



<p style="text-align: center;">APPLICANT'S GUIDE FOR ACTION GRANTS RELATED TO TRAINING IN CONFERENCE INTERPRETING</p>

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What should be considered when filling out the grant proposal?

I. MAIN PRINCIPLES

This Guide provides a summary of the main points of the administrative and financial processes governing the grants provided by DG Interpretation of the European Commission (DG SCIC) to co-finance various actions in the field of interpreter training. It is based on the rules and conditions contained in the legal documents relating to this call (in particular, the Financial Regulation 2018/1046 and the **Work Programme for 2024 on financial support for training in conference interpreting**).

The draft grant agreement (mono-beneficiary/multi-beneficiaries) provides detailed information on the rights and obligations of the successful applicant, i.e. the beneficiary of the grant. This Guide itself is not legally binding and therefore does not supersede these documents. The only binding provisions are those of the signed grant agreement.

Before completing the grant proposal, applicants are advised to carefully read the **call for proposals**, including the [linked documents](#).

Only admissible proposals that pass the non-exclusion, eligibility, selection and award criteria may be awarded a grant, providing there is sufficient funding.

The grant may never finance the entire costs of the action. DG Interpretation's co-financing level under this call for proposals is maximum 75% of the total eligible costs.

Only costs that are directly related to the proposed action and have not been incurred prior to the submission date of the proposal are eligible for co-financing.

If several grant requests are submitted, please send a separate proposal for each one.

The completed grant proposal (and its annexes) must be submitted only electronically via the SPIRIT GRANTS system at the very latest on the deadline in Point 3 of the call for proposals. Proposals may not be submitted after that deadline (see points 5 and 13).

II. DRAFTING THE BUDGET of the ACTION

II.1 General

The budget must be realistic and detailed. Calculations should be transparent (units x quantity x costs/unit) and be based on actual and experienced costs in the beneficiary's accounting system and assigned exclusively to this specific action.

If the applicant can demonstrate the need to start the action before the agreement is signed, the eligibility period may start before the signature. Under no circumstances can the eligibility period start before the date of submission of the grant proposal.

If for any reason the action will not take place (i.e. not enough qualified candidates for a post-graduate course) or is not co-funded, all costs (i.e. aptitude tests) must be borne entirely by the applicant (see also *Chapter III. Signature of a grant agreement*).

If the final expenses turn out to be lower than the budget foreseen in the grant agreement, the final grant will be reduced accordingly, as the final grant is always calculated based on the co-funding rate of the eligible expenditure and is not a fixed amount.

The budget forecast in the proposal form should always be completed in **euros**. For other currencies, please refer to <https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/procedures-guidelines-tenders/information->

[contractors-and-beneficiaries/exchange-rate-infoeuro_en](#) for the updated exchange rate of the month when the proposal is submitted.

Expenditure and income should be in balance.

Each budget line should show a detailed breakdown of the planned expenditure, specifying the unit costs and total quantities involved in the action.

The total estimated expenses should be expressed the following way:

$$\text{Quantity} \times \text{unit cost in €} = \text{total cost}$$

Please also refer to the examples given in **Annex 8**).

In order to carry out the action, the beneficiary might need to purchase goods or services. Such purchases will only be accepted as eligible direct costs, if the beneficiary has foreseen them in the budget. The beneficiary will undertake to award the corresponding contracts to the bid offering best value for money, ensuring fair competition, transparency and equal treatment of potential suppliers and avoiding any conflict of interests.

II.2. Eligible costs

Eligibility rules for the costs are described in detail in Article 6.1 and 6.2 of the grant agreement. Costs incurred are considered to be eligible if:

- they are directly connected with the proposed action;
- they are included in the approved budget;
- they directly contribute to the effective and successful implementation of the action;
- they are reasonable, justified and comply with the principles of sound financial management, in particular in terms of value for money and cost-effectiveness;
- they are incurred by the beneficiary during the lifetime of the action, as defined in the grant agreement, recorded in their accounts or tax documents, and are identifiable and verifiable.

