



DG LINC - Financial support for training in conference interpreting Call for proposals 2020-2021

Question 1

We are currently preparing a submission and are wondering whether, owing to the COVID-19 pandemic, it would be possible to submit the grant application in electronic form only (original signatures would be scanned). This would greatly facilitate the internal workflow between the different departments involved as we are in lockdown with very limited access to buildings (where all these documents usually circulate by internal mail).

Answer 1

We are aware of the additional difficulties caused by the COVID-19 pandemic and know that internal workflows are challenging to follow in the current circumstances.

However, when submitting an application, we advise applicants to follow the instructions as stated in the *Call for proposals for financial support for training in conference interpreting 2020-2021*: “**Applications** must be submitted **in paper form**, in a sealed envelope by express courier” to the address stated in the call for proposals document.

Regarding the signature(s) of the legal representative(s) of your university, we can in the current COVID-19 circumstances **exceptionally accept a scanned version of a handwritten signature**. If you use a scanned signature, please note that in case your application is successful and you will be awarded a grant, the Parliament needs to receive the original application form page with the **handwritten signature before any grant agreement can be signed**.

Question 2

We host a two-year Master’s degree course in Conference Interpreting (120 ects awarded); after an admission test in July, the 1st and 2nd year courses are held simultaneously every year from October to July.

We would like to ask you if it is possible to apply for the grant with our whole two-year course (1st and 2nd semester 2020/2021 of both years) or if we have to choose between one of them.

Answer 2

The point 10.b in the *Call for proposals for financial support for training in conference interpreting 2020-2021* states the principle of non-cumulative award and prohibition of double funding, which is based on article 191 of the Financial Regulation applicable to the general budget of the Union. According to this rule, each action may give rise to the award of only one grant from the budget to any one beneficiary. Therefore, you need to choose for which year you wish to submit your application (i.e. either the 1st or 2nd year of the 2-year Master’s degree).

Question 3

Our grant application is ready to be dispatched to Brussels. Would it be possible to send it via registered email and not by courier company? It would be much simpler since we are still working from home.

Answer 3

The *Call for proposals for financial support for training in conference interpreting 2020-2021* states: “Applications must be submitted **in paper form, in a sealed envelope by express courier**”. Additionally, we can also accept **registered mail**, which is submitted via a post office. Applicants must ensure that the date on the deposit slip is not later than the deadline date and that the date is clearly visible and readable. Failure to comply with the above requirements may lead to the rejection of the application.

NEW Question 4

We organise once in few years the consecutive and simultaneous modules for Italian into the main A language of the training programme in interpreting. As the modules are not organised every year, trainers do not have permanent positions, which makes it financially more difficult for us to hire new ones (permanent staff is paid on regular contracts covering the department as a whole, not every trainer individually).

As a result, we would like to apply for funding for the teaching modules for Italian only. It is a bit hard to find a spot on the application form where we can clearly state that information. We hope such a partial application is possible and would appreciate any information on that.

NEW Answer 4

In principle, it would be possible to submit an application for only one module of a training programme in interpreting by specifying this in the “Project title” (Section II of the application form for post-graduate courses).

However, only projects which have satisfied the requirements of the eligibility, exclusion and selection criteria will be considered for further evaluation by the Evaluation Committee on the basis of the award criteria listed in point 8 of the call for proposals.

In that sense, a partial project might receive lower points than if the application was submitted for the complete interpreter training programme and risk not to obtain the requested threshold of 60% (of maximum possible points).

Moreover, the Evaluation Committee will establish a list of accepted applications ranked according to their merits and the total number of points obtained. Award of grants will be made on the basis of this ranking and the available budget. Applicants should be aware that even if they reach the required minimum score to be accepted (60% of the total points), the application may be rejected in case the available budget is already exhausted for applications with higher scores.

Therefore, we recommend submitting an application that covers the entire training programme in interpreting.

NEW Question 5

Can we apply for a grant for an existing training programme in interpreting?

NEW Answer 5

The call for proposals for financial support for training in conference interpreting is usually published for a specific academic year (e.g. 2020-2021). Thus, existing training programmes may apply and fall into the action line a) Organisation of high-quality master of post-graduate courses in conference interpreting.

Questions received during the previous calls for proposals

Question 1

We are unable to fill in the table “Staff costs by hourly rate” corresponding to Annex 6 of application form for each person (for both external and internal teachers, technician, the external members of the final exam panel) since we do not know the exchange rate and most importantly we do not know exactly the name and the exact hours taught by the given persons the next academic year since it depends largely on how many students we accept and their language combination.

We have already been granted support within the framework of this grant scheme and always made estimates in the budget table in a uniform way (xxx EUR) both for external and internal teachers. Can we do the same this year as well?

Answer 1

We understand that applicants do not necessarily have all the elements for calculating the exact individual hourly rates when completing their application forms. As the objective, at this stage, is to establish an estimated budget, we would suggest that you use the actual data for staff already identified and estimate as accurately as possible the costs of other people that could be involved in the action (i.e. teacher with a profile similar to the one of another teacher already identified; external teacher with a contract similar to the one granted to another external teacher, etc.).

As your project should include an estimate of the number of accepted students and their possible language combinations, we suggest that you use this information as a hypothesis to prepare your budget. After award decision and if your application is successful, the budget will be fine-tuned, based on the most recent information available at that moment. Unless it is common practice at your university, using a uniform hourly rate for all staff profiles is not recommended as this could lead to a request from the Evaluation Committee for more detailed calculations. Your Human Resources Department may assist you in this matter.

Question 2

Regarding the possibility offered to update the existing equipment in order to supply simultaneous interpretation exercises, do we understand correctly that the European Parliament shall finance 75% of the total cost within the action? And that we do not need to depreciate it over the following academic years?

Answer 2

The special conditions on depreciation of equipment used for virtual classes do not apply anymore for the grants programme from 2017 onwards. This equipment will be treated as any other type of equipment purchased for the project. Please refer to point 5.c of the Guide for Applicants for further information on the rules related to equipment cost.

Question 3

I am not sure if we are expected to submit with the grant the time sheets we use to calculate the trainers/coordinators' fees. That is to say, do you want to see the time sheets with the grant or are we to submit them later during the audit, if need be?

Answer 3

The time sheets annexed to the call for proposals should give an idea what needs to be filled in by the universities during the lifetime of the project if a grant is awarded. No need to fill in any time sheet at the stage of the application. Please note that hourly rates must be reported in Annex VI of the application form and should be calculated according to instructions contained in the excel table "**Staff costs by hourly rate**" provided on the internet page.

Question 4

I am not sure about the form called 'Budget Details' (Annex VI). Should we fill in this form rather than the similar form that is already part of the application form under the link called a) Actions related to organisation of a master' or b) Project aimed at supporting conference interpreter training?

Answer 4

We recommend you complete Annex VI (Staff costs - Excel sheet) following the instructions contained in the file in order to give more information about the individual calculation of hourly rates. The hourly rates calculated in the excel sheet have then to be used to fill table 4.A Staff costs.

Question 5

Does the professor who is permanently employed have to be classified as P or S?

Answer 5

If the tasks of Professor X for the project belong to his normal tasks, they should be mentioned as P indicating the total hours worked on the project. If the same Professor X, permanently employed, receives an extra salary duly approved and paid by the University for supplementary work on the project (not foreseen in his/her work contract and therefore paid in supplement) this extra salary should be mentioned as S.

Question 6

What do we have to list under teacher external - Should we list all external teachers?

Answer 6

Yes, you should list all external teachers. See also reply to question 1.

Question 7

In my country data on salaries are confidential according to the law on personal data protection. What should I do?

Answer 7

As mentioned on item 15 of the call for proposals and articles II.5 and II.6 of the draft grant agreement, all information contained in your application will be treated in full confidentiality and respect of Regulation (EU) 2018/1725 on the protection of natural persons with regard to the processing of personal data by the Union institutions, bodies, offices and agencies and on the free movement of such data. You therefore must disclose the requested information in your application and subsequent reports.

Question 8

Where do we enter the technicians' work in the budget?

Answer 8

Works foreseen for technician staff should be reported under Chapter A. Staff Costs - Others describing shortly the tasks/estimated total productive hours/hourly rate and if paid as permanent staff within his/her normal duties (P), paid in supplement to his normal duties (S) or both. Detailed calculation must be included in Annex VI "Hourly rate".

Question 9

On depreciation and amortisation rules in this year's grant application. We are asked to state how many months remain between the purchase date and the end of the project. At this stage, it is very difficult to predict the purchase date. So how should we deal with this?

Answer 9

Even if very difficult, you should try to estimate the purchase date keeping into account all the possible elements, such as: internal rules in the field of procurement, normal time between the decision to buy an equipment and the reception of this equipment, purchase conditioned by the reception of a grant, purchase not possible before 2015, etc. It is not recommended to consider that all purchases will be done during the first month of the project as this would unnecessarily increase the total estimated budget of the action and would lead to an under-spending of the actual grant.

Reporting amortisation costs the years following the purchase is authorized if the equipment is still used for implementing the new actions.

Question 10

On hourly staff rates: we are asked to calculate them in a specific way, calculating the number of hours per day x 365 minus weekends. This does not make sense in our country, as our

salaries are not accounted in this way. Full-time staff has a working week of 35 hours but apart from their teaching time are free to organise their work-time as they wish. The faculty is open on Saturdays and staff often works over weekends (I have spent many hours over the past 2 weekends working on the grant application!). So could we propose that we take the real calculation method and not the one suggested on the table. $35 \text{ hours} * 4 \text{ weeks} * 12 \text{ months} = 1.680 \text{ hours}$ instead of $7 \text{ hours} * 365 \text{ days} - \text{week-ends}$

Answer 10

We recommend the calculation method suggested on the table for several reasons:

Firstly, your calculation results in a total of 48 weeks ($4 \text{ weeks} * 12 \text{ months}$) while a year is composed of 52 weeks.

Secondly, if work is regularly done during weekends, you should estimate how many hours during weekends are usually worked per year and add this total to the productive hours. We understand that permanent staff is paid on the basis of a fixed number of hours rather than on the basis of hours effectively worked but we consider that each hour worked by a staff member has the same value independently of the moment and the nature of the work done. It is for this reason that we consider hours spent during weekends eligible if justified (either for courses taught during weekends or for coordination work).

Question 11

CVs of the entire teaching staff has been sent with last year's application form. Is it possible for us to only send the CVs of the new teachers? And if this will not suffice, might it be possible to send last year's CVs in electronic form?

Answer 11

Each grant application needs to be treated independently from any previous application.

Electronic transmission is not allowed and all requested documents should therefore be preferably included in the application package.

Question 12

Does the Rector of our university sign only the grant application Form (at the end) or does he also have to sign the two annexes that will be attached to it (annexes h and i)?

Answer 12

Only the grant application form needs to be signed by the Rector (or any other legal representative) on behalf of the university.

Question 13

What is the difference between permanent, external and complementary salary? At our study program we only have permanent administrative staff on the payroll of the Rectorate of the University; all others are employed with different legal entities so I suppose you would consider them as external staff? If this is the case, should I fill only columns 9-11? Is administrative staff receiving a complementary salary for work done at this study program or something else?

Answer 13

- All the permanent staff of the legal entity requesting the grant (=university), involved in the project, has to be reported under P (permanent) category. In most of the cases, it is the University itself that has to be considered as the legal entity and not a department, a faculty, the Rectorate's services...
 - Staff to be reported as external are those paid on a contractual basis (as opposed to permanent staff) and hired for a specific work and period of time, on an hourly basis. This should be reported under the category external teachers, freelances...
 - Complementary salary concerns, if applicable, extra salary that could be paid to permanent staff (teaching and administrative staff) if approved and paid by the University for supplementary work on the project (not foreseen in his/her work contract and therefore paid in supplement). This should be mentioned as S. (see also general instructions under Section III of the application form).
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Question 14

Given the market demand for retour, the importance of English in the European context of conference interpreting as well as frequent inquiries from potential candidates interested in studying conference interpreting at our University with English A, our Faculty of Translation and Interpreting would very much like to expand the scope of its current Master's interpreting programme by introducing English as a second A language, thus offering students the opportunity to train into English A and to develop competence in retour from our national language into English. Would this project be eligible for the DG Grants?

Answer 14

The project as described by you would fall within the scope of this call for proposals and would therefore be eligible for evaluation, provided all other eligibility, exclusion and selection criteria are met (see points 5-7 of the call for proposals).

The Evaluation Committee will assess the applications on the basis of the award criteria and give points for each of the criteria (see point 8 of the call for proposals). It will establish a list of accepted applications ranked according to their merits and the total number of points obtained. Please note that relevance to priority needs for languages of the European Parliament and the EU institutions and bodies for which it provides interpretation services is one of the award criteria.

Award of grants will be made on the basis of this ranking and the available budget. Applicants should be aware that even if they reach the required minimum score to be accepted (60% of the total points), the application may be not retained in case the available budget is already exhausted for applications with higher scores.

Question 15

My question concerns the financial identification form: our University uses a financial identification form which is slightly different in format from the one on the webpage, but the information is exactly the same. Moreover, the form was already used to submit an application and accepted by DG INTE in previous years. Is it absolutely necessary to use the model which you provide or are other models accepted?

Answer 15

As indicated in Annex III of the application form, a financial identification form has to be supplied only if the account number or the bank account holder's name has changed since the last grant request submitted. In this case, you should use the proposed template as the one used in previous years was the one used by the European Commission.

If there are no changes in the bank account details since the last grant request submitted in the recent years, you just have to tick the first box of Annex III and mention the IBAN number on it.

Question 16

My question relates to how we should best approach the grant application.

If we were to opt for a project-specific approach, our application could be based on a combination of creation of digital speech repository/logbook/virtual classes. If on the other hand we were to opt for the more general approach, our application could be based on the renewal/installation of new conference interpreting infrastructure. Could you therefore please inform us about which application form should we best choose (Application form 2014-2015 post-graduate course VS Application form 2014-2015 – other projects)?

Answer 16

You will find more information on the objectives of the call and the types of projects sought under point 1 and 2 of the call for proposals text. Actions aimed solely at the purchase of equipment do not fall under the scope of the call.

If your project proposal aims at organisation of master/post-graduate courses in conference interpreting, please use the application form "2017-2018 post graduate course". If on the contrary, you intend to submit a proposal aimed at promoting conference interpreter training (see point 2.b of the call for proposals text for the priority areas for this action line), you should use the application form "2017-2018 other projects".

Question 17

a) We understand that there is a possibility to ask for funding from both of the Institutions. But on the other hand, in your call for proposals you mention that one action can receive only one grant from the EU budget. More specifically we have considered submitting a project covering teaching and organizational expenditures to one institution and submitting a project aimed at constructing a new language lab to the other. Would that be possible?

b) Do you have any indication on what project size is feasible? Our faculty struggles with old and out-dated equipment, which makes for example distance teaching very complicated. At the moment we cannot participate in any e-learning or virtual classes. Therefore, we very much appreciate the fact that the EP is willing to invest into new equipment. But will it be possible to cover the full expenditures of a new language lab or should we rather opt for reconstructing an old one? Are there any limits on the eligibility of expenditures? For example can we ask for the funding for the construction of new booths? (bearing in mind that our language is the third priority).

Answer 17

a) It is possible to apply at the same time for another EU programme (see answer to question 18). Please note however that purchase of equipment can be considered as eligible cost only if it is part of a project corresponding to the objectives of the call for proposals. You will find more information on the objectives of the call and the types of projects sought under point 1 and 2 of

the call for proposals text. Actions aimed solely at the purchase of equipment do not fall under the scope of the call.

b) The Evaluation Committee checks whether the budget proposed by the applicant is appropriate and reasonable for achieving the objectives of the projects. There are no pre-defined limits of expenditure, provided that the costs are necessary to implement the project and eligible. For detailed information on eligible costs please see section III of the Guide for Applicants and Article II.19 of the model grant agreement.

Question 18

I understand that as of 2014 grants are no longer jointly funded by DG INTE, European Parliament, and SCIC and the calls for proposals are separate. What I am not clear about is whether we can apply to one institution only or both. Is there a likelihood that separate funding schemes could also lead to smaller grant allocations?

Answer 18

In the past years the interpretation services of both the European Commission and the European Parliament managed indeed a joint call for proposals. The decision on the award of the grant was taken jointly by both institutions and very few proposals were sometimes jointly managed by both Institutions. However from last year, it was decided that individual grants would be financed and managed either by the Parliament or by the Commission separately, so there was no joint funding of individual grants anymore.

As of 2014, the institutions launched separate calls for proposals. As far as the European Parliament is concerned, this change shall not lead to smaller grants allocations. The single co-financing rate applied by the European Parliament is 75% of total eligible costs (subject to a possible reduction should the income of the action be greater than the expense as grants may not have the purpose of generating a profit to the beneficiary).

It is possible to apply for another EU programme. However, the same action cannot be financed twice out of the EU budget. Should your project be selected for two grant programmes you will have to choose the granting institution (coordination between DG INTE and DG SCIC shall occur during the assessment of the applications received).

Please note that the Evaluation Committee checks whether the budget proposed by the applicant is appropriate and reasonable for achieving the objectives of the projects. Within this process some items of the applicant's proposed budget might not be taken into consideration for co-financing (= non eligible costs), if they are considered excessive or not necessary to implement the project (please refer to the Guide for Applicants for more information on the procedure).

Question 19

I noticed the criteria include mention of the EMCI requirements for the number of hours of practical tuition. If we are unable to meet this standard, would a bid be considered or would it be rejected outright?

Answer 19

The call for proposals mentions different award criteria. If an application is not (fully) compliant with one or more criteria, it does not mean that it will be automatically rejected. The Evaluation Committee will assess the applications on the basis of the evaluation criteria and award points for each of the criteria. It will establish a list of accepted applications ranked according to their merits and the total number of points obtained.

Award of grants will be made on the basis of this ranking and the available budget. Applicants should be aware that even if they reach the required minimum score to be accepted (60% of the total points), the application may be rejected in case the available budget is already exhausted for applications with higher scores.

Question 20

Supposing we want to buy equipment of a total value of 1000 euros, should the University pay 250 euros of this particular expense? Or the contribution of the University should be 25% of the total value of the costs, meaning that those 1000 euros can be paid entirely from the grant while other expenses related to the programme will be covered by the University?

Answer 20

The maximum contribution of the European Parliament is 75% of the eligible costs. The remaining 25% must be provided by the applicant. It can be via the direct revenue expected from the action (fees paid by students), specific support from public sources or self-financing by the applicant.

To be eligible, equipment has to be bought for the implementation of the action and paid by the applicant. You do not need to provide more information neither about which faculty, nor from which specific budget it is paid.

To answer concretely to your question, even if the invoice has to be registered in the accounting system of the applicant and totally paid by him, you do not need to justify that the remaining 25% of this particular expense has been, at the end, supported or not by the University. The own contribution of the applicant is assessed as a whole and not on each item.

Question 21

We intend to submit an application for a collaborative project involving 5 partners. The question is whether an official co-coordination could be accepted, with one of the project partners, in the EU, coordinating the budget and another project partner, not in the EU, coordinating the content.

The sharing of responsibilities can be made clear in the body of the text proposal, but as you know, universities need to make themselves visible, hence the wish to make the co-coordination known.

Answer 21

Should a project involve more than one partner, it is indeed vital to give detailed information about the tasks and responsibilities of each partner. This information is crucial in order to allow the Evaluation Committee members to assess the project according to the selection and award criteria. Please note that, in any case, the grant agreement will be signed with one coordinating partner who will be accountable to the European Parliament for carrying out the action and who will act as a single contact point for any questions related to the project (be it administrative, budgetary or content-wise).

Question 22

We would like to know if we can apply for the grant, because we are not entirely a university.

We are a participatory foundation established by the local municipality with the aim of managing four higher education Art and Culture schools (music, cinema and drama, as well as interpreting and translating).

One of the schools is bringing together a School for Language Mediation (a three-year program, equivalent to an undergraduate degree -level), a School of International Relations and a School of Translation and Interpretation (Master's degree courses in cooperation with another European University). The last mentioned School trains students to become conference interpreters (simultaneous and consecutive) at the levels required by European institutions. It is one of the four degree programs in the country recognized by the EU's DG Interpretation.

Answer 22

Based on the point 5 "Eligible applicants" in the call for proposals, your foundation can be considered eligible to apply for DG LINC grants *if any of the objectives of your establishment are related to the programme and they are recognised by the national authorities.*
