



# SI-TEAM financial guidelines

Supporting powerpoint intro to the financial guidelines, SI 2023 Call

6 December 2022

# Summary

1. Introduction

2. Financial framework

3. Budget lines



# 1. Introduction

Update of 25 November 2022, based on policy decisions of 19/11/21, 23/11/21, and 25/03/2022 (Bureau UOS) and discussion within financial working group (ICOS-FIN).



# General principles

Principles of **alignment** with financial guidelines of the partner universities through negotiation (in particular in the context of local guidelines for travel, mileage, scholarships, etc.)

## We fund **cooperation**

The share of investment costs in the overall budget is to be kept as limited as possible, taking into account the project objectives

Key aim is to **improve the basic conditions** in which **academics** have to **do “their job”**

Academic personnel is to be provided by either the partner university or the Flemish universities

Selected input or **in-kind cofunding** is assumed by the local universities (office space, waivering of tuition fees, staff support, renovation of buildings, etc)

## 2. Financial Framework



## General framework & guidelines

- SI: Max. 70.000 EUR
- **Budget transfer (roll-over between activity years)**  
roll-over of budget between activity years is possible
- **General recommendation: spread the budget in such a way that you can take into account slow upstart in view of setting out administrative project management procedures, opening of local accounts, etc.**
- **Projects cannot be extended, max. duration 2 activity years 1 sept X – 31 Aug X+2**



## Basic info

- Currency : EUR (specific EUR bank account to be opened by the local partner university for the management of the funds)
  - Overall budget project detailed **per activity year**
  - Activity year: 12-month period (1 Sept year 'X' to 31 August year 'x+1')
  - Only invoices dated within activity period (12 months) are acceptable / original invoices
    - Date related expenses (e.g. mission related expenses, subscription costs, scholarship costs, etc.) need to be accounted for in the respective activity year
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# 3. Budget lines



## 3. Budget lines

- A. Investment costs
- B. Operational costs
- C. Personnel costs
- D. Scholarship costs

- E 1. Flemish (HEI) Coordination costs
- E 2. Partner (HESI) Coordination costs



# Guidelines per category

Budget lines
A. Investment costs
A.1. <i>General investment costs</i>
A.2. <i>Vehicles</i>
A.3. <i>ICT</i>
B. Operational costs
B.1. <i>General: goods &amp; services</i>
B.2. <i>Dissemination &amp; uptake (events)</i>
B.3. <i>ICT (operations and services)</i>
B.4. <i>International mobility &amp; subsistence</i>
B.5. <i>Local mobility &amp; subsistence</i>
C. Personnel costs
C.1. <i>Employment contracts</i>
C.2. <i>Topping-up</i>
D. Scholarship costs
D.1. <i>Short term scholarship allowances in Belgium</i>
D.2. <i>Study scholarship allowances in Belgium</i>
D.3. <i>Research scholarship allowances in Belgium</i>
D.4. <i>Short term scholarship allowances in partner country</i>
D.5. <i>Study scholarship allowances in partner country</i>
D.6. <i>Research scholarship allowances in partner country</i>
<b>Total A-D</b>
E. Coordination Costs
E.1. <i>Coordination costs in Belgium</i>
E.2. <i>Partner coordination costs</i>
<b>TOTAL</b>

## A. INVESTMENT COSTS (1/2)

- Goods with a long service life / assets that are being depreciated
- All goods are intended for the partner university / universities
- Local rules to be followed for defining the threshold for a good being considered 'investment'. For VLIR-UOS min. threshold of 1.000 EUR (VAT excluded))
- **Purchases in Belgium:** law of public expenditure is to be followed and in view of export VAT exemption is to be obtained in Belgium and locally no import taxes are paid (negotiate with national government in view to obtain tax exemption)
- **Local purchases:** local ruling and procedures
  - *Good practice: beyond € 5.500 request at least three quotations must be requested*

## A. INVESTMENT COSTS (2/2)

- All costs relating to the shipment of material and equipment, including packaging, transport and insurance are to be included under A if they are included in the same invoice
- All investment goods are to be listed in a project/institutional inventory and labelled.

### *Good practice:*

- *investment costs indicative max 25% of the total budget in the case of SI & TEAM;*
- *Considering the project scope and budget: no purchase of project cars*

# A. INVESTMENT COSTS (A1 & A2)

A.1. General	
Definition	General investment costs, except for A2 Vehicles and A3 ICT related investment costs
Examples (non-exhaustive list)	lab infrastructure, equipment, furniture, minor infrastructure works, ..
A.2. Vehicles	
Definition	The purchase of different kinds of vehicles or means of transportation (electrical, motorized or other). Includes all costs prior to or related to the purchase and commissioning of a vehicle (registration, documents, shipment, ...).
Examples	motorcycles, bicycles, ... (non-exhaustive list)

# A. INVESTMENT COSTS (A3)

A.3. ICT	
Definition	ICT refers to all Information and Communication Technologies. This covers equipment, software and services. Includes also all costs related to the purchase, shipment, installation and commissioning of ICT equipment, software and services.
Examples (non-exhaustive list)	LAN networks, servers, laptops, software licences, video conferencing hardware, applications, ...

