EU Aid Volunteers initiative

Technical Assistance for sending organisations

Capacity Building for hosting organisations

Instructions for Project Management

Selection 2018

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INTRODUCTION

Purpose of the Instructions for Project Management

The Instructions for Project Management apply to grants awarded under the EU Aid Volunteers initiative. The Instructions for Project Management are intended to serve as an aid to beneficiaries and a management tool for projects. Their principal aims are to:

- help beneficiaries to manage their project and run it efficiently;
- clarify matters arising from the grant agreement and its annexes;
- provide practical information that may be referred to throughout the project's life;
- provide guidance on the methods of project monitoring and on the dissemination and exploitation of a project's results/products;
- provide guidance on how to handle the financial side of projects in such a way that financial statements can be readily drawn up;
- promote the sound financial management of a project and ensure that the best results/products are delivered at reasonable cost;

Other documents

This document should be read in conjunction with Guidelines for applicants, the Call for proposals, the Grant agreement you signed with the Agency and its annexes and the Guidance notes - Report of Factual Findings on the Final Financial Report - Type I.
MANAGEMENT OF YOUR PROJECT
Overview Project Life Cycle

**SUBMISSION OF PROPOSALS**
Submission of proposals to the Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency.

**ASSESSMENT OF PROPOSALS**
The assessment of proposals is undertaken by evaluators according to a number of criteria established within the call for proposals, which takes into account both formal and quality elements.

**SELECTION RESULTS**
Lists of successful grant applications are established. All applicants are contacted and receive individual notification indicating the exact status of their projects.

**CONTRACTUALISATION**
Applicants who have been successful in the selection process receive a grant agreement from the Agency. The Agreement indicates the grant awarded and sets out the Financial rules to be applied. Payments are usually made in installments.

**REPORTING**
When the financial capacity of the organisation is assessed as weak by the Agency, applicants are required to submit a Progress Report, providing information on project implementation and expenditure incurred thus far. The report is assessed and only after its acceptance the second installment can be paid. All projects need to send a report at the midterm of the project.

**MONITORING OF PROJECT**
The European Commission/Executive Agency monitors the implementation of the project through its life-cycle. Project visits and Thematic Monitoring initiatives are undertaken in some cases.

**ELIGIBILITY PERIOD AND PROJECT ACTIVITIES**
The Eligibility Period is the time during which costs can be incurred and covered by the European Union grant. The length of the eligibility period depends on the project duration. Planned project activities are carried out.

**SUBMISSION OF PROGRESS REPORT**

**SUBMISSION OF FINAL REPORT & AUDIT**
At the end of the project, a Final Report is submitted which provides information on project implementation, results achieved and expenditure incurred. The report will be assessed on its content and financial qualities. Once the project has closed, the Agency/Commission may elect to carry out an audit within 5 years of the closure date.

**DISSEMINATION AND EXPLOITATION OF RESULTS WITHIN AND BEYOND PROJECT LIFETIME**

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The image contains a flowchart illustrating the project life cycle, including submission of proposals, assessment of proposals, selection results, contractualisation, reporting, monitoring of project, eligibility period, and dissemination and exploitation of results. Each step is described in detail, explaining the process from initial submission to final audit and beyond.
1. Support and monitoring of the Project by the Agency

The Agency supports and monitors your project to ensure that the stated objectives are achieved, that all basic rules are respected and to provide you support and guidance for a successful outcome.

The Agency seeks to do this in several ways:

- **Through desk monitoring**
  The Agency, through your designated Project Officer, undertakes desk monitoring throughout the entire process. Project officers are available to provide information, answer queries and give guidance. You should use the email address EACEA-EUAID-VOLUNTEERS@ec.europa.eu for any contact regarding your Technical Assistance/Capacity Building project. This ensures that your message is noted and replied to, if urgent, during the absence of your Project Officer.

- **Through the kick-off meeting on site or an online-briefing**
  A kick-off meeting on site (Brussels) is organised at the beginning of your project as a guidance session to explain the practical steps necessary for the administrative management of the project. It is strongly recommended that you participate in this briefing.

- **Through the monitoring visit to your organisation**
  A monitoring visit can take place at any time during the lifetime of the project to verify the status of the project's implementation and the preparation of its outputs to obtain a clear picture of how the project is being managed. If the monitoring requires a visit to your premises, the Agency will confirm in advance and in writing the purpose of the visit, the issues to be addressed and, where appropriate, the list of documents that should be made available or submitted in advance.