II.3. Non-eligible costs

Please note that the following costs are not considered as eligible (see Art. 6.3 of the grant agreement) for co-funding:

- return on capital
- debt and debt service charges
- provisions for losses or potential future liabilities
- interest owed
- doubtful debts
- exchange losses
- **VAT, unless the beneficiary can demonstrate that he is unable to recover it**
- costs declared by the beneficiary and covered by another action or work programme receiving a European Union grant
- contribution in kind
- excessive or reckless expenditure

Specific for this call for proposals:

- coordination and administration costs which are higher than 15% to the total costs of the other staff costs (cf. A. Personnel costs)
- costs of teaching hours not directly related to the teaching of consecutive or simultaneous interpretation exceeding the proportion of 25% (cf. A. Personnel costs) per language
- staff costs exceeding € 75,00 per hour
- subsistence costs higher than € 160,00 (cf. C.3)
- travel and subsistence costs of more than 1 accompanying teacher per 10 students for the study visits

II.4. Partners for the implementation of the action:

If an applicant intends to rely on partners for the execution of a significant part of the action, the costs of these partners as well as their financial contribution to the action should be included in the budget. For each partner, the applicant acting mainly as coordinator, shall provide a completed “**Annex 5 – partner institutions**” (Section V of grant proposal).

II.5. VAT (Value Added Tax):

The budget should exclude VAT if the applicant is exempt from VAT payment or if VAT is refunded.

II.6. Information on the cost categories – Section III of the proposal form and Annex 8

Please indicate costs under the categories below only if related to the proposed action:

DIRECT COSTS (Categories A – D)

A. Personnel costs

Please refer also to the Point II.3 above

Category A.1: Permanent or temporary staff costs refer to any payment made to an employee under an employment contract

The staff costs should be calculated on the basis of the actual salary (payroll) of the employee according to the usual remuneration policy applied by the applicant and **should be expressed in an hourly rate.**

They must include all normal charges paid by the employer, such as social security contributions and related costs. Any bonus, incentive and profit-sharing arrangements or running costs must be excluded. If a staff member is only working part-time on the action, only the part of working time devoted to the action should be considered. For the purpose of this call, a calendar year contains 215 working days or 43 calendar weeks (see grant agreement 6.A.1).

If applicable, the criteria used to calculate the supplementary payments must be objective and generally applied by the beneficiary, regardless of the source of funding used.

Category A.2: Natural persons working under a direct contract (without employment contract):

The staff should work under conditions similar to those of an employee (in particular regarding the way the work is organised, the tasks that are performed and the premises where they are performed); the result of the work belongs to the beneficiary (unless exceptionally agreed otherwise); and the costs

are not significantly different from the costs of staff performing similar tasks under an employment contract with the beneficiary.

Please define the tasks and role for the action in the **Annex 8 Budget details** (e.g., teachers, jury members, speakers, experts).

Permanent, temporary or contractual staff remunerated by the European institutions may under no circumstances be included among the remunerated staff of the action.

Category A.3: seconded persons by a third party against payment

A secondment is a temporary transfer of a person from his regular position to another position for a certain period of time. It may take place from or to the public or private sector. Costs may be included under personnel costs if the above conditions are fulfilled.

For Type A actions applicants must indicate:

- a) Staff costs linked to coordination and administration relating to tasks such as managing the course and its timetable, including secretarial assistance; designing, preparing and planning tests and exams; organising study visits, mobility schemes, virtual classes as well as liaising with the EU institutions may not exceed 15% of the teaching staff costs or the costs dedicated to the core activity.
- b) The different teaching tasks (including presence at exams) should be listed in detail.
In principle, DG Interpretation will consider as eligible only those teaching costs which are directly related to the conference interpretation content of the course for EU languages and/or EU-accession languages, where applicable.
The number of teaching hours not directly related to the teaching of consecutive or simultaneous interpretation (e.g. terminology, EU law, voice coaching) between the above languages for which co-financing is sought **may not exceed 25 % of the total number of hours** of consecutive and simultaneous interpreting per language.

DG Interpretation reserves the right to only co-finance language combinations which meet the services' needs (cf. **Language priorities for the academic year 2024-25**).

To substantiate the budget for the staff costs of the proposed action, the applicant must attach the fully completed **Annex 6 – Information on Staff** to the grant proposal, including short CVs (**maximum 5 pages**) giving information about professional training and experience relevant to the action. **It is highly recommended to use the Europass CV format.**

Please use the Excel table **Annex 8 Budget details** and consult and complete the calculation of the remuneration, in addition to the attached tables regarding remuneration.

B. Subcontracting costs

Subcontracting is the implementation by a third party with which one contractor has concluded a procurement contract for specific tasks forming part of the action. The sub-contracting may cover only a limited part of the action and is not allowed for post-graduate courses (Type A actions). Such costs must be clearly specified in the budget and in the Section II Action description of the proposal.

C. Purchase costs

C.1 Travel and subsistence (e.g. Mobility schemes, study visits, workshops, conferences)

Expenses for participation in and/or the organisation of meetings, conferences, mock conferences, workshops or any mobility schemes are eligible when clearly relevant to the action.