## **B - OPERATIONAL COSTS**

**These costs are defined as costs incurred for the purchase and/or operational use of goods or services that are directly related to a specific project activity.**

**In the case of operational goods** we can say that, these usually have a:

- 1) limited service life, or
- 2) cannot function on their own (e.g. spare parts),  
or
- 3) are strongly activity-related

**In the case of personnel related service contracts**, these are with **third parties, external to the HEI**

# B - OPERATIONAL COSTS (B1)

## B.1. General : Goods & Services

Definition	All operational costs, goods or services, with the exception of those costs under the specific categories B.2. “Dissemination & Uptake”, B.3. “ICT”, B.4. “International mobility & subsistence” & B.5. “Local mobility & subsistence ».
Examples (non-exhaustive list)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Services rendered by third parties</li><li>• Personnel related service contracts with third parties (external to the HEI), e.g. ad hoc assistance (no employment contract with HEI)</li><li>• shipping costs,</li><li>• consumer goods (non-durable laboratory equipment, chemicals, documentation, books, minor materials, spare parts, project related office supplies, fuel, copies, ...),</li><li>• representation costs,</li><li>• subscription costs,</li></ul> , ...



# B - OPERATIONAL COSTS (B2 & B3)

## B.2. Dissemination & Uptake

Definition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>costs related to the <b>distribution of information and materials, produced by the project, to both the general public or specific targeted audiences.</b></li><li>this involves communicating knowledge effectively and synthesizing and repackaging project results for (non-) expert audiences and stakeholders.</li></ul> <p>We define <b>dissemination &amp; uptake as interactions with the general public or specific targeted audiences to disseminate information or materials produced by the project</b></p>
Examples (non-exhaustive list)	Dissemination and stakeholder events, publications for the general public/targeted audiences, ...

## B.3. ICT (operations & services)

Definition	ICT refers to all Information and Communication Technologies. This covers operational goods, software and small equipment that does not fall under A.3.
Examples (non-exhaustive list)	Maintenance of ICT equipment and software, optimization of software, systems and equipment, (recurring) license fees, ...

# B - OPERATIONAL COSTS (B4)

## B.4. International Mobility & Subsistence

Definition	International travel costs comprise all costs incurred for door-to-door journeys in the context of a VLIR-UOS project by project members from Flemish and partner HEI's) or external experts involved in a project activity.
Examples (non-exhaustive list)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Transportation (e.g. plane ticket including airport tax, service fee travel agents, travel insurance)</li><li>• overnight expenses,</li><li>• visa costs, international passport</li><li>• per diem/allowance/subsistence, insurance,</li><li>• healthcare related costs (obligatory vaccinations, COVID-19) &amp; CO2-compensation.</li><li>• Costs arising from necessary certificates</li><li>• ...</li></ul>

### Specific attention points related to residential costs linked to the stay abroad of Belgian or local personnel

- Hotel accommodation costs in the partner country (indicative max. per country)
- Hotel accommodation in Belgium : indicative max. € 100 / night
- Per diem
  - Calculation of the per diem: number of nights abroad
  - In Belgium : € 75 / day
  - Mission : max. three weeks !! (if recycling/training involved then see also 'short term scholar')

# B - OPERATIONAL COSTS (B5)

B.5. Local Mobility & Subsistence	
Definition	<p>All costs incurred for journeys within Belgium or within the partner country by project members (from Flemish and partner HEI's) or external experts involved in a project activity.</p> <p><b>Local per diem max. 25 EUR/per day.</b> (Hotel and transportation <u>invoices</u> to be booked separately).</p>
Examples (non-exhaustive list)	Transportation, overnight expenses per diems/allowances/subsistence,...

## **B – OPERATIONAL COSTS: personnel related service contracts**

- Service contracts should be linked to project activities and support operational activities. Operational budget consisting mainly of service contracts would be very questionable.

Type of service contracts:

- Technical or non-technical ad-hoc support services (lab work, data collection and basic analysis)
- Consultants only selectively if no institutional experts nor Flemish expertise available or too costly (travel)

## C – PERSONNEL COSTS – basic principles

- All costs connected to the employment or subsidizing of (temporary) employees through an employment contract with the institution, within the project duration. This includes also topping-up.
- Academic staff that bears responsibility for the implementation of (parts of) the partner project is made available by both the Flemish universities and the partner university.
- No personnel can be hired on the project for employment in Belgium.
- All personnel costs outside of an employment contract (service contracts, ...) are part of budget category 'B. Operational Costs'.