- **Through EACEA participation in an event organised by your organisation**
  The Agency may attend a project event or a partnership meeting as an observer in order to become acquainted with the progress of the project.

- **Through a meeting at EACEA/European Commission**
  Representatives of the consortium shall participate in meetings organised by the Agency/European Commission. Consortium representatives may be asked to attend meetings/info days/conferences relevant to specific topics related to the content of their project or for promotion purposes. They may also be invited to meet the staff who monitors their project. Depending on the type of meeting, project representatives may also be requested to make presentations on the progress of their projects or aspects of its content or management.
Through the mid-term review meeting

A mid-term review meeting is organised in the course of the project to share project work plans, to report on activities carried out, to facilitate networking between sending organisations, and familiarise the organisations with the EU Aid Volunteers Platform which is an essential project management tool. A maximum of 2 participants per sending organisation should attend this meeting and it is strongly recommended that the staff coordinating the project participates.

2. General obligations and role of the Beneficiaries and the Coordinator

For the detailed list of obligations and roles please refer to the General Conditions of the Grant Agreement (Annex II) and Special Conditions (Article 10).

The Beneficiaries:

The beneficiaries shall be jointly and severally responsible for carrying out the action in accordance with the terms and conditions of the Agreement.

Each beneficiary shall inform the coordinator immediately of any change likely to affect or delay the implementation of the action including any change in its legal, financial, technical, organisational or ownership situation or of its affiliated entities and of any change in its name, address or legal representative or of its affiliated entities.

In addition each beneficiary should submit in due time to the coordinator:

(i) data for the reports, financial statements and other documents;

(ii) all the necessary documents in the event of audits, checks or evaluation;

(iii) any other information to be provided to the Agency according to the Agreement.

The Coordinator:

The Coordinator shall monitor that the action is implemented in accordance with the Agreement and be the intermediary for all communications between the beneficiaries and the Agency.

In particular, the coordinator shall:

(i) immediately provide the Agency with the information related to any change in the name, address, legal representative as well as in the legal, financial, technical, organisational or ownership situation of any of the beneficiaries or of its affiliated entities or to any event likely to affect or delay the implementation of the action, of which the coordinator is aware;

(ii) bear responsibility for supplying all documents and information to the Agency which may be required under the Agreement, where information is required from the other beneficiaries, the coordinator shall bear responsibility for obtaining and verifying this information before passing it on to the Agency;
In addition, the coordinator shall:

- make the appropriate arrangements for providing any financial guarantees required under the Agreement;
- establish the requests for payment in accordance with the Agreement;
- where it is designated as the sole recipient of payments on behalf of all of the beneficiaries, ensure that all the appropriate payments are made to the other beneficiaries without unjustified delay;
- bear responsibility for providing all the necessary documents in the event of checks and audits initiated before the payment of the balance, and in the event of evaluation;
- transfer to the beneficiaries, without delay, any document relating to the action or the grant.

The coordinator shall not subcontract any part of its tasks to the other beneficiaries or to any other party.

Please note that Associated Partners cannot benefit from any portion of the grant.

3. Amendments

Amendment requests are required when the beneficiary wishes to make changes to the project. Any amendment must be explicitly authorized by EACEA in advance of your proposed change and must comply with the eligibility criteria set out in the Call for proposals. When preparing an amendment request, please ensure that you continue to respect the eligibility criteria defined per each type of activity.

Changes are categorized as either Minor or Major Amendments and have different procedures accordingly, as described below.

I. Major Amendments

Major amendments require the submission of an amendment request form duly signed by the legal representative of the beneficiary organisation, accompanied by supporting documents, where applicable.

The template for major amendments and its annexes is available on the Beneficiaries space for Technical Assistance/Capacity Building: https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/eu-aid-volunteers/beneficiaries-space/technical-assistance-and-capacity-building-2018_en. The reasons for the proposed changes need to be specified in the request, which must be submitted in good time and at the latest one month before the end of the eligibility period of the project. The Agency reserves the right to reject an amendment request that is not sufficiently justified.
The request for an amendment may be submitted to EACEA via e-mail by attaching a scanned version of the original request signed request. In this case, it is not necessary to send the paper version of the request. The email address for sending of your requests is the following: EACEA-EUAID-VOLUNTEERS@ec.europa.eu

**Type of major amendments:**

**A. Change in the partnership: withdrawal and/or replacement of partners**

If you need to make a change to the partnership of your project, the following information/documents need to be **attached** to the amendment request form:

- A withdrawal letter from the withdrawing organisation explaining the reasons of withdrawal signed by its legal representative.
- An official document showing the change (election results, statute, extract from register, etc.), if the withdrawal and/or replacement is related to the universal or partial transfer of rights and obligations from one to other organisation
- The new mandate duly completed and signed. This document must be **sent by post in original** as well since it is an official annex to the grant agreement.

