

ERLAND KOLDING NIELSEN GRANT – Application Form

The Erland Kolding Nielsen Grant celebrates the enormous contribution Erland Kolding Nielsen has made to the development of European libraries throughout his long and distinguished career.

The Erland Kolding Nielsen Grant is a grant of up to €5,000, which is awarded to a CENL member library project that promotes international collaboration and strengthens bonds between CENL libraries.

Application eligibility criteria:

- Your employer is a CENL member
- Your national library is up to date with CENL membership fee payments
- All collaboration activities are in partnership with other CENL members and will foster international collaboration

Grant application proposal (maximum of 2 pages)

The Grant can focus on any aspect of international library collaboration. The first part of your proposal should provide details of the actual international collaborative aspect. This could be in a multitude of ways such as:

- Development of collections (physical and digital)
- Improving research
- Educational or cultural services including exhibitions
- Promoting interlibrary staff communications
- Infrastructure development
- Staff development

The second part of your proposal should outline the anticipated benefits of the proposed collaborative activity, and provide an estimation of the costs for carrying out the activity. The main proposer should complete this form and provide details of other collaborators.

If you meet the criteria above and would like to apply for this grant, please complete this form, including your proposal, and submit it to the CENL Secretariat at cenl@dnb.de by **7 February 2025**. Applications will be reviewed by the Executive Committee and the outcome will be announced by March 2025.

Conditions of grant

- Outputs of the grants have to be publicly demonstrable and shareable.
- The successful applicant will submit a report to the CENL Secretariat after the proposed event has taken place. This report will be published on the CENL website.
- The successful applicant (or a representative from their institution) will give a presentation to the CENL membership at the next Annual General Meeting following the completion of the project.
- Statement of costs must be provided estimating the anticipated costs, and if approved your organisation will receive 80% of the grant upfront with the remainder of the grant being paid upon completion of the project.
- Details of expenses, with original receipts, must be provided to verify all costs incurred. Final payment will only be made if the relevant documentation is provided.
- Where the grant is not used, any underspend must be repaid to the CENL Secretariat.
- Grant payments will be paid into the main proposer's account. The main proposer will be responsible for ensuring that collaborators are reimbursed for appropriate expenses.

GRANT APPLICATION FORM

1. Organisation Details

Applicant information				
	Name	Organisation	Job Title	email and phone
Main proposer	Jovica Nikcevski	National and University library "St. Clement of Ohrid"	Director	direktor@nubsk.edu.mk nikcevskijovica@gmail.com +38978209496
Collaborator 1	Magdica Shambevka	National and University library "St. Clement of Ohrid"	Advisor - Librarian	shambevskamagdica@gmail.com +38975204270
Collaborator 2	Maja Micevska Rizova	National and University library "St. Clement of Ohrid"	Librarian in International Cooperation, Public Relations, Cultural Events, Publishing and Marketing Department	maja.micevska@nubsk.edu.mk maja.may.micevska@gmail.com +38970966313
Collaborator 3	Darko Leshoski	National and University library "St. Clement of Ohrid"	Librarian in International Cooperation, Public Relations, Cultural Events, Publishing and Marketing Department	darko@nubsk.edu.mk d.leshoski@gmail.com +38979 319504
Collaborator 4				
Confirm that you meet the grant application eligibility criteria (listed above)				Yes/No Yes/No YES (under Infrastructure development section)
Signed: 				
Date: February 6, 2025/ Skopje				

2. Proposal for international collaboration

Please provide a description of your proposed project here (maximum of two pages).

- Include plans for the project's development and implementation.
- Tell us how your project will engage with CENL members and beyond, and how you plan to communicate the results of your project to wider audiences.

After the war, our library resumed with services and operations in 1944 with a modest stock of 150,000 items as one of the first national institutions in free Macedonia. Its activity has its foundations in the rich tradition of literature and libraries on Macedonian soil. The patron saint, Clement of Ohrid (830-916), established the first monastic library, in Ohrid. From 1945 the St. Clement of Ohrid National and University Library was a deposit library for Yugoslav publications. Since the independence of the Republic of Macedonia in 1991, it has only received Macedonian deposit items.

In 1972 the library moved into custom-built premises in the central part of the city, with an overall area of 11,217 square meters, of which 2,800 are storage space and 2,300 for readers. There is seating for 500 readers. The library has around 120,000 users annually, of whom 75% are students and 15% scientists and scholars, the remainder belonging to other categories.

Library also as a bibliographical and referral center, the national ISSN center and the national ISBN agency. The St. Clement of Ohrid National and University Library has the largest and richest general stock of scholarly and scientific works in the country.

In a world where knowledge flows faster than ever, a library is more than just a collection of books—it is a dynamic hub for research, collaboration, and innovation. To keep pace with the evolving needs of students, scholars, and the wider community, infrastructural development is not just an upgrade; it's essential.

This project initiative proposes a comprehensive revitalization plan to modernize a vital part of the library infrastructure, to improve environmental conditions, and enhance safety and accessibility for all our users.

As responsible and ethical library professionals, most employees of our national library have always put the needs of users and the needs for the protection of our collections before our basic needs as employees: A decent workspace and basic healthy and eco conditions. Our country, like most small developing countries, has really limited funds for investing in infrastructure projects in culture. And the past years of the pandemic and its economic consequences have additionally affected investments in culture and its protection.

