



**APPLICANT'S GUIDE
FOR ACTION GRANTS 2021/2022
- TRAINING IN CONFERENCE INTERPRETING -**

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What has to be taken into consideration to complete correctly the application form?

I. MAIN PRINCIPLES

This guide aims to give a summary of the main points of the administrative and financial processes governing grants provided by DG Interpretation of the European Commission/SCIC to co-finance different type of projects in the field of interpreting training.

This Guide is based on the rules and conditions contained in the legal documents relating to the grant programme (in particular the [work programme for 2021 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 application form, applicants are advised to read carefully the [call for proposals](#) - Points 1 to 13:

1. Objectives of the programme
2. Indicative timetable
3. Budget availability
4. Admissibility requirements
5. Exclusion criteria
6. Eligible applicants
7. Eligible actions
8. Selection criteria
9. Evaluation and grant award criteria
10. General principles and specific rules
11. Data protection
12. Contacts between applicants and DG Interpretation
13. Submission of the grant application

and the accompanying documents on the web-site of DG Interpretation of the European Commission:
http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/scic/cooperation-with-universities/training-grants/index_en.htm

Only admissible applications that pass all criteria: non-exclusion, eligibility, selection and award criteria may be awarded a grant.

The grant may never finance the entire costs of the action. DG Interpretation's EU co-financing level of actions under this scheme is maximum 75% of 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 application are eligible for co-financing.

Only one grant application form is available. The identification of the action type is made by the completion of Section II.A (for the organisation of post-graduate courses in conference interpreting), Section II.B (for special actions aimed at contributing to interpreter training or at applying the results of scientific research to interpreter training) and/or Section II.C (for innovative actions aimed at creating synergies with other types of interpreter training and/or at fostering the interpreting profession as a whole).

If several proposals are submitted, please send a separate application form for each proposal.

The signed and completed grant application (and its Annexes) must be submitted at the very latest on **Monday, 17 May 2021 (23:59 Brussels time)**. Proposals sent after this deadline will not be considered for evaluation. Please consult Point 4 and 13 of the Call of proposals.

II. DRAFTING THE BUDGET of the ACTION

II.1. General

The budget must be realistic. Calculations should be transparent (units x costs/unit) and be based on actual and experienced costs in the beneficiary's accounting system.

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

If for any reason the action will not take place or is cancelled (i.e. not enough qualified candidates for a Post-graduate course) all costs (i.e. aptitude tests) prior the signature of the grant agreement by both parties must be borne entirely by the applicant (cfr also to Chapter III. Conclusion 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 on the basis of the co-funding rate of the eligible expenditure and does not represent a fixed amount.

The budget forecast in the application form should always be completed in *euros*. The site <http://ec.europa.eu/budget/inforeuro/index.cfm?fuseaction=home&Language=en> should be consulted for the updated exchange rate (if applicable) of the month of the submission of the application.

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:

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

For example, for staff: a weekly, monthly (or hourly for projects B/C) can be chosen. Please also refer to the examples given in the [Annex VIII](#).

In order to carry out the action, the beneficiary might have to purchase goods or services. Such purchases will only be accepted as eligible direct costs of the action, if the beneficiary has foreseen them in the budget and awarded the corresponding contracts to the bid offering best value for money, ensured fair competition, transparency and equal treatment of possible suppliers and taken care to avoid 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 eligible, in particular if they:

- are directly connected with the proposed action;
- are included in the approved budget;
- directly contribute to the effective and successful implementation of the action;
- are reasonable, justified and comply with the principles of sound financial management, in particular in terms of value for money and cost-effectiveness;
- have been incurred by the beneficiary during the lifetime of the action as defined in the grant agreement, recorded in his 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 (refer to Art. 6.3 of the grant agreement):

- 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 show 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

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 the completed “**Annex V – partner institutions**” (Section V of grant application).

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 budget chapters/categories of expenditure - Section 3 of the application form and Annex VIII)

Please note that the budget chapters B to F referred in the call do not correspond exactly to the budget categories of the Art 6.2 of the grant agreement.

A. Direct Costs: Staff costs

Staff costs refer to any payment made to an internal or external person assigned to this specific action and with whom the applicant has concluded a contract. Please split the staff costs into categories such as internal/external staff, teachers, jury members, speakers, etc.

The normal remuneration policy of the applicant should apply to staff assigned to this action. These costs should 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.

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

In the chapter Staff expenditure indicate only costs directly related to the course:

- a) Coordination and administration’s staff costs relating to tasks such as managing the course and its timetable, including secretarial assistance; conceiving, preparing and planning tests and exams; organising study visits, mobility schemes, virtual classes as well as liaising with the EU institutions should be kept low (< 15%) in comparison with the staff cost relating to teaching activities.

- b) The different teaching tasks including presence at exams should be listed in detail.
For actions under point 7 a), 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 between the above languages for which co-financing is sought may not exceed 25 % of the number of hours of consecutive and simultaneous interpreting taken together.

