Roma Education Fund

Call for Proposals – Improving Educational Reintegration of Roma returnees

Deadline: September 25th, 2020

The Project “Employment Empowerment of Young Roma - Phase II” is funded by the German Financial Cooperation implemented by KfW on behalf of the German Government – Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development.

SECTION 1: CALL FOR PROPOSALS

Notice

The Roma Education Fund provides two types of grants:

1. Solicited grants to REF’s strategic partners (Ministries, Central European University, RomaVersitas programs and REF’s Toy Library Network) which serve to achieve mid-term goals of REF’s strategy, institutionalization and policy ownership of REF branded models of intervention.
2. Unsolicited (competitive) grants aimed towards innovations, piloting and essential interventions in education and employment.

This Call for Proposal is for **unsolicited project proposals only** and interested applicants can apply for:

* Grant proposals for *Improving Educational Reintegration of Young Roma Returnees* between 20.000 EUR – 50.000 EUR

Applicants can submit only one project proposal and the Roma Education Fund will automatically mark as ineligible all applications submitted by the applicants, if more than one is received.

Current grantees of REF are eligible to apply for new funding only if their proposal entails new activities, innovative approach and new beneficiaries differing from their ongoing project.

Applications must include one applicant and may include one or more partners. The Roma Education Fund strongly encourages co-funding and collaboration between NGOs and Ministries or other institutions, the inclusion of other partners is empowered, however, under this Call for Proposals such inclusion is not compulsory.

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# Background

The Roma Education Fund’s (REF) mission and ultimate goal is to close the gap in educational outcomes between Roma and non-Roma. In order to achieve this goal, the organization supports policies and programs which ensure quality education for Roma through scholarships, grant making and advocacy activities.

The objectives of REF include:

* Expanding Romani children’s access to quality early childhood education and care;
* Improving primary education outcomes for Romani children aged six to fourteen;
* Boosting academic performance and graduation rates from secondary education for Romani pupils;
* Supporting access to tertiary education, improving graduation levels and strengthening identity of Romani university students;
* Expanding employment opportunities for young Romani adults.

The Roma Education Fund operates in close links with civil society and institutional partners in 16 countries of Central and South Eastern Europe.

The Roma Education Foundation in Serbia implements the project “Employment Empowerment of Young Roma – phase II" funded by German Financial Cooperation implemented by KfW on behalf of the German Government – Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development.

The overall Project objective is to support social inclusion of Roma (both domicile Roma and Roma failed asylum seekers/returnees) in Serbian society, through increased graduation rate of Roma secondary school and university students and their facilitation into the labor market. The project integrates practical assistance with effective and efficient mechanisms to combat discrimination and create conditions in which Roma can exercise all the minority rights, focusing on access to education system and employment.

# Call for Proposal



## 1.1 Objective of the call

The main objective of the call for proposal is to improve the reintegration of young Roma returnees into the Serbian education system, including improving school readiness and inclusion.

The specific goal of this call is to select partner organizations for implementing projects aimed at improving the educational reintegration of Roma children through facilitating and expanding access to primary schools and improving skills and knowledge of children and their parents to actively participate in school life.

The proposal should include any or all the following target groups: parents, teachers, students and (local) educational institutions. It must incorporate tools to measure the educational achievements and indicators proposed. The proposals should entail a response to current challenges in distance learning and education in times of COVID-19. Activities should be tailored and adapted in order to address the educational challenges during the pandemic.

## 1.2 Main Priorities

All project proposals should include measurable and lasting improvements aligned with REF’s Strategic Framework 2021-2030 and should encompass the following:

* Support the improvement of inclusion of children from Roma returnee families;
* Aim at improving school readiness, skills and knowledge of Roma children returnees through tutoring, mentoring and other supportive activities
* Facilitate and expand access to primary schools in Serbia through increasing enrollment rates and decreasing drop-out;
* Contribute to increased enrolment to secondary schools and providing additional career counseling support;
* Empower active participation of returnees in school and social life;
* Develop specific activities and approaches to address the educational challenges during the pandemic situation;
* Advocate for changes in policy development in education and social reintegration;
* Contribute to knowledge exchange and communication in education;
* Contribute to building an inclusive education system and its desegregation;
* Integrate gender mainstreaming perspective into the preparation and design of all components of the project;
* Set grounds for sustainability of the best practices and activities in the proposal;
* Provide measurable outcomes to improving educational achievements;
* Increase visibility of educational issues Roma returnees face.

## 1.3 Timeframe for the grant implementation

October 1, 2020 –July 1st, 2021

The projects should be planned with a duration of maximum 9 months.

## 1.4 Available funds

The overall amount of funding will be announced together with the list of selected projects by the REF Project Management by October 2020.

## 1.5 Co-funding

Under this Call for Proposal co-financing is not compulsory, but it is encouraged and will be prioritized. Voluntary work and in-kind contribution should be listed, and not calculated within the budget. Partner(s) participate in designing and implementing the action, and the costs they incur are eligible in the same way as those incurred by the applicant. Applicant and Partner(s) must sign and provide signed Partnership Statement with the application package.

