

The Malta Book Fund

Introduction

Aims of Fund

Eligibility Criteria

Adjudication Criteria

Downloads (includes Q&A)

Submitting Applications

Further Guidance

Introduction

The Malta Book Fund is an initiative launched by the National Book Council to foster cultural growth in the local book market.

The relatively small size of the local book market has the regrettable effect of seriously limiting the capital available for quality publications, education, research and development, and marketing. This means that local authors and publishers are faced with the dilemma of either curtailing their more ambitious projects or taking huge financial risks in pursuing them. In the interest of encouraging both authors and publishers not to shun projects on the grounds of commercial viability, the National Book Council is opening once again the public call for applications for the Malta Book Fund as a way of boosting confidence in the pursuit of new projects and initiatives.

The main aim of the fund is to subsidise quality publications of high cultural, educational and intellectual value that in the context of the local market are not seen as commercially viable and thus would otherwise remain unpublished.

The NBC, in its drive to contribute to the overall development of the Maltese book industry, would also like to support authors and publishers by financing projects to further enhance their skills and capabilities. Education grants may be used to attend workshops, courses and cultural

initiatives which might help further improve one's skills ([download Appendix C: Recommended workshops for authors and publishers](#)).

For the reasons mentioned above, the National Book Council is issuing a minimum of eight grants, totalling €40,000, to be distributed among publishing, education and foreign marketing funds. The grants are to be distributed following a rigorous application process vetted by an adjudication board.

This initiative forms part of the NBC's endeavour to take on the role of a cultural agent within society, meaning that the NBC becomes a proactive and progressive contributor to the cultural, educational and intellectual development of our society. Small amounts of funding can make a great difference to publishing projects in our small yet thriving book market, especially to projects in Maltese and/or of local and cultural significance. Most importantly, however, the NBC strives to ensure that financial allocations are made to those applicants who would make the best use of their funds.

Aims of Fund

The Book Fund's aim is to subsidize the publication of books in Melitensia and to fund the further education, research and development of authors and publishers.

The Book Fund is to act as an extension of the NBC's holistic approach to the local book scene by helping to raise publication standards, to encourage new work and lines of research and to promote books in a more general sense in a bid to boost literacy figures in Malta. Moreover, the Malta Book Fund seeks to contribute to the development of literary and publishing arts by investing in the artistic and scholarly development and training of authors and publishers and encouraging professionalism and innovation in the field.

Eligibility Criteria

Eligibility criteria are open-ended so as to cater for as many different initiatives as possible, giving a chance to all projects that prove to be of cultural value according to the opinion of the Board of Adjudication. However, rules and regulations still apply in each case.

The Book Fund is divided into two sections:

- Publishing Grants
- Education Grants

Please make sure you read the eligibility and adjudication [criteria](#) for each grant carefully before building your proposal and applying for funds.

Important note: The winning project needs to be published/finished as per negotiations with the National Book Council upon the release of the winners' list.

Publishing Grants - Definition and criteria

Publishers and/or authors publishing their own book, either in print or ebook form or both, may apply for subsidies to publish one or more books. If an application is filed for a project which

includes more than one book, the books must have a common theme or content to the extent that it may very well be suggested by the Adjudication Board that they be published in series.

The project must be considered of relevant cultural value and should not be a project which can easily be made self-sustainable if distributed in the local market via already established routes. Coffee-table books, musical scores and books based solely on imagery or photography are excluded from the scheme. Translation of local manuscripts and books from Maltese to other languages is also excluded from the Malta Book Fund, since such a scheme already exists within the Malta Arts Fund, which is run by the Arts Council. Applications for translations of foreign-language books into Maltese are allowed.

At the date of submission of the application, the project in question should already exist either as a well detailed project-plan, or as draft or as a completed manuscript and must also already have a proposed title. The scope and aim of the project must be provided, along with any details, references and bibliographies of the author and publisher.

The grant may finance the research, writing, editing, documentation, illustration, artwork, printing, marketing and the payment of the author and/or researcher.

As part of the application, the applicant must write a brief description of the project not exceeding 1500 words, which should include a description of its cultural value. This brief should also explain why the project requires funding alongside a justification of the funding provided.

Applicant must also provide a budget breakdown of the project, preferably with proofs of official quotes.

When available, clearly dated copies of press cuttings (including printouts of online press material) that may further the applicant's cause are to be attached to the application.

Please state whether you have already received public funding in the past and list the dates, amount specifications and any other relevant details about the funds received.

Education Grants - Definition and criteria

Publishers and authors may apply for grants to attend short courses related to their field of work as writers, editors and publishers. A list of short courses and initiatives which the NBC advises authors to attend is listed in Appendix A, but any course or educational experience which might contribute to the applicant's line of work is considered.

The grant may finance travel, lodging and participation fees.

Applicant must write a brief of not more than 1000 words to describe the importance and value of the proposed travel and educational initiative.

Applicant must provide a budget breakdown of proposed expenses, preferably with proofs of official quotes.

When available, clearly dated copies of press cuttings (including printouts of online press material) that may further the applicant's cause are to be attached to the application.

Please state whether you have already received public funding in the past and list the dates, amount specifications and any other relevant details about the funds received.

Adjudication Criteria

- The adjudication board may decide to fully or partially fund a particular project or application.
- The adjudication board will base its judgment on the strength of each application.
- The adjudicating board may discriminate against applications so as to set funding targets for grants according to certain priorities that the adjudicating board deems to be of importance in the current circumstances of the book market.
- In cases where an application for a project is turned down, the adjudication board will inform the applicant by issuing an official result sheet including an explanation. Failure to qualify does not bar the applicant from applying again following the next call for applications with the same or a different project.
- One is not allowed to submit more than one application proposal at one go.
- The adjudication board's decision is final and non-contestable.

Adjudication Criteria for Publishing Grants

Preference is given to:

- Projects which are of considerable cultural, educational and intellectual importance to society.
- Applications carrying a concrete vision behind the project, and which have a clear and defined end to where the project should lead to in terms of content, result and response to the target audience.
- Projects that are not very commercially viable despite their importance.
- Applications which provide a reasonable description of how and why their project are of cultural, educational, academic and literary value to society in general.
- Applications which are supported by third-parties via a legitimate written reference.
- Applications with realistic budgets and backed by proven quotes.

A project of cultural value could be:

- Any project in prose, poetry, research and documentation which might distinguish itself by its quality and originality from previously published books with a similar theme.
- A literary or academic project which is of such good quality, but so extensive and particular in scope, that it needs the help of a very specialized editor in order to be brought to completion, or further research and work is needed by the author himself to complete the manuscript.
- Any project which might be considered to be crossing boundaries in the local literary or academic fields, and which opens new avenues of opportunity for the local book scene and to society as a whole.

Adjudication Criteria for Education Grants

Preference is given to:

- Authors and publishers who give a reasonable justification of how the initiative or workshop to be attended will contribute to their line of work, be it in the realm of creative or academic writing, publishing or editing
- Authors and publishers who give reasonable justification as to how they will practically use the workshop or educational initiative to benefit a particular project they are working on
- Authors and publishers who show a willingness to learn and broaden their horizons
- Applications with realistic budgets and proven quotes

Downloads

Download Appendix A: 2018-19 Malta Book Fund application form

(application deadline for 2018-19: Monday 18 February 2019 at 12:00 noon)

Download Appendix B: Malta Book Fund: Questions and answers

Download Appendix C: Recommended workshops for authors and publishers

Download Appendix D: Definition of terms used in the Malta Book Fund scheme

Download Appendix E: Documents checklist

Download Appendix F: Contract draft

Submitting Applications

You may download here a copy of the [application form](#) and of the [documents checklist](#).

Your application dossier may be submitted in four (4) identical and complete copies in separate and clearly labelled folders to the National Book Council before the stipulated deadline, from Monday to Friday between 08:30hrs and 15:00hrs. Call on +356 27131574 to secure an appointment.

The call for applications closes at 12:00 hrs (noon) on 18 February 2019.

Whether you are applying as an individual or a company, please make sure you include the official address, contact number and e-mail address in your application. Also make sure you sign and date (date of completion of application) every document before making copies.

Applications for the Malta Book Fund are to be submitted by hand to the National Book Council offices:

2nd Floor, Central Public Library,
Prof. J. Mangion Street,
Floriana, FRN1800.

A specially-appointed board of adjudicators will assess the applications in the 2 weeks following the deadline for submission of applications.

Further Guidance

For further guidance on how to submit an application, one can contact Simona Cassano (General Manager, NBC) on simona.cassano@ktieb.org.mt