

EEA AND NORWAY GRANTS  
FUND FOR BILATERAL RELATIONS

INITIATIVE PROPOSAL

<b>Title of the initiative: Estonian-Norwegian writers' dialogues</b>	
<b>Implementing entity</b> <i>(beneficiary state entity):</i>  <b>Eesti Kirjanike Liit (Estonian Writers' Union)</b> , reg. nr. 80080786 (Äriregister)  <b>Partner(s)</b> <i>(minimum one donor state entity):</i> <b>Rangøya internasjonale kultursenter AS (Rangøya International Cultural Centre)</b> , org. nr. 833101552 (Brønnøysund)  <b>Bilateral priority area identified by the JCBF beyond the programmes:</b> € promotion of core European values, such as respect for human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law and the respect for human rights for all people, regardless of their racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, gender, disability, age, sexual orientation or gender identity;  <b>Allocation</b> <i>(total sum): 74910 EUR</i> <i>(A more detailed project budget description in the activity plan)</i>	

**Short description of the initiative:**

*(background, aim, participants, activity plan, budget outline, communication and dissemination)*

**Background**

The Estonian Writers' Union (EKL) has for several years developed and strengthened ties with Norway. In May 2022, a five-member delegation from the Norwegian Writers' Union (DnF) visited Estonia and Tallinn during the HeadRead festival and had talks with EKL. The cooperation has largely been facilitated by Øyvind Rangøy, both in the role as board member of EKL and a member of the International Committee of DnF. In March 2024, a five-member delegation from EKL visited the general assembly of DnF and continued to Rangøya island for a workshop and in order to be present at the official opening of Rangøya International Cultural Centre. During the workshop, the delegation from Estonia and team members from Norway and the centre worked out a plan for a project that would benefit both Estonian and Norwegian authors, Estonian-Norwegian relations as well as the general public.

## **Aim:**

The aim of the initiative is to organise a series of public discussions between Estonian (beneficiary state) and Norwegian (donor state) writers. The discussions will be based on a range of topics that relate to the authors' experience and body of work. The initiative will raise awareness of Estonian literature in Norway as well as Norwegian literature in Estonia. In addition to serving the Norwegian and Estonian literary scenes, it will also contribute to the awareness of the cultural ties between Norway and Estonia and the countries' common interests and traditions in promotion of shared core values, such as respect for human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law and the respect for human rights for all people. While respecting the artistic licence and creative liberty of the authors, the project will encourage dialogue about societally important topics such as gender equality, environmental issues, historical identity and democratic freedoms. The final wording of the topics will be agreed upon with the authors/performers.

In selecting the authors, in addition the following criteria is observed:

- The authors should be professional writers, being recognised as a part of the literary scene in their respective countries.
- At least one of the writers in each discussion pair should have one or more works translated into a language the conversation partner can read.
- The authors being paired should have a common topic in their body of work that they are interested in and willing to discuss.
- The authors will both need to have a decent command of English (or another common language). In special cases interpreted conversations could be considered.
- The authors will preferably be good spontaneous performers comfortable in the conversation format.

## **Participants:**

The implementing entity is **Estonian Writers' Union** (Eesti Kirjanike Liit, EKL). Founded in 1922, it is Estonia's main professional association of writers, literary translators, and critics. As of March 2024, EKL has 347 members in the main association in addition to sections representing translators, philosophers and young authors. In addition to representing writers' interests, the EKL has also been promoting Estonian literature through the operation of two houses of literature (Tallinn and Tartu) and the organising of literary events and tours.

The donor state entity is **Rangøya International Cultural Centre** (Rangøya internasjonale kultursenter, RIK), incorporated in february 2024 to formalise a work that has been going on since 2016, including visits of several Estonian authors and literates and cultural events and festivals in the centre's creative house at the island of Rangøy, Averøy. The organisation (incorporated as a non-profit company) is according to the by-laws aiming to facilitate artist residencies and cultural cooperation. The centre has both Estonia and Norway represented both in its board and artistic council and sees Estonian-Norwegian cultural relations as a natural priority.

In addition to the project partners, a number of other entities are involved in advisory capacities. The Norwegian Authors' Union (Den norske Forfatterforening, DnF) is involved through their International Committee and through the ongoing bilateral cooperation between DnF and EKL. DnF endorses the project and is available as a network. The Norwegian Writers' Centre (Norsk Litteratursentrum, NL) is involved as an advisor regarding fees and conditions for professional writers in Norway. The Estonian Literature Centre (ELIC, Eesti Kirjanduse Teabekeskus) is kept in the loop as the main promoter of Estonian literature abroad.

