

HRANT DINK FOUNDATION TURKEY-ARMENIA TRAVEL GRANT REGULATION

Turkey-Armenia Travel Grant, implemented by the Hrant Dink Foundation, will continue to support at least 50 individuals and non-profit civic initiatives from Armenia and Turkey, thanks to the financial assistance of the European Union within the framework of the programme “Support to the Armenia-Turkey Normalisation Process - Rapid Responses” (ATNP-RR) between March 2023 and December 2024, to travel to the neighbouring country for their activities and studies in various thematic fields, by covering their international travel and inter-city transportation costs.

Background

1. Hrant Dink Foundation established the Turkey-Armenia Travel Grant in February 2014 with a view to increase direct contacts and to promote cooperation between the peoples of the two neighbouring countries within the framework of the programme Support to the Armenia-Turkey Normalisation Process financed by the European Union. Thanks to the European Union funding, the Turkey-Armenia Travel Grant issued 5 open calls from March 2014 to May 2015, received more than 850 applications and supported the travel of 210 individuals.

2. The Turkey - Armenia Travel Grant continued to receive applications by announcing a 6th open call, jointly administered by the Hrant Dink Foundation and the Gyumri “Youth Initiative Centre” NGO (YIC) based in Gyumri, Armenia, with the joint financial assistance of the British Embassy Ankara and British Embassy Yerevan. In the 6th round, Turkey-Armenia Travel Grant received more than 160 applications and supported the travels of 26 individuals from July 2015 to September 2015.

3. In 2016-2017, the Hrant Dink Foundation administered the Turkey-Armenia Travel Grant with the financial assistance of the European Union within the framework of the programme *Support to the Armenia-Turkey Normalisation Process Stage II*, in collaboration with the Eurasia Partnership Foundation (EPF) and Gyumri “Youth Initiative Centre” NGO (YIC) in Armenia. Thanks to the European Union funding, from July 2016 to September 2017, the Travel Grant issued 6 open calls (7th-12th rounds), received approximately 600 applications and supported the travels of 186 individuals.

4. The Turkey-Armenia Travel Grant, in 2017 - 2019, was implemented by the Hrant Dink Foundation in partnership with Gyumri Youth Initiative Centre with the support of the UK Government's Conflict, Stability and Security Fund. In response to five call periods of application (13th to 17th Rounds) between October 2017 and November 2018, Travel Grant received 450 applications and the travels of 129 individuals to the neighbouring country were supported.

5. In 2020-2021, the Hrant Dink Foundation made preparations to make an open call for the Turkey-Armenia Travel Grant with the financial assistance of the European Union within the framework of the programme *Support to the Armenia-Turkey Normalisation Process Stage III*. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the 44 Day Nagorno-Karabakh war which started at the end of 2020, the call could not be launched and the Travel Grant had to be suspended until 2023.

Who Can Benefit From the Turkey-Armenia Travel Grant?

6. Any individual holding citizenship of Armenia or Turkey, any individual legally residing in Armenia or Turkey, any non-profit group, initiative or organisation based/registered in Armenia or Turkey will be eligible to benefit from the Turkey-Armenia Travel Grant. Groups and initiatives without legal entity can also benefit

from the Turkey-Armenia Travel Grant.

a) Turkey-Armenia Travel Grant primarily targets to support youth initiatives, university students, university clubs, civil society organisations, professional organisations, high school students and teachers, academics, researchers, journalists, doctors, lawyers, publishers, artists, sports clubs, sportsmen and sportswomen, businesses, local authorities, for their travels within the scope of eligible field and type of activities.

b) Turkey-Armenia Travel Grant will support eligible actions in various thematic fields such as - but not limited to - civil society, youth and volunteering policies, human rights and democracy, education and training, environment, history, culture and arts, development, gender, medicine, law, technology, sports, regional cooperation and European integration.

c) Turkey-Armenia Travel Grant will support the travel of individuals and groups who are organising or attending various types of eligible activities such as partnership building and networking, feasibility visits, cross-border projects, project preparation meetings, exchange programmes, trainings, language learning, academic cooperation, research and dissertation, voluntary service in civil society organisations, joint artistic productions; as well as organising or attending panels, seminars, conferences, workshops, exhibitions, concerts and similar activities in any of the thematic fields above.

7. There is no age limit for applicants who would like to receive Turkey-Armenia Travel Grant support. Those who are under the age of 18 – the age of legal maturity in Armenia and Turkey - will be required to submit the approval of their parents, legal custodians or teachers along with their application, and during their travels to the neighbouring country they should be accompanied by an adult above 18.

Who Cannot Benefit from the Turkey-Armenia Travel Grant?

8. Trips of profit-making organisations, commercial enterprises, and businesses for the purpose of selling their goods and services, trips by political parties, and touristic and personal visits, including visits for medical reasons will not be eligible.

9. Visits by the current and former staff, members and board members of the Hrant Dink Foundation as well as the partner organisation Gyumri “Youth Initiative Centre” NGO (YIC) and the members of the Consortium implementing the programme *Support to the Armenia-Turkey Normalisation Process* and/or travels from/to the activities of the mentioned organisations will not be eligible.

10. Visits by the individuals who have already received the support of the Hrant Dink Foundation for their visits to Armenia and Turkey in the past will not be eligible.

11. Individuals who received the support of the Turkey-Armenia Travel Grant in the previous rounds are not eligible. Individuals who received the Travel Grant support in the previous rounds, yet could not realise their travels due to force majeure are eligible to apply by submitting the same or a different application form.

12. An individual can benefit from the Turkey-Armenia Travel Grant only once. However, in cases not awarded in the specific selection round, the same individual can apply in subsequent rounds by submitting a different application.

13. The application has to be submitted by individuals. In case of group travel, all members of the group should submit individual applications by specifying the details of the group in the relevant part of the

application form.

What are the Costs Covered by The Turkey-Armenia Travel Grant?

14. The Turkey-Armenia Travel Grant will finance eligible transportation costs that can be documented (plane, train, bus tickets). The Turkey-Armenia Travel Grant will only cover economy class tickets and means of public transport.

15. The costs arising from the eligible domestic and international means of transport that will be used during the travel will be directly paid to the relevant airline company or travel agency by the Hrant Dink Foundation. Grantees' tickets will be delivered by the Hrant Dink Foundation.

16. In cases where it is not possible for the Hrant Dink Foundation to directly book and pay for tickets, in particular for inter-city transportation such as Yerevan-Gyumri and Yerevan-Tbilisi travels, the Travel Grant beneficiary may need to pay for these expenditures himself/herself. In such cases, the Travel Grant beneficiary may request reimbursement from the Hrant Dink Foundation. The reimbursement requests may be approved by the Hrant Dink Foundation provided that they fulfil the following criteria:

a) The inter-city travel is made in economy class and by means of public transport.

b) All legal documents, receipts, invoices certifying the inter-city transportation as well as the Travel Grant Activity Report are submitted by the Travel Grant Beneficiary to the Hrant Dink Foundation latest within ten days after return to the home country.

17. The Turkey-Armenia Travel Grant will not finance the ineligible costs including visa costs, exit fees and duties, travel insurance or any other visit-related cost including accommodation, food, etc. Such costs will be covered by the Turkey-Armenia Travel Grant beneficiaries and/or the inviting persons or organisations.

18. Those who will be travelling to Armenia or to Turkey with the support of the Turkey-Armenia Travel Grant are strongly recommended to arrange personal travel health insurance that will cover the entire duration of their stay. Sole responsibility to arrange travel health insurance will lie with the grantee. Hrant Dink Foundation, the Consortium implementing the programme Support to the Armenia-Turkey Normalisation Process - Rapid Responses, the European Union shall be by no means held responsible in case of any incident that may occur during the visit.