**B. Change of legal representative**

The following information/documents need to be attached to the amendment request form:

- An official document showing the change (election results, statute, extract from register etc.).
- Full contact details of the new legal representative.

**C. Changes to the eligibility period**

Please use the appropriate section in the amendment request form to request a change to the eligibility period. Please note that the total eligibility period of your project can never exceed 24 months.

**D. Changes to the budget breakdown**

An amendment request relating to an adjustment to the budget breakdown is **only necessary** when the transfer between budget headings **exceeds 10% of the amount of the heading of eligible direct costs** for which the transfer is intended.

A new Excel budget sheet needs to be attached to the Amendment Request form.
N.B.:

- You need to keep track of any transfer between budget headings and inform us when the cumulative changes exceed 10% so we can approve or reject the budget amendment.

- Indirect costs are not concerned by this rule as they are always limited up to a maximum of 7% of total eligible direct costs.

E. Change of bank account

The following document needs to be attached to the Amendment Request form:

- New financial identification form

http://ec.europa.eu/budget/contracts_grants/info_contracts/financial_id/financial_id_en.cfm

The form must be signed by the account holder in original and either stamped and signed by the bank concerned or accompanied by a recent bank statement. Then, the form must be uploaded in the Participant Portal and your request for amendment must be sent by e-mail.

F. Change of name/legal address of the beneficiary organisation

In case your organisation changes name and/or address, the LEAR has to request a modification through the Participant Portal following this procedure:

- Apply the request in the Participant Portal

- Upload a new Legal Entity form together with all legal documents attesting the registration of the new address with the effective date of the change

- Once the REA validation system validates the change, inform your project officer at EACEA

In case of problems linked to your PIC or changes of legal entity's data, please follow these instructions:

- If you are a Self-registrant/LEAR please contact the Validation Services via the messaging tab of the PIC in the Participant Portal Beneficiary Register: https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/portal/screen/how-to-participate/participant-register, (login with your EU Login)

- For technical questions, please address your request to the IT helpdesk: http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/api//contact/index.html Or by e-mail to: EC-SEDIA-SUPPORT@ec.europa.eu
II. Minor Amendments

Amendments for minor changes can be made through an e-mail exchange or a letter attached to an email with EACEA. Please use the email address EACEA-EUAID-VOLUNTEERS@ec.europa.eu when sending the request.

Type of minor amendments:

A. **Change of the venue**
   - Flexibility subject to your budget limit.
   
   Specific project activities can take place beyond the partner countries as long as the countries concerned have a direct link with the partners such as offices. This change must always be subject to prior authorization from EACEA. A justification of the choice(s) and the expected added value to achieving the project objectives must be stated.

B. **Change of activity dates**
   - Flexibility subject to your budget limit

C. **Change of the contact person**
   - The contact person mentioned in the contract

D. **Change in the work plan**
   - Only if the change is substantive.
   - Please note that the Agency can accept a higher number of participants for real cost activities (conferences, etc.) provided that this does not increase the budget.

E. **Final report submission deadline**
   - An extension of maximum 2 more months can be asked for the submission of the final report.

4. Publicity obligations

Publicity

Project beneficiaries must make themselves familiar with the publicity provisions as stipulated both in the specific and the general provisions of the Grant Agreement in conjunction with the instructions available on the following website: http://ec.europa.eu/echo/en/what/humanitarian-aid/eu-aid-volunteers.

Disclaimer

"This project/document covers humanitarian aid activities implemented with the financial assistance of the European Union. The views expressed herein should not be taken, in any way, to reflect the official opinion of the European Union, and the European Commission is not responsible for any use that may be made of the information it contains."
EU Aid Volunteers visual

Where the action, or part of the action, is a publication, the mention and graphic EUAV visual must appear on the cover or the first pages following the editor's mention.

If the action includes events for the public, signs and posters related to this action must be displayed. This must include the visual mentioned above. Authorization to use the visual described implies no right of exclusive use and is limited to this agreement.

