (in case of services and works). Exceptionally, costs in respect of which an invoice has been issued in the final month of eligibility are also deemed to be incurred within the dates of eligibility if the costs are paid within 30 calendar days of the final date for eligibility. Overheads and depreciation of equipment are considered to have been incurred when they are recorded on the accounts of the Project Promoter.
- (5) Direct eligible expenditures of a project are those expenditures which are identified by the Project Promoter and/or the project partner, in accordance with their accounting principles and customary internal rules, as specific expenditures directly linked to the implementation of the project and which can therefore be booked to it directly.
- the cost of staff assigned to the project, comprising of actual salaries and social security charges as well as other statutory costs included in the remuneration, provided that this corresponds to the Project Promoter's and project partner's customary policy on remuneration;
 - travel and subsistence allowances for staff taking part in the project, provided that they are in line with the Project Promoter's and project partner's customary practices on travel costs and do not exceed the relevant national scales;
 - cost of new or second hand equipment, provided that it is depreciated in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles applicable to the Project Promoter and generally accepted for items of the same kind. NB! Only the portion of the depreciation corresponding to the duration of the project and the rate of actual use for the purposes of the project may be taken into account by MoSA;
 - purchase of land and real estate directly linked to the objectives of the project and representing maximum up to 10% of the total eligible expenditure (see Article 7.5 of the Regulation of the Norwegian Financial Mechanism);
 - costs of consumables and supplies, provided that they are identifiable and assigned to the project;
 - costs entailed by other contracts awarded by a Project Promoter for the purposes of carrying out the project
 - costs arising directly from requirements imposed by the project contract for each project (e.g. dissemination of information, specific evaluation of the action, audits, translations, reproduction).
- (6) Indirect costs are all eligible costs contributing to the project but which cannot be solely identified with one concrete project activity (i.e. office costs). Flat-rate methodology of 15% of eligible direct staff costs shall be applied to indirect costs without a requirement for the Project Promoter to execute any calculation to determine the applicable rate.
- List of indirect costs under flat-rate methodology include (list is conclusive):
- administrative personnel costs (accountants, personnel workers, procurement specialists, IT specialists, other assisting workers);
 - office supplies;
 - communication costs, including telephone and postal costs;
 - information technology (servers and networks) and maintenance of equipment;
 - public utilities, including heating, water, electricity and cleaning;
 - room rent;
 - security services;
 - land tax;

- costs of opening and administrating the project related bank account and transfer fees of the payment if a separate bank account is necessary for the project.

These costs cannot be submitted as direct eligible expenditures.

- (7) 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;
 - provisions for losses or potential future liabilities;
 - exchange losses;
 - recoverable VAT;
 - costs that are covered by other sources;
 - fines, penalties and costs of litigation;
 - excessive or reckless expenditure.
- (8) Every project must include co-financing with by a minimum of 15% of the eligible expenditures of the project. In case of NGOs the project grant rate may be up to 90% of eligible expenditures.
- (9) In case of projects implemented by NGOs, in-kind contribution in the form of voluntary work may constitute up to 50% of the co-financing required by the programme for the project and will be calculated according to the median average labour expenses (per hour or per month) in the particular region and category of labour, including all required social security contributions, on the basis of the salary survey carried out by Fontes PMP OÜ²⁴. Additional information regarding the salary of a concrete category of labour can be acquired from the contact person of the call for proposals. NB! The expenses representing voluntary work will not be used in the calculation of the projects' indirect costs (i.e. voluntary work is not part of direct staff costs).

PAYMENTS AND REPORTING

Method of Payments

- (1) If the duration of the project **is more than 12 months**, the Project Promoter will submit an advance payment request to MoSA no later than at the time of signing the project contract. The advance payment request includes an expenditure forecast for the first and second reporting period (the duration of a reporting period is four months). The advance payment may not exceed 25% of the total amount of the allotted grant. The subsequent interim payments will be made jointly with the interim financial reporting where the costs made in the last reporting period will be checked and approved and a new payment request will be submitted for the next reporting period.
- (2) If the duration of the project **is less than 12 months**, the Project Promoter will submit an advance payment request to MoSA which may not exceed 80% of the total amount of the allotted grant.
- (3) *A payment request* is a formal written request made on a standard form that will be submitted by the Project Promoter to MoSA in order to receive the next payment of the project grant. The payment request will be accompanied with a list of costs made and copies of invoices and payment receipts requested by MoSA. The payment request must include all eligible costs of the project made within the reporting period and can be verified. In justified cases and in agreement with MoSA, the Project Promoter may present costs related to the previous reporting