Selection Criteria

19. Contribution to the following overall objective will be the main selection criterion:

“to support civil society efforts towards the normalisation of relations between Turkey and Armenia and towards an open border by enhancing people-to-people contacts, expanding economic and business links, promoting cultural and educational activities and facilitating access to balanced information in both societies”

Selection Priorities

20. In addition to the main selection criterion, applications that comply with the following qualities will be given priority.

- a. **Support for First Time Goers:** Priority will be given to individuals who will be travelling to the neighbouring country for the first time.
- b. **Support for Local and Regional Activities:** The Turkey-Armenia Travel Grant aims to mobilize individuals and organisations from major provinces as much as local areas. Local actions and travels from/to cities other than Istanbul and Yerevan will be given priority.
- c. **Diversity:** Diversity of beneficiaries will be ensured in terms of gender, age, geographical area, thematic area and type of activity.
- d. **Support for Youth:** The Turkey-Armenia Travel Grant will be open to all age groups; however young people including high school and university students as well as youth groups will be given priority.
- e. **Support for New Initiatives:** The Turkey-Armenia Travel Grant will support both registered civil society organisations that are experienced in certain fields as well as civic initiatives, which do not have legal entity. Civic initiatives and individuals with innovative ideas will be given priority.
- f. **Sustainability and Multiplier Effect:** Travels that can reach out to more people, that can have greater impact in the long run, and that can contribute to the initiation of concrete partnership projects between Armenia and Turkey will be given priority.

Selection Process

21. All incoming applications for the Turkey-Armenia Travel Grant are assessed by a Selection Committee in line with the selection criteria and priorities. The Selection Committee is made up of 6 members, 3 from Turkey and 3 from Armenia, out of independent, neutral and competent names. The members of the Committee are identified by the Hrant Dink Foundation. The Selection Committee composition pays attention to gender equality. Selection Committee members will perform their functions voluntarily.

22. Members of the Selection Committee will assess all incoming applications from Armenia and Turkey through scoring. Each member of the Selection Committee will score the application out of 10 points. Applications which score above the average point for the selection period will be eligible for support. The scoring is done for both countries and not separately for Armenia and Turkey.

23. Members of the Selection Committee will have the right to veto. Members of the Selection Committee will assess the incoming applications received for each period specified in the Selection Timeline within nine (9) days.

24. 2023-2024 Selection Committee Members: Burcu Becermen, Dikran Altun, Itir Erhart, Gayane Mkrtchyan, Gegham Vardanyan, Marine Karoyan.

Turkey-Armenia Travel Grant Selection Timeline

25. Individuals who want to benefit from the Turkey-Armenia Travel Grant between May 2023 to December 2024 can submit applications at any time between March 2023 to September 2024. Their applications will be assessed and results announced as specified in the below Selection Timeline. The Selection Committee shall make its decisions on beneficiaries in eight rounds on the specific dates mentioned in the below Selection Timeline.

26. Applicants must arrange their travel dates in accordance with the Eligible Travel Timeframes below and apply for the corresponding round. While filling in/submitting their application form, the applicants can only choose travel dates that correspond to the eligible timeframe for the given round. The travel can also last longer than the given timeframe, in case of long-term stays or in justifiable cases.

Selection timeline

Rounds for Applications	Application submission period	Announcement of Selected Grantees	Eligible Timeframe for Travel
18	March 1 - April 30, 2023	May 15, 2023	May 20-August 30, 2023
19	May 1 - June 30, 2023	July 15, 2023	July 20-November 30, 2023
20	July 1 - August 30, 2023	September 15, 2023	September 20-December 30, 2023
21	September 1 - October 31, 2023	November 15, 2023	November 20, 2023 - February 29, 2024
22	November 1, 2023 - January 31, 2024	February 15, 2024	February 20 – April 30, 2024
23	February 1 - March 31, 2024	April 15, 2024	April 20-June 30, 2024
24	April 1 - May 31, 2024	June 15, 2024	June 20-September 30, 2024
25	June 1 - July 31, 2024	August 15, 2024	August 20-November 30, 2024
26	August 1 - September 30, 2024	October 15, 2024	October 20-December 1, 2024

27. The Turkey-Armenia Travel Grant will only support travels that take place starting from May 20, 2023 until December 1, 2024. Travels taking place later than 1 December, 2024 will not be eligible.

Application Process

28. Any applicant who would like to benefit from the Turkey-Armenia Travel Grant should fill in the online application form on the website www.hrantdink.org and submit it. Application forms should be submitted in English language. Competency in English is not a selection criterion. The purpose is to prevent possible disagreements about translation and to facilitate the work of the Selection Committee. In case applicants need support with translation from Armenian/Turkish into English, they are welcome to contact the Hrant Dink Foundation project team members for advice.

29. Hrant Dink Foundation project team members will compile all incoming applications, do a technical assessment to check if the application forms are complete. When necessary, the project team members will also contact the contact/reference persons mentioned in the applications. Afterwards the project team members will share the compiled list of applications with the Selection Committee.

30. Once the assessment of the Selection Committee is completed, all applicants from Armenia and Turkey are listed from the highest to the lowest score. Applicants above the average score who fall within the target quota for 2023-2024 Travel Grant period are identified as Turkey-Armenia Travel Grant beneficiaries.

31. The project team of the Hrant Dink Foundation in Turkey and Armenia will contact the applicants and their contact/reference persons in the neighbouring country for double-checking prior to notification of Selection Committee decisions.

32. Grantees will be informed of the result of their application by e-mail as per the dates in the table above. Travel should only start after the announcement of the beneficiaries in accordance with the Eligible Travel Timeframes specified above. Applicants who were not awarded a grant are informed by the Hrant Dink Foundation by e-mail.

33. The beneficiaries of the Turkey-Armenia Travel Grant will be obliged to first confirm their dates of travel and travel route with the project team, sign the Turkey-Armenia Travel Grant Agreement with the Hrant Dink Foundation, provide the Hrant Dink Foundation with a copy of the Grant Agreement at least 5 days prior to travel. Only afterwards the Hrant Dink Foundation will make the necessary bookings and deliver the travel documents and tickets to the Beneficiaries. If the beneficiaries fail to confirm their travel dates and travel route within the eligible timeframe for the given round, the project team reserves the right to withdraw their travel grant.

34. Special passports and other types of travel documents may necessitate additional processing and may require special permits to enter the neighbouring country. The beneficiaries of the Turkey-Armenia Travel Grant holding special passports or other types of travel documents will be obliged to confirm their dates of travel and travel route with the project team, sign the Turkey-Armenia Travel Grant Agreement with the Hrant Dink Foundation, provide the Hrant Dink Foundation with a copy of the Grant Agreement at least 30 days prior to the travel.

35. It is the responsibility of the beneficiary of the Turkey-Armenia Travel Grant to obtain the required entry permits for the neighbouring country and to abide by the period of time and other specifications of the permit. The Hrant Dink Foundation may be contacted for advice regarding the travel requirements of bearers of special passports and other types of travel documents.

36. In case the individuals who were selected as the beneficiaries of the Turkey-Armenia Travel Grant and who entered into the Turkey-Armenia Travel Grant Agreement fail to travel to the neighbouring country and fail to notify the Hrant Dink Foundation at least three days prior to their travel dates, the Hrant Dink Foundation will take necessary action to reclaim the funds spent for travel expenditures in accordance with the relevant articles of the Turkey-Armenia Travel Grant Agreement.

37. In cases when the project team of the Hrant Dink Foundation detects any information provided by the applicants being false and/or incomplete, the Foundation has the right to disqualify the application at all stages of the Selection Process, including the cases when the applicant has already been officially announced as a grantee.