In the budget, and in a more detailed way in the grant proposal, the following should be indicated for each event:

- the subject, date and place of the event, the estimated conference fees and the estimated number of participants to be sent by the applicant
- the purpose of the trip, the name of the persons and/or their function, the place of departure and arrival, the number of working days covered by the stay, the costs of the return ticket

Participation at any conferences related to conference interpreting organised by the European Commission and/or the European Parliament are **not** eligible for co-funding.

Travel and subsistence costs are based on actual costs incurred. The subsistence costs cover hotel accommodation and per diem (for local expenses like meals and local transport) and can be eligible for co-financing provided they are essential, reasonable, properly documented and incurred by the grant applicant. Subsistence costs exceeding the maximum of EUR 160,00 will not be co-funded. The most economical fares (i.e. economy class, public transport instead of taxi) must be used.

Study visits to the EU institutions during the academic year referred to in the proposal:

Applicants who intend to organise a visit to the EU institutions are advised to include the related costs in their budget estimate if such costs are borne by the universities and not by the students themselves. Please note that costs for teachers who are accompanying students are considered eligible only up to 1 teacher per 10 students. If for any reasons the visit cannot take place, the final grant will then be reduced accordingly.

C.2 Equipment

This includes both the purchase of equipment to be used for the training of interpretation (such as virtual classes or booths, etc.) and its current operating and maintenance costs. The purchase contract for equipment may not be signed before the submission date of the grant proposal. Also, the depreciation of equipment purchased prior to the submission of the proposal cannot be included.

Costs shall be eligible only:

- if included as part of a proposal for organising a master or a post-graduate course in conference interpreting, for which Section II.A of the proposal form must be fully completed;
- if dedicated to the development of e-learning tools and is part of an activity aimed at supporting conference interpreter training, whereupon it should be indicated in Section II.B of the proposal form.

For equipment to be bought for the academic year referred to in the proposal, the total purchase and installation costs of equipment needed for the execution of the action are fully eligible (see Art. 6.2 – C.2 of the grant agreement) and no depreciation rule will apply.

If technical advice on interpretation booths is needed, please consult the [Standards for interpreting facilities website](#).

C.3 Other goods, works and services

The applicant may include in this category costs like teaching material (books, subscription to newspapers), promotion, rental of rooms, subscription to virtual platforms, publications, translations which are used exclusively for the proposed action.

Photocopies, toner, stationery and notepads are considered as office supplies and are included in the general costs.

D. Other direct costs:

Not applicable

INDIRECT COSTS

E. Indirect costs

These are overheads or general costs related to the action management, such as bank charges, communication costs and office supplies (postage, telephone, mailing, internet, stationery, photocopies etc), rent of the premises used for the action (proportionate to their use).

Occasional accountancy and secretarial activities should also be indicated under this category. They may neither cover, nor overlap with, costs declared under the above-mentioned categories. and will be reimbursed at the flat-rate of maximum 7% of the eligible direct costs (budget categories A-D); any amount exceeding this percentage will be ineligible. They do not need to be justified by invoices.

What happens once the grant proposal is dispatched?

The grant proposal will be examined against admissibility, eligibility, selection criteria. If all criteria are fulfilled and the proposal does not fall under the exclusion criteria, it will be evaluated and ranked by an Evaluation Committee according to the award criteria (cf. Call for proposals).

In accordance with Article 200.3 of the Financial Regulation, during the evaluation stage the applicant may be asked to provide additional information or to clarify supporting documents via email. The applicant must reply within the deadline set in the request for clarification.

The applicants will be informed as soon as possible of the outcome of the selection procedure solely by electronic means at the email address indicated in the proposal.

For actions described in point 6.2 a), some small adjustments to the budget may be necessary once the final list of students and their language combinations is known. In such cases, the applicants are requested to inform DG Interpretation immediately, in writing, of the changes to the budget and the grant amount requested. However, the proposal may not be changed substantially.

What happens if the grant proposal is successful and a grant is awarded?

III. SIGNATURE OF THE GRANT AGREEMENT

If the proposed action is selected for co-funding by the responsible authorising officer, the applicants will be informed of any changes made to the budget in terms of the eligible costs. They will be also informed if the budget was reduced according to the budget availability and the ranking of the proposals. The applicants will then be requested to confirm that they are still willing to carry out the

proposed action and receive the grant as proposed by DG Interpretation. They are also requested to confirm the final language combinations which will be taught, following the aptitude tests and enrolments, which might decrease the budget and thus the grant amount.

If the envisaged action does not take place (i.e., not enough candidates for Type A actions), the applicant should inform DG Interpretation immediately. In that case, all the incurred costs (i.e., advertising for the course, aptitude tests or preparation of the action etc.) are to be borne by the applicant.