# C - PERSONNEL COSTS

## C.1. Employment Contracts

### Definition

All costs connected to the employment or subsidizing of (temporary) employees through an employment contract with the institution, within the project duration.

## C.2. Topping-up

### Definition and general principles

- Supplement to the salary of university staff involved in the project
- Indicative max. 40% of gross salary
- Justification: salary slip
- To be kept to a minimum → standard academic responsibilities
- Persons that will receive a topping up are to be listed in the project proposal

## **D - SCHOLARSHIP COSTS**

- The general principle for a project/embedded scholarship is that it contributes to capacity building at level of the involved department of the partner institution.
- Scholarship costs are costs linked to having scholars study / conduct research either in Belgium or in the country/region of origin

**“Scholarship allowance” instead of “scholarship”**

## D – Scholarship costs – types

### Different types of allowances for scholarships in Belgium

- **Short term:** Education, training or research stays up until 6 months for which no degree is awarded
- **Study:** Bachelor, master, graduate, postgraduate
- **Research:** Predoc, PhD, postdoc



## **D – Short term scholarship allowance**

**Education, training or research stays up until 6 months** for which **no degree is awarded** and that **last between 7 days and 6 months**.

Differentiated based on the duration:

- 7 days and 14 days: based on a daily allowance of 100 EUR
- 15 days – 31 days: based on a standard monthly allowance of 1500 EUR (not pro rata!)
- > 1 month - 6 months: based on a standard monthly allowance of 1500 EUR (pro rata) For stays longer than one month the allowance is calculated pro rata, by multiplying the total number of days by the allowance of 1500 EUR, and dividing this amount by 31

## **D – Short term scholarship allowance**

### **Payments to/for the scholar**

- Indirect travel costs : 200 EUR (lump sum)
- Airline ticket : 1.400 EUR (upon justification)
- Insurance : 2 EUR / day (upon justification)

### **Payments to the Flemish host unit or institution – bench fee**

- The bench fee is a payment to the host unit and is a contribution to the costs incurred in the provision of workspaces and laboratories, the use of study material, research equipment and computing hardware and software, supervision of scholars, etc.
- Bench fee : 16 EUR / day (lump sum)

***Exceptionally, extra costs can be budgeted (esp. for accommodation, indirect travel costs)***

# D – Scholarship Allowances: study/research

## Common monthly allowances “all-in” (lump sum), except for flight tickets

Study	1.400 EUR/month (no distinction 1- and 2-year programmes)
Research	1.900 EUR/month + 310 EUR supervision & research fee when in Belgium (up to max 24 months)

- » board and lodging in Belgium
- » insurance
- » logistical allowance
- » indirect travel costs
- » Tuition or registration fee

### This does not include:

- » airline tickets (contrary to earlier info on new guidelines, taking into account major differences per country)
- » research and supervision cost will be apart

# Phd Scholarships in a project

- Considering that persons who are granted a PhD scholarship as part of a project are expected to be under contract at the partner institution, deloading from normal duties – academic and/or administrative – is expected so that sufficient time can be devoted to the scholarship.
- The Flemish institution is committed to ensure that study or research stays of scholars, being selected partner institution scientists, are organised in such a way that the results are of maximum benefit to the project.
- The Flemish institution and the partner institution will jointly establish procedures and criteria for selection of candidates for study or research stays abroad. The selection of scholars is the joint responsibility of the Flemish and local promoter.
- *Good practice: due to the short term nature of SI projects, Phd scholarships are not expected to be at the core of an SI proposal, but linked to an SI limited funding can be destined towards the support of ongoing Phds (finalisation of existing PhDs, support of a research exchange visit, etc.)*



# Local scholarships in a project

- Local Scholarships
  - As a general principle local scholarships may be funded from the project budget but the amounts are to be in line with university and national guidelines
  - Types of scholarships that can be identified:
    - Short-term scholarships or in the region
    - Study scholarships (e.g. Master) in partner country or in the region
    - Exceptionally: local PhD scholarships

# E. COORDINATION COSTS

## Coordination costs E 1 and E 2

Definition (subject to further optimisation within the financial framework document)

The coordination costs are fixed amounts, based on a calculation of max. 10% of the planned budget A-D, divided under the umbrella of equal partnerships as:

- E1: coordination costs in Belgium (fixed amount, 5% A-D at the Flemish level), and
- E2: partner coordination costs (fixed amount, 5% A-D at the local level)

Detail

These fixed amounts are foreseen in the budget and reporting as a lump sum. This budget is allocated to cover administration and coordination costs as well as non-attributable institutional costs related to the institutional management of the project.

The partner coordination costs are allocated to cover costs which are related to the administration and coordination of the local implementation of the project. The distribution of the partner coordination costs in case there are multiple partners is left to the parties involved



*Questions, remarks, reflections ??*

*Thank you!*