The core team of the project:

**Marko Levin** (born 1974) is the managing director of EKL. Having graduated Tallinn Pedagogical University in 1997 with a Master of Arts, he has worked as a university lecturer and graphical designer. From 2023, he has taken over the daily operation of EKL and is leading the organisation's administrative reform. In the project, he will be the main contact of the beneficiary state entity.

**Øyvind Rangøy** (born 1979) is the founder and managing director of RIK. Being both a Norwegian and Estonian poet and author, he graduated from Tartu University with a BA of Estonian and Finno-Ugric Linguistics in 2007 and Volda University College with a MA of New-Norwegian Written Culture in 2012. Since 2007, he is a Norwegian state authorised translator from Estonian into Norwegian, with 20 years of experience in translation and editing. As a member of both the Estonian and Norwegian writers' unions, he has been a long-time facilitator of bilateral cooperation. In addition to teaching Norwegian language and literature at the University of Tartu, he also is a member of the board of EKL and the International Committee of DnF. In the project, he will host and coordinate the activities in Norway, and also organise and participate in the transcription, translation and editing of texts.

**Veronika Kivisilla** (born 1978) is an Estonian poet, story-teller and bard and a member of the managing board and artistic council of RIK. She studied Estonian language and literature at Tallinn University and has compiled textbooks, songbooks, dictionaries; organised literary festivals and numerous events. A musician, she has performed in mediaeval- and folk-music ensembles. From 2011 to 2021, she worked as the project manager of EKL with the main responsibility of the union's literary events. With a special interest in Norwegian folk music and culture, she has also been a promoter of Norwegian-Estonian relations. In the project, she will participate both as an organiser, advisor and a performer.

**Rein Raud** (born 1961) is an Estonian writer and scholar. Being a prolific and awarded author in many genres, including both fiction (11 novels and several other books) and poetry, Raud is also an accomplished cultural theorist and japanologist. He defended his doctorate at Helsinki University in 1994, where he taught Japanese studies for more than 20 years. He has done translations into Estonian from a number of languages, including Classical Japanese, Italian, German, Lithuanian and others. In the public sphere, he has been noted as a participant in public debate. He served as the first rector of Tallinn University and holds honorary doctorates in Latvia and Lithuania. Rein is a member of the board of EKL. For this project, he has provided some core ideas and will support the implementation of the project both as an advisor and a performer.

**Endre Ruset** (born 1981) is a Norwegian poet and cultural event organiser. Being a member of the managing board and artistic council of RIK, he is also a board member of the Norwegian Union DnF and of the Møre and Romsdal county association of writers. As a professional performer and organiser, he has worked with a great number of Norwegian writers. He has been involved in the Bjørnson literary festival and has worked for three years as the artistic leader of the Lillehammer literary festival. In the project, he will participate in the recruitment of Norwegian authors as well as otherwise an organising and advisory capacity.

**Odd Einar Sprakehaug** (born 1973) is an award-winning Norwegian film and TV photographer. With documentary photo education from NISS (now Kristiania University College), he has more than 20 years filming experience in the genres of documentary films and serials, true crime, reconstructions, entertainment, music production and concept development. He has worked with several TV and streaming channels such as NRK, TV2, ViaPlay, TV3, TVNorge and others and has filmed a considerable number of high profile shows. One of his key skills is his ability to help performers act sincerely and naturally in front of the camera. In the project, he will be technically and creatively responsible for the filming. He will also advise in the setup of scenes for the conversations.

**Marianne Kõrver** (born 1980) is an award-winning Estonian filmmaker, graduated from Baltic Film and Media School and majoring in film directing. With background from Tallinn English College, Nõmme Musical School, Georg Ots Tallinn Music College and Estonian Art Academy, she is credited for authoring, directing or editing more than 30 films. In 2018, she received the Cultural Endowment of Estonia's annual award for the portrait film of the year. A majority of her work has been in documentary. In the project, she will edit the raw footage into clips ready for publication as well as advise on the production of the clips.

In addition to the core team, the project will receive input from advisory partners and use external workforce for minor tasks like text or film editing. The contributions of the individual discussion partners will be based on the abovementioned criteria and implemented according to the final plan, taking into account the schedules and other practical considerations. The following authors have already confirmed their readiness to participate as discussion partners/performers in the project: Meelis Friedenthal, Aina Basso, Veronika Kivisilla, Nina Lykke, Urmas Vadi, Kai Aareleid, Klara Hveberg, Rein Raud, Knut Ødegård, Kätlin Kaldmaa and others.