²⁴available at:

<http://www.fontes.ee/cms-data/upload/files/eesti-palgauuring-2013-luhitutvustus.pdf>

- period in the payment request.
- (4) MoSA may withhold up to 20% of the total grant, i.e. the final payment until the approval of the project's final report.
 - (5) The payments to the Project Promoter will be made in the same proportion as the project grant rate constituted in the project contract.
 - (6) The Project Promoter is responsible for forwarding the relevant grant to its project partner(s).

Project Interim and Final Reporting

- (1) Within 20 workdays after the end of a reporting period, the Project Promoter will submit an interim project progress report as well as a financial report to MoSA. Both reports will have to be submitted three times a year if the duration of the projects is **more than 12 months**. If the duration of the project **is less than 12 months**, the Project Promoter will submit one interim project progress report as well as a financial report to MoSA.
- (2) Specific reporting periods will be identified in the project contract.
- (3) Within 40 workdays after the end of the project activities, the Project Promoter will submit a final project report that will have to include final progress and final financial reports.
- (4) MoSA will review the interim project progress report within 10 workdays and the final project report within 20 workdays after the report has been submitted by the Project Promoter. When no deficiencies are found, MoSA will approve the report.
- (5) In the case that deficiencies are detected, MoSA will request corrections from the Project Promoter within a reasonable deadline.

Irregularities

- (1) In the case of irregularities, Regulation No 278 of the Government of Estonia - "*The procedure and criteria of reclaiming and reimbursing the received grant and informing on irregularities*" - (adopted on December 22, 2006) will be followed.
- (2) According to Article 7.16.2 of the Regulation on the implementation of the Norwegian Financial Mechanism 2009-2014 all Project Promoters must follow the Estonian Public Procurement Act. Article 7.16.3 makes an exception to NGOs who have to comply with the Public Procurement Act starting from thresholds set for public procurement by the European Union. Neglecting the before mentioned act will be treated as an irregularity.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION AND CONTACTS

(1) Date of Information Seminars

Detailed information on the date, venue and agenda of the information seminar on the Small grant scheme regarding the programme "Mainstreaming Gender Equality and Promoting Work-Life Balance" will be made available on the programme's website <http://norra.sm.ee>.

(2) Queries and contacts

All queries regarding this Call for Proposals should be directed to the Contact Person (see below the contacts). The queries sent by email will be answered as quickly as possible, but no later than 3 working days.

Contact Person:

Irje Tammeleht

Gender Equality Department
Ministry of Social Affairs

E-mail: irje.tammeleht@sm.ee, Phone: (+372) 626 9814

Website: <http://norra.sm.ee>

(3) Documents and other Relevant Information Related to the Norwegian Financial Mechanism 2009-2014

- Memorandum of Understanding on the implementation of the Norwegian Financial Mechanism for the period 2009-2014 between The Kingdom of Norway and The Republic of Estonia²⁵
- Programme Agreement of the Norwegian Financial Mechanism 2009-2014 programme "Mainstreaming Gender Equality and Promoting Work-Life Balance"²⁶
- Regulation on the implementation of the Norwegian Financial Mechanism 2009-2014²⁷
- Regulation No 278 of the Government of Estonia - "*The procedure and criteria of reclaiming and reimbursing the received grant and informing on irregularities*" - (adopted on December 22, 2006) (In Estonian)²⁸
- Website of the Ministry of Finance dedicated to the Norwegian and European Economic Area Financial Mechanisms 2009-2014²⁹
- Website of the Norwegian and European Economic Area Financial Mechanisms 2009-2014³⁰

²⁵<https://www.riigiteataja.ee/akt/217062011001>

²⁶<http://norra.sm.ee>

²⁷<http://eeagrants.org/content/download/5899/65320/version/1/file/Regulation+Norway+Grants+2009-2014.pdf>

²⁸<https://www.riigiteataja.ee/akt/12769549>

²⁹<http://eeagrants.fin.ee/>

- Website of the Norwegian Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs – the Donor Programme Partner³¹

³⁰<http://eeagrants.org/>

³¹<http://www.bufetat.no/engelsk/bufdir/>