The beneficiaries must inform the public, press and media of the action (internet included), visibly indicate “with the support of the EU Aid Volunteers initiative of the European Union" as well as the graphic visual available at https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/eu-aid-volunteers/beneficiaries-space/technical-assistance-and-capacity-building-2018_en

5. Dissemination and exploitation of results

EU Aid Volunteers co-funded projects have the responsibility to put emphasis on dissemination and exploitation of results, as they directly contribute to the impact of the initiative and to public awareness of their functioning and results. Grant beneficiaries must make themselves familiar with the underlying principles and tools and take them fully into account during the project implementation phase.


Purpose of dissemination and exploitation activities

Significant emphasis is placed on the impact of EU co-financed projects and on ensuring that what they produce will be widely known about and widely used. The results generated, lessons learnt and the experience gained by the project should be made available to the widest possible community.

The objective of dissemination and exploitation is to maximize the impact of project results by optimizing their value, strengthening their impact, transferring them to different contexts, integrating them in a sustainable way and using them actively in systems and practices at local, regional, national and European levels.

Beneficiaries of grants under the EU Aid Volunteers initiative have the duty to ensure that the work undertaken within the framework of this grant agreement and the results accruing from it receive substantial visibility.

The coordinator must:

- pay specific attention to the importance of dissemination, exploitation of results of the action and to their visibility at a transnational level;
- provide during the project lifetime the Agency and/or the Commission with the information requested in order to promote the EU Aid Volunteers initiative and disseminate the results.
What are the project results?

The results of the project may be of a diverse nature and consist of concrete (tangible) results as well as skills and personal experiences (intangible results) that both project coordinators and participants to the activities have acquired. The different categories of results may require different approaches for dissemination and exploitation. For example, tangible results such as ‘products’ may be easily demonstrated with actual items, graphical representations and samples, whereas intangible results such as ‘experiences’ may require alternative methods of display such as survey results, interview analysis etc.

How to plan successful dissemination and exploitation:

Having a strong plan for dissemination and exploitation from the beginning of a project is a key priority. In planning/updating these activities, the project team should address the following main questions:

- What needs does the project meet?
- What are the expected results?
- Which users will benefit from the project’s results?
- To reach these users, in which languages should the products be disseminated?

Key elements of a dissemination and exploitation plan are among others:

- The types of activity – the methods and mechanisms, the languages to be used;
- The resources – people and budget including for translation;
- The timetable;
- The strategy beyond the project's lifetime and beyond the partnership.

How to disseminate and exploit results:

In order to reach as many people as possible, it is advisable to translate as many communication materials and project outputs in as many languages as possible. It is recommended to cover all languages of the partnership and English; the cost of these translations could be included in the grant request if necessary.

There are many different ways to disseminate and exploit results. Beneficiaries could use:

- Project or organisational websites;
- meetings and visits to key stakeholders;
- dedicated discussion opportunities such as information sessions, workshops, seminars, training courses, exhibitions, demonstrations or peer reviews;
- targeted written material such as reports, articles in specialized press, newsletters, press releases, leaflets or brochures;
- audiovisual media and products such as radio, TV, YouTube, Flickr, video clips, podcasts or apps;
- social media;
- public events;
- existing contacts and networks.
When dissemination and exploitation activities should be carried out:

Dissemination and exploitation of results are an integral part of the EU Aid Volunteers project throughout its lifetime. Examples of activities at different stages of the project cycle:

**BEFORE** the project starts (NB: costs associated to those activities are not considered eligible):

- drafting the dissemination and exploitation plan;
- definition of the expected impact and deliverables;
- consideration of how and to whom dissemination and exploitation outcomes will be disseminated;
- identification of a communication focal point as main contact on communication issues.

**DURING** the project:

- putting in place and maintaining a project website;
- use of EU Aid Volunteers templates and materials in all communication/visibility products relating to the EUAV initiative; this includes the use of the name "EU Aid Volunteers", the slogan "We Care, We Act" and adherence to visual identity requirements.
- providing during the project lifetime the Agency and/or the Commission with the information requested in order to promote the EU Aid Volunteers initiative and disseminate the results. This may include answering questionnaires and entering data into EUAV Platform.

**AFTER** the project (NB: costs associated to those activities are not considered eligible. The following advice is not a contractual obligation, but should be considered as good project practice.)

- contacting policy-makers at wider scale;
- continuing further dissemination (as described above);
- developing ideas for future cooperation;
- evaluating achievements and impact;
- contacting relevant media.