The remuneration of external trainers should be reasonable and not disproportionate compared to the internal staff involved in the proposed action.

To support the budget for staff costs of the proposed action, the applicant must attach the fully completed **Annex VI – Information on Staff** (Section V of application form) to the grant application including professional training and experience in the relevant field necessary to implement the action.

Staff costs related to actions type A (cfr Point 7 Eligible actions of the call) will be calculated on the basis of the actual salary/fees of the employee/service provider per months/weeks, multiplied by the number of months/weeks (or its proportion) to be spent on the action, according to the usual remuneration policy applied by the university. If a staff member is only working part time on the action, only the part of the staff working time devoted to the action shall be eligible for co-financing. Hourly rates should be used for actions type B/C (cfr Point 7 Eligible actions of the call). A calendar year contains 215 days or 43 calendar weeks (cfr grant agreement 6.A.1).

To determine the share of working time devoted by a staff member to the action, the applicant may:

- refer to the work contract, provided that the contract clearly stipulates the share of working time devoted to the proposed action
- estimate the percentage of working time that will be devoted to the action, and use it as a ratio to determine the corresponding share of staff remuneration
- select the most appropriate time unit (month, week, hour) based on the provisions of the contract or the appointing act

Please use the Excel table [Annex VIII Budget details](#) (containing automatic calculations) and consult the attached examples.

B. Direct Costs: Travel and subsistence costs (e.g. Mobility schemes, study visits related to the course)

The name of the persons and/or their function, place of departure and arrival, working days of stay, costs of the return ticket and purpose of the trip need to be clearly indicated.

Travel and subsistence costs are based on actual costs incurred. The most economical fares (i.e. economy class) must be used.

Travel and subsistence costs covering hotel accommodation and per diem (for the local expenses like meals and local transport) are eligible for co-financing provided they are essential, reasonable, properly documented and incurred by the grant applicant.

DG Interpretation may accept the co-financing of subsistence costs covering accommodation, per diem and local transport for actions involving a substantial level of mobility.

Travel tickets (showing dates of departure and return, place of departure and destination and name of the traveller) and hotel invoices and the relevant payment proofs need to be kept.

Study visits to the EU institutions during the academic year 2021/22:

DG Interpretation may finance accommodation for students and accompanying teachers invited for a study visit to DG Interpretation within certain conditions stated on the web-site

http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/scic/cooperation-with-universities/study-visits-to-dg-interpretation/index_en.htm :

- hotel accommodation is offered to universities that cooperate with DG Interpretation, on the condition that they are based outside Belgium and provide training mainly in A-languages which are most needed by DG Interpretation
- lunch vouchers might be offered to all universities that cooperate with DG Interpretation.

However, applicants who intend to organise a visit to the EU Institutions are advised to include the related costs in their budget estimation. If a grant is awarded and the students'/teachers' accommodation will be paid directly by the DG Interpretation, only the travel tickets' expenses may be declared when the Final Report is submitted.

If for any reasons (i.e. COVID19) the visit cannot take place, DG Interpretation and the university should inform each other as soon as possible. The grant might then be reduced accordingly.

C. Direct Costs: Equipment

This chapter includes both the cost of 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 application. It 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 application 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 it should be indicated in Section II.B or C of the application form.

For equipment to be bought for the academic year 2021-2022, the total purchase and installation costs of equipment needed for the execution of the action are fully eligible (cfr Art. 6.2 – C.2 of the grant agreement).

If technical advice on interpretation booths is needed please consult our web-site:

http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/scic/organisation-of-conferences/interpreting-booth-standards/index_en.htm

D. Direct Costs: Costs of consumables and supplies or Purchase costs

The applicant should include in this chapter costs like teaching material (books, note-pads, subscription to electronic newspapers) which is used exclusively for the proposed action. Photocopies, toner and stationary are considered as office supplies and are included in the general costs.

E. Direct Costs: Conferences, seminars, workshops, meetings and mock conferences

Expenses for participation in and/or the organisation of such events are only eligible when clearly relevant to the action. Details about the purpose of the conferences/meetings/mock conferences should be provided in the action description. Costs must be indicated per event.

For each event, please specify the subject, date and place of the event, the estimated conference fees and the estimated number of participants to be sent by the applicant.

Participation at any conferences related to Conference Interpreting organised by the European Parliament and/or the European Commission are not eligible for co-funding. Any travel and subsistence expenses related to other meetings and conferences should be included under chapter E.2 “travel and subsistence”.

F. Other direct costs

These are costs which cannot be indicated under another category or item of expenditure. They must be fully documented and clearly itemised in the application and report. They are eligible only if clearly relevant to the purpose of the proposed action.

G. Indirect Costs: General costs

These are overhead or indirect costs related to the action management, such as bank charges, communication costs and office supplies (postage, telephone, mailing, Internet, stationary, photocopies, office supplies, etc), rent of the premises used for the action (proportionate to its use).

