CALL FOR PROPOSALS
Procedure for acceptance of project proposals for grants from the Republic of Bulgaria

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Bulgaria through the Embassy of the Republic of Bulgaria in Tunis, Tunisia announces a procedure for the acceptance and selection of proposals for projects to be implemented with a grant through the Official Development Assistance of the Republic of Bulgaria, with an initial implementation period in 2027.

Priority Areas for Project Implementation on the territory of Tunisia:

- Support in the field of education – improving the quality of education, including through improving the educational infrastructure and access to quality education for vulnerable groups in less developed regions;
- Support in the field of healthcare – improving the quality of healthcare and healthcare infrastructure in Tunisia and providing better access to essential healthcare services in less developed regions of the country.

1. Objectives and Scope of the Projects:

- Repair, reconstruction, rehabilitation, modernization or equipment of state or municipal educational or healthcare infrastructure (contributing to the Sustainable Development Goals for Quality education, Good Healthcare and Well-being;
- Organizing training courses for students and state and local administration employees (contributing to the goals of Quality Education, Decent Work and Economic Growth, and Gender Equality).

2. Target Groups:

- pupils and students (including people with special needs or disabilities, vulnerable or disadvantaged groups, and marginalized communities);
- teachers and administrative staff of schools and universities;
- doctors, practitioners and employees in medical and healthcare institutions;
- employees of the state and local administration.

3. Outputs/Results:

- Promoting Bulgaria's reputation and international image as a donor country; *- Ensuring an inclusive and equitable quality education;* *- Ensuring access to quality healthcare;* *- Contributing to good governance and sustainable economic development;* *- Building and strengthening the administrative capacity of educational and healthcare institutions;* *- Improving the quality of life.*

4. Eligible Project Budget:

4.1. Minimal amount of the project is 10 000 euro.

4.2. Recommended maximum amount of the project is:

- for projects with main purpose to deliver goods and /or services – up to 50 000 euro;
- for projects with main purpose to carry out repairs and /or construction activities – up to 50 000 euro;
- for projects with main purpose to carry out so called "soft components of ODA: /conferences, seminars, study visits, colloquiums and so on/ - **up to 15 000 euro and term – up to 9 months.**

4.3. Co-financing of project activities provided by the applicant will be considered an advantage in the evaluation, selection and approval of the projects.

4.4 Project proposals envisaging joint activities with Bulgarian institutions /ministries, schools, higher education institutions, institutes, research centers, etc./ will also be considered with priority.

5. Implementation Deadlines and Duration of the Projects:

5.1. Project proposals must include an **indicative start date for project implementation no later than June 1, 2027.**

5.2. **Projects must be completed no later than December 31, 2029.**

5.3. **When determining the total project implementation period, provision should be made for the timeframe of administrative procedures under local legislation** (the name of the administrative procedure and its statutory timeframe shall be indicated).

6. Eligible Candidates:

Priority
Primary and secondary budget spenders - legal entities of Tunisia; Municipalities and their associations; Educational, health and social institutions;

International humanitarian organisations;
Others
International and local non-governmental organizations.

<u>As ineligible candidates in the procedure for 2027 will be considered:</u>

- Individuals and legal entities for whom there are circumstances under Art. 23, para. 3-8 of Resolution No. 234 of the Council of Ministers of 01.08.2011 on the policy of the Republic of Bulgaria on participation in international development cooperation / **see Annex 1 below/**
- Beneficiaries whose projects from previous years have not been completed within the term of the contract/annex and without final reports approved by the MFA **<u>by September 30, 2026</u>**
- Beneficiaries **who have not submitted interim reports** on projects from previous years within the term of the contract/annex.
- Current beneficiaries **who have not reimbursed due funds from previous projects financed** under the Development Cooperation Program.
- Applicants **without a sustainable project history of less than 2 years.**
- Applicants **with a registration period of less than 2 years.**
- **Applicants who have received first payment in 2024 and still carrying out the project in 2025 and have no approved an interim report till the announce of the company for receiving the project proposals for 2027.**

Applicants may not submit more than one project proposal under this call for proposals. In the event that an applicant submits more than one project proposal, all of their submitted project proposals will be excluded from subsequent evaluation.