### **Communication and dissemination**

The two main products of the project are (1) a set of texts (translated into Norwegian and Estonian) and (2) a set of video clips. The video clips will be published through the project's Youtube channel disseminated through social media and other channels of the main partners as well as their advisory partners and networks and other entities. The first set of film clips will be shown as a part of the Baltic Film Days in Oslo in October 2024, and other cinema venues will also be sought in cooperation with the partners.

The video clips will thereby also function as a marketing device for the main product of the conversation, or the edited and translated transcripts of the conversations. These will be published in book format in the two languages and also offered to literary journals in Norway and Estonia. The books, intended as a "twin publication" of separate Norwegian and Estonian editions, will be available through ordinary channels in Norway and Estonia respectively. Regarding publishing alternatives, possible cooperation with established publishers will be prioritised in order to maximise the impact.

### **Activity plan and budget outline**

Because of the logistics and overhead costs involved with filming, the discussions need to be concentrated to a few days. To spread the load of text and film editing throughout the period, the most efficient is two periods, planned for mid-August 2024 and mid-January 2025 respectively, with the exact times negotiated based on the availability of the participating performers. This will allow for gaining editing experiences in the autumn so that the final work in February-March can be as efficient as possible. As a bonus, this will also give outdoor footage from two seasons, adding contrast and depth to the resulting films.

	Activity	Time	Location	Cost	Participants
1	Finalising conversation topics and participants, recruitment and negotiations with performers	April-June 2024	Norway and Estonia	2250	Project core crew
2	Consulting expertise on scenography and technical production, planning production of clips	April-July 2024	Norway and Estonia	1700	Project crew, external participants
3.1	First batch of conversations/ recordings	July-August 2024	Rangøya International Cultural Centre, Norway	20530	Film and production crew, 6–8 individual writers/performers. (8 for budget purposes), including logistics, transport, travel and board
3.2	Editing and post-production of the first set of clips	September–October 2024	Estonia	3200	Project crew, external participants
3.3	Transcription, translation and editing of the first set of texts	September–November 2024	Norway and Estonia	4200	Project crew, individual performers (for approval)
3.4	Publication of the first clips of the project	December 2024	Project Youtube channel, <a href="http://www.ekl.ee">www.ekl.ee</a> website and and sharing on social media	200	Project crew
4.1	Second batch of conversations/ recordings	January 2025	Rangøya International Cultural Centre, Norway	20530	Film and production crew, 8-10 individual writers/performers. (8 for budget purposes), including logistics, transport, travel and board

	Activity	Time	Location	Cost	Participants
4.2	Editing and post-production of the first set of clips	February 2025	Estonia	3200	Project crew, external participants
4.3	Transcription, translation and editing of the second set of texts	February 2025	Norway and Estonia	4200	Project crew, individual performers (for approval)
4.4	Publication of the first clips of the project	March-April 2025	Project Youtube channel, <a href="http://www.ekl.ee">www.ekl.ee</a> website and and sharing on social media	200	Project crew
5.1	Finalising of manuscripts for publication, design	March 2025	Norway and Estonia	1000	Project crew, individual performers (for approval)
5.2	Printing and publication	March-april 2025	Norway and Estonia	3000	Project crew
6	General administration	April 2024–April 2025	Norway and Estonia	10700	Project core crew

## **Planned results**

In addition to the tangible results indicator in the table below, an important long-term effect of the project will be the strengthening of ties through established contacts between the writers. Together with the publicity of the project, this would enhance the chances for Estonian authors being picked up by Norwegian publishers (and vice versa). In addition, the raw footage will be recorded in 4K quality in order to secure future proof archive materials readily available for reuse in follow-up projects (technical data: DCI 4K 4096x2160, XF-AVC / ALL-Intra C-Log3).

OUTPUT	INDICATOR	TARGET
Writer meetings and conversations	Number of writer meetings	8
	Number of writers involved	16
Video clips / minidocumentaries produced and digitally published	Length of videos in minutes	10–15
	Number of videos	8
Texts produced and edited, ready for digital and physical publication	Length of each text (words)	4500–9000
	Number of texts	8
Physical publications (books)	Number of publications	2
	Minimum number of printed copies per publication	200

Planned results<sup>1</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> Please refer to the [Results Guideline](#)