The item “General costs” may not cover nor overlap with staff costs or any other costs already declared under another item in Chapters A) to F). The General costs cannot exceed 7% of the total of the direct costs (mentioned in Chapters A to F); any amount exceeding this percentage will be ineligible.

Also, accountancy work and occasional secretarial activities should be indicated under chapter G "General costs". General costs do not need to be justified by invoices.

What happens once the grant application is dispatched?

Please refer to the [call for proposals](#) Points 14-15 containing information on:

14. Contacts between applicants and DG Interpretation

15. Information on the award decision

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

III. CONCLUSION OF THE GRANT AGREEMENT

If the proposed action is selected for co-funding, the applicant will be informed of any changes made to the budget in terms of the eligible costs. The applicant will then be requested to confirm that it is still willing to receive the grant as proposed by DG Interpretation and to whom the grant agreement should be sent for signature.

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

If the applicant replies positively, he receives two (original) grant agreements which should both be sent back to the address indicated, initialled, signed (per [qualified electronic signature](#)) and dated. The beneficiary will then receive from DG Interpretation a countersigned original. 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 Article 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. Annex III (Accession form, formerly called “mandate”) of the grant

agreement has to be signed by the legal representatives of the partner institutions and sent back 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.

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

IV. AMENDMENTS

Any modifications to the supported action after the signature of the [grant agreement](#) must be submitted by the beneficiary and authorised by DG Interpretation in writing (preferably by email) and before it is due to take effect, and in all cases one month before the closing date of the action, except in cases duly substantiated by the beneficiary and accepted by DG Interpretation.

DG Interpretation will examine if an amendment to the grant agreement is needed.

Budget transfers between chapters must not exceed 10% of the total eligible costs of the action provided that the objectives and the implementation modalities of the action remain compatible with those set out in the grant agreement (cfr grant agreement: Point 3 of Data sheet and Art 5.5 and 39).

Such transfers are not possible, irrespective of the percentage of the total eligible costs, in the case where a chapter (e.g. equipment) did not include any cost in the initial budget of the grant agreement.

For corresponding expenditure to be eligible, transfers above the 10% ceiling require an amendment to the grant agreement before implementation. After the amendment has been signed by both parties, the beneficiary will receive - by e-mail- the amended report forms.

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

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

Example:

The total eligible cost of an action is € 60 000. The beneficiary needs to purchase additional items of an equipment of a total amount of €2 900 not foreseen originally in the budget (the equipment foreseen in chapter C is € 1 000), on the other hand a travel expenditure of € 2 800 will be cut. No amendment to the grant agreement is needed because it remains below 10% of the total cost of the action.

If no equipment was foreseen in the initial budget, the cost of any equipment shall be eligible only if the beneficiary has requested an amendment to the initial budget to accommodate this new expenditure.

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." (cfr grant agreement: Point 4 of Data sheet, Art. 21 and 22).

V.1 V.A.T. (Value added tax)

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

V.2 Currency (for non-Euro-Zone-countries)

Please indicate the currency in which the payments were done when reporting. The beneficiary should convert the currency into euros (€) using the average of the monthly exchange rates (see web-site http://ec.europa.eu/budget/contracts_grants/info_contracts/inforeuro/index_en.cfm) over the action's duration.

Organisations established in countries outside the Euro-zone should be aware that they bear the risk related to exchange rates.

V.3. Payments

The grant will be paid in two instalments. The 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 after both signatures of the grant agreement

The beneficiary receives up to 50% of the grant, unless stipulated differently in the grant agreement, once it 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 grant agreement: Point 4.2 of Data sheet, Art 22.3.4, duly completed, signed and dated:

- Final Technical Report on the action's implementation (Annex IV A – *Word*)
- Final Financial statement on final expenditure and revenue (Annex V A- *Excel*)
- Details of Expenditure (Annex V B– *Excel*)
- Staff remuneration (Annex V C – *Word*)

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. The EC 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 or at a later stage, 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 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, proofs of payments, etc.) and revenue must be kept by the beneficiary for at least 3 years (for a grant less than € 60 000) or 5 years (for a grant higher than € 60 000) after the last payment made by the DG Interpretation and should be made available on request.

If not all expenses incurred have been paid at the moment of drafting the final financial statement, 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 request proof of payment after the payment of the final grant.

Staff 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 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).

Time-sheets 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 time-sheet for the academic year 2021-22](#) includes the different ways of staff cost calculation. These sheets should be completed regularly from the start of the action; signed by the staff member and counter-signed by the hierarchic superior or supervisor.

V.6 Recovery

If the final grant is lower than the pre-financings already paid by DG Interpretation the beneficiary will be requested to pay back 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".

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 the course of a financial year shall be published on the internet site of the European Commission no later than the 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 the co-financing percentage.

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

VII. CHECKS AND AUDITS

The beneficiaries are reminded that the European Commission has to protect the financial interest 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 application, the grant agreement and its management, please contact:

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