7. Eligible Activities and Project Costs:

7.1 Eligible Activities

• Development of new/updating existing training modules

• Capacity building activities /organizing and conducting trainings in areas of interest of the administration/institutions of the partner country

• Conducting trainings on specific topics in Bulgarian institutions to exchange good practices and increase the qualification of employees from the administration of the partner country

• Organization and holding of seminars, forums, conferences

• Research and strategy development

• Activities to raise awareness of citizens' rights

• Activities to promote multicultural dialogue and to limit racism, xenophobia, hate speech, discrimination and intolerance in society

• Activities to improve dialogue between non-governmental organizations and local, regional and national authorities

• Activities related to improving the quality of social infrastructure (educational/health) ex.: Delivery of equipment and materials for state or municipal property – schools, hospitals,

kindergardens, homes for elderly, etc.; construction and repair works to improve the condition of state or municipal property – schools, hospitals, kindergartens, homes for elderly, etc.

7.1.2. Compulsory Activities to be provided in the Project:

- Provision of **an audit report issued by an independent financial auditor.**
- Communication plan with **activities to ensure publicity and visibility of the financial assistance provided, in accordance with the Publicity and Visibility Guidelines of the Bulgarian Development Aid**, worth 3 to 5% from the total value of the grant for the project, but not exceeding 2 500 euro. The Communication plan includes a set of targeted activities and communication measures (public events, media appearances, promotional materials, information boards, digital channel publications, and the use of the mandatory visual identity) that inform the public about the grant financial assistance provided by the Republic of Bulgaria. This plan is mandatory for implementation, and its scale and specific tools are determined depending on the total funding amount. Practical requirements and guidelines for developing the communication plan and filling out the application form are contained in the Publicity and Visibility Guidelines for the Bulgarian Development Aid.

7.2. Eligible and ineligible expenses

7.2. 1 Eligible expenses

The costs of project implementation must meet all of the conditions below:

- to be spent within the terms specified in the agreement for targeted grant funding after the start and before the end of the project implementation period
- be lawful and comply with the principles of responsibility, economy, efficiency, effectiveness and transparency
- be executed only against the necessary supporting documents - invoices or other documents of equivalent probative value, testifying the expenditures incurred
- be within the budget limits of the project
- not be covered by another project, program or any other financial scheme, related to or originating from the national budget, the EU budget or any other donor.
- the selection of a supplier of goods and services has been made in accordance with the current applicable national legislation
- organization and management costs / **project manager/coordinator costs**/ **to be up to 10% of the total allowable costs for the individual project**
- **expenses for translation of the project documents in section "Expenses for project management"**

7.2.2. Ineligible expenses

• Expenses that are out of the scope of eligible activities under this announcement

• Utility expenses - telephone expenses, subscription to internet services, newspapers and magazines, stationery; costs for ongoing maintenance of buildings such as electricity, water, taxes, municipal fees, etc.
• Bank costs - interest on loans, debt service fees and penalties for late payments, fees for financial transactions and others
• Refundable VAT
• Costs that are covered by other sources
• Fines, penalties and costs of legal proceedings
• Unjustified expenses incurred for activities out of those agreed in the agreement

7.2.3. Cost estimates

The **completed cost estimate is an integral part of the project proposal**, with which the grant application is submitted under the announced competitive procedure.

The estimate **should contain specific and clear information about the planned costs of activities in accordance with those planned in the project proposal.**

The cost estimate is entered for the activities included in the project proposal (Organization and management, Communication plan, etc.), **and for each activity, the costs for all foreseen sub-activities related to the specific activity are entered sequentially (**for example, for organizing an event, etc.). In the "Type of activity" column, a specific description should be entered for each specific expense.

When **planning the costs related to publicity and visibility of the project, the requirements described in detail in the Publicity and Visibility Guidelines for the Bulgarian Development Assistance should be followed.**

8. Required Documents for Application:

An Application Form is available on the following website in Bulgarian and English: https://www.mfa.bg/bg/3865

All parts of the application form should be duly completed in Bulgarian and / or English. In case of any deficiencies that hinder the evaluation of the project proposal, the Embassy of the Republic of Bulgaria in Tunisia may require additional information within a short period of time. Failure to provide such information within the deadline shall be considered a ground for rejection of the proposal.

9. Method and Deadlines for Projects Applications:

The deadline for submission of project proposals is December 1st, 2026 to the e-mail address of the Embassy Bulgaria in Tunisia: Embassy.Tunis@mfa.bg
The application document should be sent both in word and scanned as a pdf file.

