Il-Kunsill Nazzjonali tal-Ktieb
Kumpless Bice Mizzi Vassallo
Triq Arnheim
Pembroke PBK1776
Malta EU

+356 27131574
nationalbookcouncil@gov.mt
ktieb.org.mt

Subsidy Scheme for Printed Books – Terms & Conditions

1. At a Glance

The Subsidy Scheme for Printed Books was launched on 1 April 2026 by the National Book Council (NBC), with the aim of mitigating costs related to the printing of books published with a Maltese ISBN number, as issued by the NBC.

This scheme forms part of the NBC's Five-Year Strategic Vision (2025-2030).

The annual fund for 2026 is capped at €50,000, and the funds will be disseminated on a first come, first served basis. Only books published between 1 January 2026 to 15 December 2026 will be eligible to benefit from the scheme.

The subsidy covers up to 40% of all costs, up to a maximum of €2,000 for each receipt and/or proof of payment.

Applications are to be submitted through Submittable. All prospective applicants are urged to read through the regulations carefully ahead of submitting their application.

2. The aims of the Subsidy Scheme For Printed Books

- To support the publishing industry and in this way, further strengthen Maltese culture
- To ensure access to books across a varied cross-section of society
- To foster a varied publishing environment which ensures that even under-represented voices enjoy a place in the island's literary ecology.

3. Who can apply?

The Subsidy Scheme for Printed Books is open to all publishing entities who have published at least one book with a Maltese ISBN number which has been issued within the time window specified above. All applicants must be either Maltese citizens or residents in Malta.

The category of publishing entity applies to:

- Publishers;
- Self-published authors
- Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs)

Publishers and NGOs may benefit of a subsidy of up to €6,000 per year (irrespective of the amount of submitted published works), while self-published authors may benefit from the subsidy for only one book per year.

Public entities are not eligible for the subsidy.

4. Which expenses may be covered?

Only expenses related to printing costs may be covered by the subsidy.

Any other expenses related to the publishing of books will not be considered, and should not be included in the application.

The subsidy is granted only on the amount of the receipt/proof of payment excluding VAT. In the case of NGOs – who do not recover any VAT incurred – the subsidy is given on the amount inclusive of VAT.

The subsidy may cover up to 40% of the total printing costs, however it may not exceed €2,000 on each receipt and/or proof of payment.

<u>Note 1</u>: Eligible costs apply only to receipts/proof of payments issued in the time window mentioned above for 2026 (1 January 2026 – 15 December 2026).

<u>Note 2</u>: Applicants may not submit separate receipts and/or proofs of payment that refer to the same individual book. In this case, 'book' refers to a 'single indivisible project'. Should the administrators of the scheme determine that receipts and/or proofs of payment were split up artificially in an attempt to benefit from the subsidy for each receipt, such applications would be at risk of immediate disqualification.

<u>Note 3:</u> Eligible applicants cannot receive subsidies for the same book more than once. This applies especially for reprints of the same book.

<u>Note 4:</u> Books that have benefited from the Malta Book Fund or won the Novels for Youth Prize are not eligible for the subsidy.

<u>Note 5:</u> Beneficiaries of any other source of public funding related to printing costs for the same book are disqualified from applying for the National Book Council's printing subsidy with that same work.

<u>Note 6:</u> The subsidy is not open to school books.

5. How do I apply?

Applicants are to apply for the scheme through Submittable by following [this link.]

All applicants are expected to register for an account with Submittable prior to applying.

Applications will only be accepted through the Submittable platform – any applications sent in through different means will not be considered.

Applicants are encouraged to read through the regulations carefully and to prepare all necessary documents ahead of starting the application process.

6. What do I need to submit?

To apply for the Subsidy Scheme for Printed Books, all applicants are expected to submit:

- The application form via Submittable;
- The relevant receipt and/or proof of payment from the printer.

Note 7: Only receipts and/or proof of payment will be accepted. Invoices (which indicate a promise of payment, but do not specify whether payment was effected) will not be accepted.

Note 8: The subsidy will be applied for each receipt/proof of payment attached to the application.

Applicants are to ensure that the receipt or proof of payment clearly indicates:

- The total cost;
- The date of payment;
- The type of purchase – may only be related to printing costs;
- The name of the book/s applicant is submitting;
- The name of the printer whose services are being employed.

Note 9: You may attach a receipt/proof of payment which contains mention of expenses not directly related to printing costs. However, it must be clearly indicated which of the costs are related to printing costs. Should these not be marked clearly, the administrators of the scheme may deem the application ineligible.