**How to assess success:**

The impact assessment is an essential part of the process. It evaluates achievements and generates recommendations for future improvements. Indicators could be used to measure progress towards goals. These are signs that help measuring performance. Indicators can be both quantitative relating to numbers and percentages as well as qualitative relating to the quality of the participation and experience. Questionnaires, interviews and assessments could also be used to measure the impact. Defining indicators relating to the different project activities should be foreseen at the start of the project and part of the overall dissemination plan. Some examples:
Facts and figures related to the website of participating organisations (updates, visits, consultation, cross referencing);

Number of meetings with key stakeholders/public authorities;
Number of participants (institutions and individuals) involved in experimentation, discussions and information sessions (workshops, seminars, peer reviews); follow-up measures;
Production and circulation of products;
Media coverage (articles in specialized press newsletters, press releases, interviews, etc.);
Visibility in the social media;
Participation in public events;
Links with existing networks and transnational partners; transfer of information and know-how;
Impact on regional, national, EU policy measures;
Feedback from end-users, other stakeholders, peers, policy-makers.

The dissemination and exploitation plan should be regularly reviewed, and if necessary corrective action should be taken in close cooperation and in agreement with the Agency.

6. Penalties in the case of non-compliance with publicity obligations and for poor, partial, or late implementation

The obligation to comply with the publicity provision set out in the General conditions (article II.7) constitutes a substantial obligation. If the beneficiary fails to fulfil this obligation, the Agency may apply a 20% reduction of the grant initially provided for.

For the purpose of poor, partial or late implementation as provided for in Article II.25.4 and in a total of maximum 100 points, the reduction will be of:

- 25% if the project scores at least 40 points and below 50 points;
- 35% if the project scores at least 30 and below 40 points;
- 55% if the project scores at least 20 and below 30 points;
- 75% if the project scores below 20 points

7. Reporting

Mid-term report

A mid-term report using the form specified in Annex V is to be submitted to the Agency at the latest on the first day of the month after the midterm of the action.

For projects which received 75% of pre-financing: the mid-term report will consist of a narrative part where you will describe how the project is proceeding and what has been implemented so far.
For projects which received 40% of pre-financing: the mid-term report will consist of a narrative part where you will describe how the project is proceeding and what has been implemented as well as of a financial part where you will have to provide the costs incurred so far and demonstrate that at least 70% of the pre-financing has already been spent. It must be accompanied by a request of payment of the second pre-financing.

Final report

The final report must be submitted to the Agency at the latest 2 months after the end of the project. It consists of a narrative and a financial part. Templates will be available soon at the following link: [https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/eu-aid-volunteers/beneficiaries-space/technical-assistance-and-capacity-building-2018_en](https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/eu-aid-volunteers/beneficiaries-space/technical-assistance-and-capacity-building-2018_en)

The narrative part:

You will be requested to describe the project implementation in detail. The information requested will follow the structure of the application form. You will also be requested to provide examples of the products arising from the project (e.g. training materials, videos, handbooks and guides, etc.).

The financial part:

You will be requested to present the financial aspects of the project implementation in detail and to provide with a list of invoices and/or copies of invoices of the project upon a sampling request from the Agency. **A rigorous bookkeeping is therefore essential.**

You must keep all supporting documents and records for a period of five years after the final balance of the grant is paid in case of audit.

VAT will be considered as an eligible cost only if it is recoverable under the applicable national VAT legislation. The auditor should verify the non-deductibility of the VAT and the appropriate supporting documents at the final report level and report on it in the report of factual findings.

Please note that all travel costs should be linked to eligible countries and to countries which take part in the project. Any exception to this rule must always be subject to prior authorization from EACEA.

1) Reporting of expenses based on actual/real costs

   a. Exchange rate to be used for your final report

You should use the current exchange rate for the reimbursement of your partners' participants. However, for the final report presentation, the exchange rate of the month of the pre-financing of your project should be used (please refer to the terms of article I.10.3 of your grant agreement).
b. Real costs higher than 60,000 EUR

When the real costs of your project are higher than 60,000 EUR you are requested to submit an audit report produced by an external independent auditor. Please refer to Annex VII of the Grant Agreement for further details.

It is important to select the auditor well in advance to avoid delays in submitting the final report. The costs of the audit certificate are eligible costs of the project. A template for your engagement letter with the auditor is available on the website together with these Instructions for Project Management. The exact role and procedures to be respected by the auditor are stated in the Guidance note.

The following link provides the Guidance note on the Audit Report: