

The Malta Book Fund - Publishing Grants (guidelines and regulations)

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What are the MBF Publishing grants?

The Malta Book Fund Publishing grants form part of the National Book Council's strategy to boost the publication of books in the local market by subsidizing the publication of books in Melitensia.

The Book Fund acts as an extension of the NBC's holistic approach to book publishing in Malta 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.

The Publishing grants section of the Malta Book Fund has an annual allocated budget of €50,000 that supports applications for the publication of the following types of original works in Malta:

- literature (fiction, poetry, drama, biographies, literary nonfiction and graphic novels);
- works of research including academic and scholarly books (monographs, edited collections, critical editions, researched exhibition and gallery catalogues containing analytical material that is the result of research).

What are the objectives of the MBF Publishing grants?

The objectives of the grants are:

- to foster cultural growth in the local book market. This initiative forms part of the NBC's endeavour to take on the role of a cultural agent within society, thus becoming a proactive and progressive contributor to the cultural, educational and intellectual development of society;
- to boost confidence in the pursuit of new projects and initiatives in the local market;
- 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value that in the context of the local market are not seen as commercially viable and thus would otherwise remain unpublished.

What do the MBF Publishing grants support?

The scheme offers grants to authors and publishers to finance the research, writing, editing, documentation, illustration, artwork, printing, marketing, and author and/or researcher payments.

The publishing grants may support up to 100% of the publication or up to a maximum of € 5,000 per project. Applicants must provide a **budget breakdown** of the project, with proofs of official quotes.

Each application will be assessed individually on the basis of the criteria of the grant.

Please make sure you read the eligibility and adjudication criteria for the grant carefully before building your proposal and applying for funds.

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.

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.

The Evaluation Process

Once received, applications will be first screened for eligibility. Applications which are not eligible in terms of the procedure stipulated by these guidelines will not be processed further and will not undergo evaluation. **Eligible applications will be passed on to an independent adjudication board who will evaluate the projects.**

The grants will be awarded to successful applicants following a competitive adjudication process according to established adjudication criteria.

Each criterion is allocated a specific number of marks. **In order to be considered for funding, projects have to obtain at least 60 marks.**

Nevertheless, the evaluation session and funding decisions depend on the level of competition and on the availability of the funds. Obtaining 60 marks or more does not automatically mean that you will be receiving the funds.

The order of classification of the projects, according to the marks allocated by the evaluators, **will be published online within 6 (six) weeks from the application deadline. Only the names of the successful projects will be published.**

The adjudication board may require clarifications from the applicant during the evaluation sessions; however, being contacted by the board does not mean that that project will necessarily be funded. All correspondence will be sent by the National Book Council's fund administrator.

Eligibility Criteria

Applications are first screened in terms of eligibility and are to be complete and include: the project description, a budget breakdown and estimated timeframe.

Project description

As part of the application, the applicant must write a **brief description of the project.**

The description of the publishing proposal should **not exceed 1,500 words.** The brief should include a description of its positioning in the Maltese publishing market. The project must be considered of relevant cultural value and should not be potentially commercially viable and self-sustainable if distributed in the local market via already established routes. The brief should explain why the project requires funding, alongside a justification of the funding provided.

The publication of coffee-table books, musical scores and books based solely on imagery or photography are excluded from the scheme. The translation of local manuscripts and books from Maltese to other languages and foreign-language books into Maltese is now included in the Malta Book Fund (refer to Translation grants guidelines and regulations).

Publishers and/or authors publishing their own book, either in print or ebook format or both, may apply for subsidies to publish one or more books. **Applicants may submit more than one application under the same call, however only one of the applications can be funded per session.**

Project costing - budget breakdown

The application should include a justification of the funding provided in the costing and a **budget breakdown** of the project in order to support your proposal. At application stage, provide copies of any relevant quotations that can give an indication of estimated costs (**see downloadable budget breakdown table template - APP 3**), with proofs of official quotes. Official documentation **must be submitted** in support of the budget breakdown of the project costs. These can be broken down as follows:

- research,
- writing,
- editing,
- documentation,
- illustration,
- artwork,
- graphic design,
- printing,
- marketing,
- author and/or researcher payments.

You may fill in relevant entries only pertaining to the specific grant applied for. At final report stage, and if the grant is awarded, fill out the 'actuals' column of the budget breakdown and resubmit with invoices, receipts and other relevant documentation for each item listed in the budget. The budget must include amounts relating to secured, unsecured and other planned revenues. The unsecured amount requested from the fund must be quantified and allocated as the 'amount requested' from the fund.

NB: Every budget **must** include both expenditure and income through other sources of funding. Other sources of funding and sponsorships (including sponsorships in kind) must be supported by relevant documentation.

Timeframes

The publication date for each winning project will be negotiated with the National Book Council upon the release of the winners' list and established within the beneficiaries contract.

An estimated completion date of the project should be mentioned in the project brief and should not exceed 18 months from the date indicated in the beneficiary's contract.

Ineligible projects

Applications for publishing grants in the following areas are ineligible for funding:

- textbooks, instruction manuals;
- yearbooks;
- works whose primary objective is party propaganda;
- coffee-table books, musical scores and books based solely on imagery or photography;
- novels and short-story collections which are commercially viable;
- children's books and any material specifically intended for an audience below the age of 18;
- expenses already covered by public cultural organisations, or another public funding programme managed or co-managed by the National Book Council, or any other public agency, government department or Ministry;
- retrospective costs;
- incomplete applications (please refer to mandatory documents checklist below).

Ineligible proposals in terms of the eligibility criteria listed above shall not be processed further and shall not undergo evaluation.

Adjudication Criteria

Each eligible application is evaluated against the adjudication criteria established in these guidelines and regulations. The criteria cater for many different initiatives that prove to be of cultural value, albeit not commercially viable, based on the evaluation of the adjudication board.

- ➡ 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 and completeness of each application.
- ➡ The adjudicating board may discriminate against applications so as to set funding targets for grants according to certain priorities that the adjudication board deems to be of importance in the current circumstances of the book market.
- ➡ The adjudication board's decision is final and non-contestable.
- ➡ Applicants can submit more than one application under the same call, however only one of the applications can be funded per session.

The Publishing grants section of the Malta Book Fund has an annual total allocated budget of €50,000.

Rules and regulations apply to the grant. The adjudicators will evaluate applications on the basis of the following criteria to reach a final assessment. The project description should elaborate on each of the three criteria, as outlined below:

1. Quality of the proposed project
2. Engagement with the publishing market
3. Management and feasibility

The grant may finance the research, writing, editing, documentation, illustration, artwork, printing, marketing and author and/or researcher payments. At the date of submission of the application, the project should already exist in the form of a detailed project plan, or a draft, or a completed manuscript. It must also carry a title. The scope and aim of the project must be provided, along with any details, references and bibliographies of the author and publisher.

1. Quality of the proposed project – TOTAL: 40 MARKS

The strength and thoroughness of the project, and the quality of the sample provided (a CV/ Portfolio of the author and a sample of the work should be submitted with the application).

Projects which are of considerable cultural, educational and intellectual importance to society. (40 marks)

2. Engagement with the publishing market – TOTAL: 40 MARKS

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.

Details of the plan for researching, editing, publishing, printing, distributing, disseminating and promoting the work. This criterion considers the level of detail and contacts already established supported with relevant documentation. (30 marks)

Relevance/cultural value of the work to be published to the target local market. This criterion requires knowledge of the market targeted and an explanation as to why that specific work is targeting the selected market. (10 marks)

3. Management and feasibility – TOTAL: 20 MARKS

The clarity of the application and the level of detail provided. (10 marks)

The applicant's ability to manage the project (including financial management) responsibly and successfully. (10 marks)

Preference is given to:

- Projects which may not be commercially viable despite their importance.
- Applications which provide a reasonable description of how and why their project is 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 official 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 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 or herself 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.

How to apply and deadline

Before submitting an application, applicants are strongly encouraged to read these guidelines and regulations very carefully.

The application form can be downloaded from ktieb.org.mt/malta-book-fund together with all necessary supporting documentation.

The call for applications **closes on Wednesday 30 June 2021 at 12:00 noon**.

Due to the current situation, applications for the Malta Book Fund 2021 are to be scanned and submitted by email to andrew.ricca@ktieb.org.mt using the subject line: **Malta Book Fund 2021 - application [AND NAME OF APPLICANT]**. *A pack with four identical printed and signed copies of the application, bound in individual flat files or punch file folders, must still be mailed to the National Book Council offices at the address provided here. The application must be sent no later than the closing date specified above (date of postmark serves as proof)*

The printed and signed complete application must be mailed to the National Book Council offices:

Malta Book Fund 2021 - application [AND NAME OF APPLICANT]
National Book Council
First floor, Central Public Library
Prof. J. Mangion Street,
Floriana, FRN1800

In case of difficulty, or for any queries regarding this fund, you can email us on andrew.ricca@ktieb.org.mt. You can also call us on +356 27131574 from Monday to Friday between 09:00hrs and 16:00hrs.

Please note:

- It is your responsibility to present a complete application form as explained in these guidelines and regulations. If you do not present all the necessary information, then your application will not be processed as it will be considered ineligible.
- 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 the identical and complete four copies of the application pack.
- Applications handed in or mailed/couriered after 12.00 (noon) of the aforementioned deadline cannot be accepted.

Mandatory Documents Checklist

The mandatory documents listed below need to be submitted together with the application form and are required for the pre-evaluation screening.

A decision on funding will be made on the strength of the submitted information. Omission to present any of these documents will render the application ineligible.

1. Complete, signed and dated Application Form specifying which grant is being applied for
2. Project proposal (1,500 words for publication projects)
3. Budget breakdown (including copies of relevant official quotes)
4. A copy of the applicant's ID card (front and back) or residence permit or citizenship certificate or passport.
5. Bibliographic references of applicant and/or author's proposed project if any.
6. Other relevant bibliographic references.
7. Author's CV/portfolio.
8. A sample of the work, if any.
9. Any references and/or press cuttings supporting the proposed project.
10. List, if any, of any public funds awarded in the past.

Kindly note that it is your responsibility to submit all the necessary documentation, as outlined above, by the indicated deadline.

Upon request, National Book Council representatives can discuss details of the application process with the applicant prior to the submission date, but are not authorised to fill in any parts of your application OR to check your application form prior to submission.

Communication of Results

The results of each respective grant **will be published online on www.ktieb.org.mt within 6 (six) weeks from the application deadline. Only the names of the successful projects will be published with the order of classification of the projects, according to the marks allocated by the adjudication board.** No other information on the evaluation process will be released.

On the day indicated above, applicants will receive the results notification from the National Book Council, including a copy of the order of classification of the projects, according to the marks allocated by the adjudication board according to the fund criteria.

Failure to qualify does not bar the applicant from applying again in the following call for applications with the same or a different project.

Processing of personal data

All information received by the fund administrators and adjudicators will be considered confidential, both during and after the evaluation process. Provisions on data protection and confidentiality for successful projects will be included in the grant agreement with the fund beneficiaries.

Enquiries

The decisions made by the adjudication board is final.

If you have any enquiries regarding the results, please **email the Executive Director at the National Book Council on simona.cassano@ktieb.org.mt within five (5) working days of receipt of your funding decision.**

Please provide a detailed explanation and justification of the request supported by relevant documentation, if any.

You will normally receive a reply within ten (10) working days.

Project implementation and monitoring

If your application is approved and funded, you will be requested to sign a contract specifying the conditions of the fund. When accepting the grant, applicants accept that their name, the project title and the amount awarded can be published by the National Book Council.

50% (fifty per cent) of the total amount allocated by the adjudication board to a specific project will be awarded upon signing of the grant beneficiaries contract. The other 50% (fifty per cent) will be released following approval by the National Book Council of the final report, submission of the two copies of the publication, and submission and tallying of final invoices and receipts within the budget breakdown.

The Fund beneficiaries must use the National Book Council's logo on all related material and specify that the project was supported by the Malta Book Fund – in all marketing, PR and printed material. The grant received must be used solely for the purpose for which it was awarded, in line with the submitted proposal and the contract.

Beneficiaries must notify the National Book Council immediately if changes affecting the nature of the project take place during implementation. Changes cannot be implemented unless approval is received. The National Book Council reserves the right to revise or withhold the final payment if the change in the project is not considered to be in line with the initial proposal, or if the Council is not informed of the changes within a reasonable time.

Reporting

Upon completion of the project, applicants will be required to **submit a detailed report (including invoices and receipts)** highlighting the work carried out and the achievements of the project upon its conclusion, by not later than eighteen (18) months after signing the fund

beneficiary contract. Together with this report, beneficiaries must submit **2 copies of the published book**, and any relevant marketing, publicity or information material developed for the funded project.

The National Book Council retains the right to make use of submitted project material.

The information provided will be evaluated by the National Book Council fund administrators and, if this information is satisfactory, then the final 50% of the amount allocated by the fund will be granted. **The amount will be adjusted based on the invoices and receipts received.**

The National Book Council reserves the right to revise the final payment if the project was not delivered as indicated in the application form.

Likewise, **the National Book Council retains the right to recover funds in case these are not being used and/or are misused and/or are not used according to the submitted proposal and budget.**

Contact us

In case of difficulty, or for any queries regarding this fund, you can email us on andrew.ricca@ktieb.org.mt. You can also call us on +356 27131574 from Monday to Friday between 09:00hrs and 16:00hrs.

Definition of terms used in the Malta Book Fund scheme

Adjudication board

The board of adjudicators, appointed by the National Book Council to adjudicate and distribute funds among applicants.

Applicant

Applicant is the individual or a Maltese registered or international publisher, or legally recognised organisation applying for the grant.

Application

An application is a submission, inclusive of all mandatory documents and any annexes to the application form, made by an eligible applicant.

Author

A person who has published, or has had published, a minimum of one book, or a story or article in book form.

Beneficiary

The recipient of the grant. The beneficiary is responsible for the implementation of the proposal supported by the Malta Book Fund..

Book

A printed publication that carries an ISBN.

Eligibility

Applications will first be screened in terms of eligibility. Proposals which are not considered eligible in terms of the set criteria will not be processed further and shall not undergo evaluation.

Grant

A grant may be a publishing, educational or foreign-promotion grant issued by the NBC.

Maltese books

Books in English or Maltese published in Malta and carrying a Maltese ISBN.

Melitensia

Books, electronic or not, published in Malta, or by Maltese authors, or about Malta, or in the Maltese language, or about any aspect of Maltese studies by any author.

Project

The book the applicant is planning to publish with funds from the Malta Book Fund.

Publisher

Person or group of persons who own a publishing house that has published a minimum of one book by one author.

Textbook

A publication used as a standard work for the study of a particular subject at school (all levels)

Translator

A person who has translated a minimum of one translated book, or a story or article in book form, or can prove literary translation skillset.

Translation Grant

A grant awarded under category 1 or category 2 of the Malta Book Fund - Translation Grants supporting the translation of published literature identified by an ISBN (fiction, literary non-fiction, poetry, drama, biographies, academic works, and graphic novels).

Yearbook

A yearly publication containing information and statistics about the past activities.