FINANCIAL GUIDELINES AND STANDARDS FOR EVENT MANAGEMENT

(to be fine-tuned upon contract signature)
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1. FOREWORDS

These guidelines aim to provide a set of implementation rules on financial issues to guide users in the utilisation of the framework contract for the outsourcing of the ETF events organisation.

They are based on the ETF financial and procurement regulation and are in line with the information provided in the framework contract.

Regular updating of this document will result in a revised version which will be distributed to all users.

2. GENERAL PRINCIPLES

The framework contract deals with logistics and administrative support for events, which are described in detail in the contract (Attachment 1, Terms of reference and Annex 1 to the Attachment 1, Terms of reference - Activities and services).

In fulfilling its contractual obligations, the contractor should not take any discretionary power of judgment. For any decision having an impact on costs and/or which can be seen as an exception to the standards herein mentioned, the responsibility for approval lies with the ETF and it must be agreed a priori with the ETF staff member in charge of the event (the logistics coordinator), who should ensure that approval is accorded by his/her hierarchy.

The contractor should maintain complete documentary evidence of such agreements and attach it to the relative claims for payment.

3. BUDGET MANAGEMENT WORKFLOW

3.1 PRE-EVENT

3.1.1 Request of offer

The ETF logistics coordinator will send the Event Profile with the description of the event requirements three months before the event date (exceptions are possible based on the size and complexity of the event).

3.1.2 Budget submission

On the basis of the Event Profile and a briefing with the ETF logistics coordinator, the contractor submits within one week its draft budget proposal (named Budget_00). For events held abroad, in particular when communication with service providers can be slow or difficult, two weeks may be allowed for the contractor to submit the Budget_00. The budget document is part of the execution plan and is accompanied by the logistics proposal. Both documents are inserted in the ETF Event Management System by the contractor at the moment of the submission of the offer.

ETF comments on Budget_00 shall be integrated by the contractor in its draft proposal. Only in case the Budget_00 is to be substantially revised, a new version named Budget_00_rev1 shall be submitted by the contractor, in principle within 1-3 working days from the receipt of comments by the ETF (this deadline may be extended depending on the number/level of difficulty of the modifications required). As a rule, there should be no more than the above
two versions of the budget. In case more versions have to be released, they will be numbered progressively (Budget_00_rev2, Budget_00_rev3).

3.1.3 General reserve in the budget

The budget shall include a general reserve which is intended to cover any change in the event requirements during the implementation process and consequently any modification in the budget both in the transition from Budget_00 to the Pre-final balance and between the Pre-final balance’s approval and the end of the event (see below, On site order form).

3.1.4 Commitment of the service by the ETF

Upon approval of the budget proposal submitted by the contractor, the ETF logistics coordinator will require the Communication Department to proceed with the relevant financial commitment. At the end of the internal process for the financial commitment, the budget officer in the Communication Department will send the related Order form to the contractor. Both actions shall be implemented through the ETF Event Management System.

The Order form will indicate:

- Title of the event, date and place (country/city)
- Name and surname of the ETF logistics coordinator.

The Order form is the only legally binding commitment which can initiate the activity (see Attachment 1, Terms of reference, Section 7.7.4).

3.1.5 Acceptance of the service by the contractor

Upon receipt of the Order form, the contractor will confirm acceptance of the service by using the appropriate step in the ETF Event Management System workflow.

3.1.6 Pre-financing invoice

Advance payments can be claimed as follows:

- for amounts above 15,000 €, the 30% of the total value of the order form can be paid
- for amounts above 100,000 €, the 50% of the total value of the order form can be paid.

In such cases, the contractor should send the ETF an invoice clearly indicating the contract number and that of the order form to which it refers. This invoice will be paid within 30 days of its receipt.

In case of an increase of the event budget, and subsequent additional commitment, (resulting in top-up of the original order form), the same rule applies.

3.1.7 Mid-term budget revision

One month before the event date, the contractor will submit a budget revision (Budget_01) to the ETF logistics coordinator. The document can be shared through normal e-mail.

3.1.8 Pre-final balance

About 7 days before the event, an up-to-date revision of the budget, the Pre-final balance, shall be delivered by the contractor through the ETF Event Management System. This revision must reflect all modifications to the event requirements, services and budget occurred during the event preparation. The ETF logistics coordinator will endorse the Pre-final balance and transmit it to the Communication Department in order to get it approved by
the Authorising Officer before the event starts. The Authorising Officer is the Head of the Communication Department.

The *Pre-final balance* will be the reference document for the invoice check.

### 3.2 EVENT

#### 3.2.1 On site order form

Any unforeseen need/change which might occur between the *Pre-final balance* approval and the end of the event, and which has an impact on the budget, shall be registered using the *On site order form*. The associated costs are covered by the general reserve, as mentioned above, and may be related to expenses such as:

- additional costs of travel, local transfer, accommodation and catering, due to last minute changes in the participant’s flight schedules or in the event programme;
- additional costs related to meeting rooms, technical equipment, interpretation services, ancillary services, transport of materials, due to last minute changes in the programme or unexpected needs;
- additional costs of catering due to last minute, unexpected changes in the list of participants (e.g. the necessity to invite an unexpected guest to join the official dinner) or unexpected needs (e.g. for small changes in the menu);
- in general, other unforeseen services related to the implementation of an event.

The ETF logistics coordinator shall get assurance from the contractor that the amount available in the reserve covers the services required before approving them. The reference budget is the *Pre-final balance* (the latest revision of the budget) approved by the Authorising Officer before the event takes place.

The *On site order form* is prepared by the contractor and countersigned by the ETF logistics coordinator on site, who has the Authorising Officer’s delegation to use the available amount in the budget general reserve. The value of each single service should not exceed a limit of € 500. Should the additional service be of an exceptional nature or exceed the limit of € 500, the ETF logistics coordinator shall obtain written authorisation from the Authorising Officer before approving the expense.

The following information shall be included in the on site order form:

- what has been ordered
- an indication of the cost
- the operational justification.

After the meeting (usually, upon return from the event), the contractor will forward a PDF copy of the *On site order form* to the Communication Department for the Authorising Officer’s approval. Once approved by the Authorising Officer, the budget officer will take care of including the document in the final invoice’s file.

### 3.3 POST-EVENT

#### 3.3.1 Financial reporting

**Invoice**

Following the conclusion of the event, the contractor will provide the ETF with a valid invoice. To be valid, an invoice should:

- be on headed paper;
- be dated and numbered;
- be addressed to the ETF;
- report a description of services/products provided (in this case: title, date and venue of the event) and the order form reference number;
- indicate the payable total amount;
- indicate if it is an advance or a final invoice; in case of a final invoice, all advances already received have to be clearly mentioned.

According to article II.4.3 of the contract, the contractor shall submit to the ETF a formal request for payment (invoice) within 45 days of completion of the task. However, the ETF would appreciate if the contractor could submit the invoice by 30 days following the conclusion of the event.

The contractor invoice file represents the basis of the payment. It should be clear, complete and well structured, to facilitate the check of the invoice.

The invoice will be accompanied by the final balance, the overall logistic list, the list of participants’ signatures and any relevant supporting documents.

**Final balance**

The Final balance is a detailed description of services and goods provided, and the relative costs. The structure of the Final balance should follow the approved Pre-final balance breakdown, and for each heading of expenditure a reference should be made to the relevant supporting document (the supporting documents should be therefore numbered accordingly).

Services and costs in the Final balance should be consistent with the Pre-final balance and any changes should be clearly explained and justified.

The Final balance must be prepared in Euro, using the European Commission’s official InforEuro exchange rate of the month in which the event takes place (see more details under 5.6, Euro exchange rate).

**Overall logistic list**

The Overall logistic list shall include external participants and ETF staff who actually attended the event, and any information related to no shows or cancellations having an impact on the budget. The list will indicate complete logistic details of participants’ attendance, including (where applicable) arrival/departure schedule, transfer, flight and miscellaneous costs, night’s stay, registration for catering and social programme. The list shall be ordered by all external participants in alphabetical order, followed by ETF staff in alphabetical order, and will be provided by the contractor both in paper and in editable electronic format.