Therefore, despite the current efforts of the current government to reconstruct the remaining part of the roof reconstruction that started in 2022, the approved funds will not be sufficient to create more decent conditions for employees in certain parts of our library.

As an institution, efforts have been made together with the Ministry of Culture as well as private donations to renovate the main reading room in our library, the roof structure, as well as additional investments in the protection of the storage facilities for our collection. We are proud to say that we succeed in that mission.

We believe that it is time to start improving and modernizing the workspace of our long-standing employees who deserve better conditions, so in addition to this initiative, we would like to provide you with several photos of the actual situation in certain offices of the National Library, where the worn-out floor and furniture are clearly visible, as well as the damage from the leaking roof structure in the past before it was restored.

We believe that it would be fair to mention that Skopje is one of the most polluted cities with ambient air in Europe and the world during the winter period, so these poor working conditions further worsen the already fragile condition of the majority of employees (allergies, bronchial and pulmonary disorders and autoimmune diseases). We would use the funds from this grant to change the flooring in four (4) offices which are in truly unenviable position. The results and outputs of this grant would be of great importance both for the employees and for several hundreds of users who circulate through these rooms on a yearly basis.

Proposed Actions:

Infrastructure Modernization: Renovating the floor in four offices to ensure structural safety, better insulation, and improved ventilation to combat huge external pollution.

Safe and Sustainable Solutions: Using cleaner and healthier eco materials in our library.

Accessibility Improvements: Adapt spaces for people with health issues and especially for people with disabilities (uneven and worn-out floor)

By modernizing facilities, embracing sustainable solutions libraries can continue to serve as vital cultural and learning centers despite the current challenges.

3. Previous Collaborations

Does your project create new connections between CENL institutions?

Please give details of any previous collaborations between the libraries involved in this project.

The nature of our profession often requires the exchange of experiences and innovations in librarianship. Due to the disrepair and dilapidation of the working premises, when visiting fellow librarians from other libraries in our country and the region, we are forced to hold most of the trainings and meetings in other rooms of the library intended for users of our services, which have already been renovated. Consequently, if we were to renovate the floors with your grant, our working premises in the IBSN and ISSN departments and the international cooperation department would be encouraged to intensify our activities without being at the expense of the user experiences of our members. As you are already introduced, our colleagues Maja and Darko from the International cooperation sector are included in several initiatives and activities of CENL, as well as in many joint activities between our library and regional national libraries. Maja is part of EEDI group of CENL. Therefore, a decent working space would be more than essential for us. In the past, our library was grateful and responsible grant user of Hidden stories and COVID 19 support grants.

4. Benefits

Please outline how your project will benefit CENL's aims and goals.

This transformation isn't just about the physical space—it's about fostering an environment where ideas thrive and knowledge knows no bounds. The National Library of North Macedonia seeks CENL's support to renovate four staff offices with deteriorated flooring, directly addressing safety, sustainability, and accessibility. By installing eco-friendly, slip-resistant flooring, we will create a healthier environment for our staff and visitors while aligning with CENL's goals of modernizing library infrastructure. This project will also enable us to expand community engagement through revitalized spaces that host workshops and exhibitions, furthering our mission as a cultural cornerstone in the Balkans. By modernizing these workspaces, we will better support our space which serve several hundred of annual visitors. Universal Design: We will ensure new flooring is slip-resistant, smooth for wheelchair access, and compliant with accessibility standards of ADA and EU accessibility directives). Safety First: the damaged floors (e.g., cracked parts, uneven surfaces, and very old and damaged carpet) are a tripping hazard for staff and visitors. Renovating them, directly addresses workplace safety, which is critical for a functional library. Staff Morale: We would like to emphasize that a well-maintained environment boosts productivity and self-esteem among employees which will directly contribute toward better future joint activities. Modern, durable flooring will transform these offices into professional workspaces that reflect the dignity of our national heritage collections.

Objectives:

- Improve the physical infrastructure of libraries to create safe and welcoming spaces.
- Implement sustainable solutions to address pollution and energy efficiency.
- Enhance accessibility for the staff and users.
- Foster community engagement through educational and cultural programs.

5. Estimated cost of proposal

*Please include a breakdown of the costs which will be incurred by all collaborators.
Indicate when these costs are likely to be incurred.*

- **Replacement of the floor in four (4) working offices in the National and University library „Saint Clement of Ohrid“ – Skopje. (1250 EUR per office) TOTAL: 5000 EUR**

The floors of the four department offices (the Department of IBSN, ISSN and the Department of International Cooperation) are in the worst condition by far. If we find your understanding, for which we are grateful in advance, we would immediately, after receiving the initial 80% of your grant, begin a procedure for collecting bids from authorized companies operating in the field. (Minimum of three offers by certified suppliers)
The director would form an independent committee of several employees that would collect a minimum of three bids for a complete change of floors (dislocation of waste material, procurement of laminate or linoleum depending on prices and labour for their installation)
All received bids, along with the most favourable one in terms of price and quality, would be transparently included in our final report and we would of course publicly highlight your support on all our official communication channels (social networks and website).