10. Criteria for initial evaluation of the eligibility of the project proposals

• The applicant is an eligible beneficiary, according to the call for project proposals

• The application form is filled correctly and contains all necessary information for the evaluation of the project proposal (all applicable fields of the application form are filled in)

• The deadlines for implementation and the duration of the project correspond to those indicated in the call for project proposals

• The objectives and scope of the project proposal correspond to the priority areas and sectors of ODA set out in the call for project proposals

• The project proposal is in line with **the Sustainable Development Goals** and the priority goals of the Mid-term Programme for Development Assistance and Humanitarian Aid of the Republic of Bulgaria for the period 2025-2030.

• The target groups of the project proposal correspond to those indicated in the call for project proposals

• Project activities are eligible under the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development Assistance Committee Guidelines for Activities Counting as ODA

• The project proposal includes communication activities that ensure visibility of the financial assistance provided by Bulgaria

• The expected results of the activities provided for in the project proposal and the set indicators for their measurement are clearly defined.

11. Funding cycle

Payments for the approved project proposals are made in 3 stages

First payment - in the amount of 50% of the amount of approved funds under the project

Interim payment (second installment) – in the amount of 40% of the approved funds for the project after the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has received and approved an interim report and a financial report on the interim implementation of the project

Final payment – the amount to cover the costs incurred by the beneficiary to complete the project, but not more than 10% of the approved project funds, after receipt and approval by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of a final report, a consolidated financial statement on the implementation of activities, audited by an independent financial auditor.

All unforeseen expenses above the approved budget of the specific project are financed with own funds.

12. Additional Information:

Applicants **shall be informed of the results of the procedure for evaluation**, selection and approval of the project proposals within 14 working days of the completion of the individual stages of the procedure. The Embassy of the Republic of Bulgaria in Tunisia **has no obligation to inform applicants about the grounds for approval or rejection of the submitted project proposals**.

Annex 1

Decree No 234 of the Council of Ministers of 01.08.2011 on the policy of the Republic of Bulgaria regarding its participation in international development cooperation (excerpts)

Article 23(**3**) **A legal person seeking to apply for the provision of development aid must not**:

1. be declared bankrupt;
2. be in liquidation proceedings or in a similar procedure under the national laws and regulations;
3. be in open insolvency proceedings or must not have entered into an out-of-court settlement with its creditors within the meaning of Article 740 of the Commerce Act, and if the applicant is a non-resident – it must not be in a similar procedure under the national laws and regulations, including if its activities are under the court's control or it has ceased its activities;
4. be disqualified from practicing a particular profession or activity under the law of the State in which the offense was committed;
5. have any monetary debts owed to the State or a municipality within the meaning of Article 162, paragraph 2 of the Tax and Social Insurance Procedure Code established by an act of a competent authority which has entered into force, unless rescheduling or deferral of the debts has been allowed, or monetary debts relating to the payment of social insurance contributions or taxes under the legal provisions of the State in which it is established;
6. have any outstanding private debts owed to the State listed in Article 3, paragraph 7 of the National Revenue Agency Act.

(4) A legal person seeking to apply for the provision of development aid must not have a member of the management body that:

1. has been convicted by a final sentence for indictable offense;
2. has not fulfilled his/her/its obligations relating to the payment of social insurance contributions or taxes in accordance with the applicable law;
3. has provided deliberately false documents when providing information requested as a condition for financing development aid activities or has not provided such information;
4. has been disqualified from practicing a particular profession or activity under the law of the State in which the offense was committed;
5. is a legal person for which any of the circumstances under paragraph 3 exist;
6. has any outstanding private debts owed to the State listed in Article 3, paragraph 7 of the National Revenue Agency Act.

(6) Where the members of the management bodies are legal persons, the requirements of paragraph 5 shall apply to their representatives in the relevant management bodies.

(7) Persons seeking to apply for the provision of development aid must not:

1. have a member of a management or supervisory body, as well as such person ad interim, including a procurator or a commercial agent who has “close links”, within the meaning of § 1, item 1 of the Supplementary Provision of the Conflict of Interest Prevention and Ascertainment Act, with the agency administering the relevant project or with senior employees in his/her organisation;

2. have entered into a contract with a person under Article 21 or 22 of the Conflict of Interest Prevention and Ascertainment Act.