**List of participants’ signatures**

The contractor will collect the signature of all participants registered for an event, regardless of their eligibility for fees. The list, in alphabetical order, will indicate:
- Category (with regard to fee eligibility, i.e.: Guest, Self, Local, Other, ETF)
- Title
- Name, Surname
- Country/Organisation.

Signatures will be taken per event (and not per event day). In specific cases (i.e.: dignitaries, speakers, etc.) the ETF logistics coordinator (or, if not present, any other designated ETF staff member) can sign on behalf of the invitee. For large events, two separate lists, one for external participants and the other for ETF staff, can be used to facilitate the registration process.

In the list, colour highlighting will be used to identify the participants’ category (e.g. GUEST = green, SELF = yellow, LOCAL = blue, Other = pink, ETF = orange), and for each category progressive numbers will be attributed to each participant.
Supporting documents

To check the financial report more easily, the supporting documents should:

- always be clearly readable;
- be identified by a reference code, corresponding to the coding in the Final balance headings;
- allow an easy identification of the total(s) by highlighting the corresponding amount;
- bear consistent titles if compared with the Final balance and any other related document.

All expenses included in the Final balance shall be verified against the relevant supporting documents. In particular:

a) The reimbursable costs for the meeting, such as hotel accommodation, meeting rooms, catering, technical equipment, interpretation, prepaid flight tickets, and – in general – all goods and services provided by suppliers, will be supported by a copy of the suppliers’ invoice.

b) In case of prepaid tickets, travel costs of participants will be supported by the List of participants’ signatures, the copy of the electronic ticket or travel agency invoice with the indication of name, flight schedule of each participant and price, and the original of the boarding cards if the participant travelled by plane (or the copy of the ticket if they travelled by train/bus). A detailed procedure is described under 4.5, Administrative procedures for pre-paid tickets.

c) Contractor fees for on site presence will be supported by signed time-sheets indicating the date, place, start time and end time of work, countersigned by the ETF logistics coordinator. The time-sheets should also clearly indicate if any expense (hotel or meals) has been offered to the contractor staff. Time sheets will also be provided for occasional staff (see under 5.14, Time sheet for occasional staff).

d) Travel costs sustained by the contractor staff attending the event (flight, train and/or other public transport) will be supported by a copy of the ticket (in case the cost of the ticket is not readable, by the travel agency invoice), and the original boarding cards. Taxi costs will not be reimbursed. If the contractor cannot submit original staff travel documents (for instance, because the contractor’s country law requires that original travel documents be kept by the contractor), a copy is enough.

e) Daily subsistence allowance for the contractor staff will be reimbursed on the basis of the travel documents and the time sheets.

f) In case the supplier’s invoice should be in a currency other than Euro, the contractor will also provide the ETF with the calculation of the amount in Euro based on the InforEuro applicable exchange rate (see under 5.6, Euro exchange rate).

g) In case the supplier’s invoice is expressed in both currency (local and Euro), the amount expressed in Euro will be eligible for reimbursement.

h) In case the supplier’s invoice should include costs of travel and accommodation (which is often the case for interpreters’ costs) these will be supported by copies of the tickets/payment receipts. Taxi costs will not be reimbursed.

For supporting documents related to the reimbursements to participants, more details are provided under 4. Reimbursement of participants’ expenses.

The supporting documents should also include any correspondence between the ETF and the contractor relevant to clarify/justify costs (such as: cancellation fees not already included in the pre-final balance, odd travel schedule, business class or exceptionally high price tickets). In this case, communication should take place via the ETF Event Management System (Correspondence), for completeness of records.

The contractor shall be aware that no expenses incurred can be recovered in the absence of the proper supporting documents.

In specific case, e-mail exchange approved by the Authorising Officer can be considered a valid supporting document.
3.3.2 Payments terms

As a rule, payment will take place within 30 days from receipt of the advance invoice, 45 days for the final invoice.