Other documents required to apply via Submittable

- Details of the book/s submitted for the scheme – the cover, along with a link or contact number for where it may be found on sale
- The book's ISBN number
- A copy of the applicant's ID Card or Residence Permit

- A filled-out De Minimis form.

7. How will funding be issued?

Applications will be processed up to 5 days following submission. All documents attached to the application will be scrutinised and checked according to the eligibility criteria mentioned above.

Following the adjudication process, successful applicants will be contacted personally to pass on the details of their chosen bank account. The subsidy will then be passed on via bank transfer to the account shared by the applicant.

Note 10: The subsidy will be issued by bank transfer only, and through no other means.

Note 11: Successful applicants are to pass on their banking details by no later than 3 days after being informed of the result. Failure to submit the application within this timeframe will result in the application being nullified.

Each applicant will be informed of the final decision taken by the scheme's administrators. The decision of the administrators is to be considered final.

8. Applicability of State aid rules

8.1 The De Minimis Regulation – Rules Applicable for State Aid

The Subsidy Scheme For Printed Books is being implemented in accordance with the provisions of Commission Regulation (EU) 2023/2831 of 13 December 2023, concerning the application of Articles 107 and 108 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union to *de minimis* aid.

No aid will be awarded to those sectors expressly excluded from receiving *de minimis* aid under Article 1 of the *de minimis* Regulation.

The total amount of *de minimis* aid granted to any single undertaking[1] must not exceed €300,000 over any period of three years, which period is assessed on a rolling basis. The

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[1] The term 'Single undertaking' means all enterprises having at least one of the following relationships with each other:

a. One enterprise has a majority of the shareholders' or members' voting rights in another enterprise;
b. One enterprise has the right to appoint or remove a majority of the members of the administrative, management or supervisory body of another enterprise;
c. One enterprise has the right to exercise a dominant influence over another enterprise pursuant to a contract entered into with that enterprise or pursuant to a provision in its memorandum or articles of association;
d. One enterprise, which is a shareholder in or member of another enterprise, controls alone, pursuant to an agreement with other shareholders in or members of that enterprise, a majority of shareholders' or members' voting rights in that enterprise.

maximum threshold would include all State Aid granted under this aid scheme and any other State Aid measure implemented in line with the *de minimis* Regulation including that received and/or applied for from any entity other than the National Book Council.

Applicants to this fund are required to submit, together with their application, a *de minimis* Declaration Form confirming the amount of *de minimis* aid they have received and/or applied for during the applicable three-year period. This will ensure that the total amount of *de minimis* aid granted to a single undertaking under the *de minimis* rule will not exceed the *de minimis* threshold over the applicable three year period. Any *de minimis* aid received in excess of the established threshold will have to be recovered, with interest, from the undertaking receiving the aid.

The cumulation of aid must follow the applicable rules set out in Article 5 of the *de minimis* regulation. Aid under the Subsidy Scheme For Printed Books must not be combined with other government aid covering the same costs. If it becomes evident that the project has received separate funding for the same costs (i.e. double funding), the proposal will be considered ineligible and any funds granted must be reimbursed.

In line with the *de minimis* State Aid Regulation, records regarding *de minimis* aid shall be maintained by the National Book Council for 10 years from the date on which the aid under the scheme is granted.

<u>Publication in Central Register</u>

In line with Article 6(1) of the *de minimis* Regulation, as of 1 January 2026, information on *de minimis* aid granted under this scheme shall be made publicly available in a central register on *de minimis* aid.

The following information shall be made public:

- the identification of the beneficiary,
- the aid amount,
- the granting date,
- the aid instrument, and
- the sector involved on the basis of the statistical classification of economic activities in the Union
  ('NACE classification').

8.2 Non-State aid option

Enterprises having any of the relationships referred to in points (a) to (d) above through one or more other enterprises shall be considered to be a single undertaking.

Applicants that do not carry out an economic activity within the meaning of Article 107 TFEU may apply for the scheme. In this case, the rules outlined in Section 8.1 will not be applicable.

9. Get in Touch

Should you have any questions on your eligibility, required documentation or if you're having trouble using Submittable, please send an email to Matthew Borg on matthew.borg@ktieb.org.mt or call us on 356 27131574 from Monday to Friday between 9am and 4pm.

Our address is: Il-Kunsill Nazzjonali tal-Ktieb, Kumpless Bice Mizzi Vassallo, Triq Arnhem, Pembroke, PBK1776.