If the applicants accept the award proposal, they receive the grant agreements which should both be sent back to the address indicated, initialled, dated and signed (with a qualified electronic signature) or blue ink signature (in case of hard copies, in which case two copies are required). The beneficiary will then receive a countersigned copy from DG Interpretation. The beneficiary is only entitled to the grant once the agreement has been signed by both parties.

If the proposed action involves several participating institutions/partners, Data Sheet Point 2 and Articles 7, 9.1, 11, 12, 39 and 40 of the grant agreement in particular apply. The coordinator (coordinating institution/applicant) submits the grant agreement to the partner institutions to ensure that the partners understand the applicable rules. The legal representatives of the partner institutions shall sign Annex 3 (Accession form, formerly called “mandate”) of the grant agreement¹ and the declaration on honour and send both to the coordinator.

The pre-financing and final balance will be paid to the coordinator. The coordinator will redistribute the amounts to the partners according to their respective contribution to the action. Some additional documents from each partner might be requested.

All documents of the grant agreement (including the annexes) are contractually binding. In case of discrepancy between the different documents, the special conditions prevail over the general conditions. The grant agreement prevails over the other documents/annexes.

What happens once the grant agreement is signed by both parties?

IV. AMENDMENTS

The budget may be adjusted without an amendment as long as:

- the budget change does not imply any substantive or important change to the description of the action.
- the budget transfers between budget categories A, B or C do not exceed 10% of the total eligible costs of the action (see grant agreement: Point 3 of Data Sheet and Articles 5.5 and 39).
- No new costs are introduced in a budget category A, B or C where there were initially no costs.

In case of doubt, it is preferable to contact DG Interpretation who will decide whether an amendment is needed.

Requests for modifications to the supported action made **after the signature of the grant agreement** must be submitted by the beneficiary as soon as possible and authorised by DG Interpretation in writing (preferably by email). They must be submitted at the latest one month before the closing date of the action, except in cases duly substantiated by the beneficiary and accepted by DG Interpretation.

¹ to be signed within 30 days after the entry into force of the agreement

Like the grant agreement, the amendment must be signed by both parties. Once the grant agreement is signed, the beneficiary will receive the amended report form templates.

No amendment can be signed after the end of the action, as stipulated in the grant agreement.

Without agreement in writing, any modified provision or expenditure that was not foreseen in the beneficiary's initial budget (Annex III of grant agreement) cannot be taken into consideration in the final calculation of the grant.

Example:

The beneficiary needs to purchase additional equipment for €2 000 not foreseen originally in the budget under C.2. On the other hand, an item of travel expenditure for €3 000 under C.1 will not be executed as planned by the beneficiary. No amendment to the grant agreement would be needed if the change under budget category C did not exceed 10% of the eligible costs of the action and did not increase the total budget. This just needs to be reported in the Final Report. If no equipment was foreseen in the initial budget under C.1, the cost of any equipment shall be eligible only if an amendment was signed by both parties.

V. REPORTING – PAYMENTS – FINAL GRANT - RECOVERY

The beneficiary is entitled to the final balance payment upon approval of the correctly completed report forms.

The beneficiary has to certify that the financial documents submitted to the Commission comply with the financial provisions of the agreement, that the costs declared are costs actually incurred, and that all receipts have been declared. (see grant agreement: Point 4 of Data Sheet, Art. 21 and 22).

V.1 VAT (Value Added Tax)

The financial reports should exclude VAT if the beneficiary is exempted from VAT payment or if VAT is refunded.

V.2 Currency (for non-eurozone countries)

Please indicate the currency in which the payments were made when reporting. The beneficiary should convert the currency into euros using the average of the monthly exchange rates of the action's duration (see: http://ec.europa.eu/budget/contracts_grants/info_contracts/infoeuro/index_en.cfm). Organisations established in countries outside the eurozone should be aware that they can be impacted by fluctuations of exchange rates.

V.3. Payments

The grant will be paid in two instalments. The indicative dates of the payments will be stipulated in the grant agreement and may vary according to the risk assessment made by DG Interpretation. Unless otherwise provided in the grant agreement, payments will be made as follows:

a) pre-financing instalment

Unless stipulated differently in the grant agreement, the beneficiary will receive up to 50% of the grant once the agreement has been signed by both parties.

b) final payment request

The following final report forms must be submitted as early as possible after the end of the action and as stipulated in the grant agreement: Point 4.2 of Data Sheet, Art 22.3.4, duly completed, signed and dated:

- Final Action Report on the action's implementation (Annex IV A)
- Final Financial Statement on final expenditure and revenue (Annex V A)
- Details of Expenditure (Annex V B)
- Staff remuneration (Annex V C)

Please note that the Final Financial Statement should only report the final expenditure and revenue related to the action.