## 1.6 Geographical coverage

This Call for Proposal calls upon civil society organizations registered and operating in the Republic of Serbia.

# Eligibility Criteria

In order to apply for the grants, the following eligibility criteria apply:

* Legally registered non-governmental organization or institution in the given country;
* Operational capacity: systems and processes for ensuring sound management of funds. At a minimum, an organization needs to have basic accounting and reporting systems and to have been registered and working for at least 2 years;
* Proven relevant experience and indicating ability to fulfill the objectives of the action;
* Core values in line with REF’s values – tenacity, integrity, justice, accountability and inquisitiveness – including REF’s commitment to integration and gender mainstreaming;
* Project proposals should entail innovative activities for improving educational reintegration of young Roma returnees.

# Selection Criteria

REF’s Project Management Committee will use the following criteria in the process of reviewing and selecting project proposals, and rank each one by scores 1-5:

Innovation and alignment with REF Strategy 2021-2030

* Creative approach in the project design and methodology aimed at building resilience of Roma students through curricular or extracurricular activities;
* Innovative approach in working with beneficiaries and implementation of project activities;
* Gender-mainstreaming integrated in the implementation of all project activities;
* Alignment with REF’s strategic framework and priorities.

Grass-root involvement and participation

* Experience with Roma community and target group: REF prioritizes organizations that are rooted in their community and operate with community input and investment;
* Roma involvement in planning and management of project: REF prioritizes organizations in which Roma participation is encouraged and valued;
* Experience and knowledge about local needs and demands.

 Future impact

* Potential for scaling-up, replication by local and national institutions; stakeholders’ engagement;
* Potential to impact advocacy and policy actions aimed at influencing decisions and changing the discourse towards improved educational systems to benefit Roma;
* REF encourages and prioritizes co-financing, voluntary work and in-kind contribution as part of the proposal. All costs should be stated clearly and separately for the whole project duration.

Monitoring

* Well-elaborated Project Implementation and Monitoring Plan to track and measure the progress and project indicators.

## 3.1 Grant amounts

The minimum requested funding for the projects is **EUR 20,000** and the maximum requested funding is **EUR 50,000**. REF reserves the right to change this amount (increase, decrease) depending on the outcomes of the Call for Proposals.

## 3.2 Costs

REF will consider **eligible** most of the usual operational costs, including:

* Costs for gross salaries for staff involved in implementing the proposed action. **Administration** **category within the budget template must include staff salaries and administration costs.** This category must not exceed 25% of the total budget requested from REF
* Partial operational costs for the organizations’ regular work (office rent, electricity/heating, phone bills, etc.) that are relevant to the proposed action
* Direct costs for the proposed action that will occur during its implementation period
* Small scale study visits limited to circumstance and justification
* Educational equipment with proper justification for the project activities and within reasonable amount and cost range

**Grantees are obliged to open a separate bank account for the REF supported project.**

REF will consider the following costs **not eligible**:

* Costs of activities that are completed before the date of signature of the grant contract;
* Costs declared by the grantee that are financed by another donor;

;

* Projects supporting individual political parties;
* Purchase of vehicles, furniture and another inventory;
* Purchase or renovation (fully or partially) of fixed assets (land, buildings, etc.);
* Loans to third parties;
* Currency exchange losses;
* Debts and debt service charges;
* Actions concerned only or mainly with individual sponsorships for participation in workshops, seminars, conferences and congresses;
* Conferences and roundtables;

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* Re-granting.

# Application process



## 4.1 Application Package

**Grant Proposal** between EUR 20,000-50.000:

1. Application form for standard grant proposal
2. Budget table
3. Organizational eligibility criteria template
4. Project Implementation and Monitoring Plan

Detailed instructions on how to fill the forms are provided in the documents. Please use the correct templates that are published as part of this Call for Proposals and do not change their content or format.

**Annexes containing required supporting documents** for this stage of the application process:

Annex 1. Proof of registration

Annex 2. Organizational statutes

Annex 3. Annual financial reports for the last two years (2018, 2019) and audit report, if available

 Annex 4. Signed Partnership statement

All items of the Application Package, including Grant Proposal and Annexes, must be completed.

## 4.2 Deadline

The deadline for the submission of applications is **September 25th, 2020** by midnight, CET time.

Applications must be submitted electronically at jbojic@romaeducationfund.org

Please note that all documents in the application package should be sent by email in the original format provided with this Call, and all annexes including Partnership statement should be sent in a true scan format (PDF) of the original version as evidenced by the presence of scanned signatures. Annexes with multiple pages should be placed in one pdf file.

Please include in the subject line: **Call for Proposals – Educational Reintegration of Roma Returnees.**

## 4.3 Information and FAQs

REF encourages applicants to consult the Roma Education Fund [website](http://www.romaeducationfund.org/) on a regular basis so that they are timely and adequately informed on project activities, calls and updates. If information needed cannot be found on the website, please send an email with your question to jbojic@romaeducationfund.org no later than September 23rd2020. REF will provide answers to all questions no later than September 24th for this Call for Proposals.

Names of selected grantees shall be published on REF’s website.