V.4 Calculation of the final grant

The final amount of the grant is only established *at the end of the action*, after verification and approval of the *final report* and the provision of supporting documents. DG Interpretation calculates this final grant amount by applying the co-financing percentage specified in the grant agreement to the *accepted (eligible) final balance* of the action.

The final amount of the grant can never exceed the maximum amount set in the grant agreement. Should the final amount not fully cover actually incurred costs, the difference must be financed from other sources.

Example:

A post-graduate course has a total proposed/estimated budget of € 75 000. Total approved (= eligible) budget: € 65 000. Grant awarded: € 20 000 (= 30.76% of € 65 000).

If in the end the final eligible expenditure amounts to € 50 000, the final maximum amount of the grant will be 30.76 % of € 50 000 = € 15 380 (and not € 20 000).

V.5 Verification of the balance

As part of the verifications on the final amount of the grant to be paid, DG Interpretation carries out a control on the reality and eligibility of several items reported in the final financial statement. For that purpose, you may be requested to produce copies of various accounting documents. Once DG Interpretation has checked and approved the eligibility of the selected items, the final grant is calculated (see point V.4). The beneficiary will be informed of the result of the calculation via email. All supporting documents evidencing costs (procurement procedures and contracts, employment contracts, payslips, invoices, log book, **timesheets**, timetables for assignments, boarding passes, travel tickets (showing dates of departure and return, place of departure and destination and name of the traveller), hotel invoices and the relevant payment proofs or proofs of revenue need to be kept by the beneficiary after the last payment made by DG Interpretation and should be made available on request:

- for at least 3 years (for a grant less than €60 000)
- for at least 5 years (for a grant higher than €60 000).

If not all expenses incurred have been paid when the final financial statement is drafted, please mark in the overview of expenditure under payment date "pending". The payment should be made as soon as possible, but this could be done after closure of the action and payment of the last instalment by

DG Interpretation. Please note that DG Interpretation might still request a proof of payment after the payment of the final grant.

Personnel costs:

For reporting to DG Interpretation, the beneficiary shall retain evidence regarding the time worked by the staff, be that through a time-recording system, a reliable method of calculating how much time was dedicated to the supported action or through an employment contract or direct contract stipulating the precise assignment and remuneration of the action.

On request, the beneficiary must be able to document in a transparent way the staff remuneration (via counter-signed specific contracts or agreements, clear working schedules or **time-sheets** confirmed at the end by the persons responsible).

Timesheets are only necessary if the beneficiary has no alternative reliable method to demonstrate which proportion of the staff working time is devoted to the supported action. The template timesheet for academic year 2024-2025 should be completed regularly from the start of the action, signed by the staff member and counter-signed by the hierarchical superior or supervisor. The beneficiaries are free to use their own templates or any other way of recording.

V.6 Recovery

If the final grant is lower than the pre-financing already paid by DG Interpretation, the beneficiary will be requested to reimburse the difference between pre-financing and the final grant. Please also note that grants are eligible for ex-post controls after the final payment of the grant.

VI. VISIBILITY OF EUROPEAN UNION FUNDING

a) Beneficiaries:

Beneficiaries must clearly acknowledge the European Commission's contribution in all publications or in conjunction with activities for which the grant is used.

In this respect, beneficiaries are required to give prominence to the [name and emblem of the European Commission](#) on all their publications, posters, programmes, websites and other products realised under the co-financed action by using the following wording “co-funded by the European Union”.



Co-funded by the
European Union

The European Commission will ask for proof of visibility of European Union funding during the action. This proof will be requested in the reporting exercise.

b) European Commission:

All information relating to grants awarded in a financial year shall be published on the internet site of the European Commission no later than 30th June of the year following the financial year in which the grants were awarded.

The Commission will publish the following information: name of the beneficiary, town (country of the beneficiary), subject of the grant, amount awarded and co-financing percentage.

Upon a reasoned and duly substantiated request by the beneficiary, the publication shall be waived if such disclosure risks threatening the rights and freedoms of individuals concerned as protected by the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union or harming the commercial interests of the beneficiaries.

VII. CHECKS AND AUDITS

The beneficiaries are reminded that the European Commission has to protect the financial interests of the European Union. Therefore Article 25 of the grant agreement lays down the obligations of any beneficiary to cooperate in checks and audits undertaken by a European Union institution.

For any further questions related to the grant proposal, the grant agreement and its management, please contact:

scic-grants-to-universities@ec.europa.eu