The contractor invoice file has to be approved by the ETF and final payment will depend on its approval. Should the invoice file be unclear or incomplete and clarifications deemed necessary, the payment of the invoice will be suspended until the contractor has provided the ETF with the necessary clarifications, or the credit note, if applicable. The contractor will have 5 working days to provide a complete and properly documented answer (see contract, Article I.5).

4. REIMBURSEMENT OF PARTICIPANTS’ EXPENSES

4.1 Overview

The reimbursement policy of each event is established by the ETF and communicated to the contractor through the Event Profile. In principle, the ETF prefers whenever possible to directly cover the costs related to guests’ attendance (hotel accommodation, travel, meals not included in the official programme, local transfer). However, it may be that a different policy applies to some events and/or that participants incur travel related expenses for which they are entitled to reimbursement. In such cases, the contractor will be responsible for the reimbursement to participants on behalf of the ETF and the related administrative procedures.

Reimbursement procedures are based on the Director’s Decision (ETF007/DEC/028) of April 2008), which is an integral element of the framework contract (Annex 3 to Attachment 1, Terms of reference).

The following types of reimbursable expenses exist:
- travel
- miscellaneous (travel related expenses, such as visas, insurance, exit taxes)
- daily subsistence allowance (DSA).

As a general rule, travel costs and DSA should be reimbursed after the event, via bank transfer. When the participant only claims the reimbursement of miscellaneous costs, these should be reimbursed in cash, during the event.

Please find below the detailed description of administrative procedures and supporting documents related to each type of reimbursable expense.

4.2 Reimbursement of travel tickets

On site procedure

The contractor:
- collects the original boarding cards of the inbound flight(s) from the participant;
- stamps the ticket “PAID” and takes a photocopy of it;
- verifies if the price is readable on the flight ticket. If not, a copy of the travel agency invoice will also be needed;
- verifies that the participant has signed the List of participants’ signatures as proof of his/her attendance;
- calculates each individual reimbursement related to the flight cost and asks the participant to sign the Refund form1.

1 For the purpose of reimbursement, the contractor will use its own Refund forms.
Procedure after the event

The contractor:
- reimburses the participant by bank transfer.

In order to be refunded by the ETF, the contractor includes the following annexes in the invoice file:
- List of participants’ signatures;
- copy of the flight ticket (and copy of the travel agency invoice in case the price is not readable on the ticket);
- original boarding cards of the inbound flight(s);
- the Refund form, signed by the participant.

4.3 Reimbursements of miscellaneous expenses

Miscellaneous expenses include train, bus or underground costs (when not related to local transfers – see Director’s Decision ETF007/DEC/028, Art. 3), and travel-related expenses, such as visas, insurance, exit taxes. Taxi costs are not reimbursed. Any expense not mentioned above shall be approved by the ETF in advance.

On site procedure

The contractor:
- collects the original receipts of expenses paid by the participant. In case of two way tickets, a photocopy is sufficient; in case of visa reimbursement, the copy of the passport cover and of the visa stamp on the passport are needed;
- calculates the reimbursable amount, applying the Inforeuro exchange rate of the month of the event when needed (for any one leg ticket, if requested by the participant and if there is no doubt that a return trip is also required, the contractor calculates twice the amount of the ticket).

In case of:
- pre-paid tickets, miscellaneous expenses should be reimbursed in cash, on site. In this case, the expense is supported by the On site refund form signed by the participant. For practical purposes, amounts reimbursed in cash can be rounded to the nearest Euro.
- reimbursed flight tickets, miscellaneous expenses should be reimbursed together with the flight costs, by bank transfer, after the event. In this case, the amount of miscellaneous costs will be added to the calculation of flight costs in the Refund form. No rounding is foreseen in this case.

Procedure after the event

In order to be refunded by the ETF, the contractor includes the following annexes in the invoice file:
- original receipts of expenditures (or the copies of the two-way tickets if any);
- the On site refund form or the Refund form signed by the participant.

4.4 Payment of daily subsistence allowance (DSA)

ETF policy is to avoid DSA where possible. However, in case allowances are exceptionally foreseen, reimbursement is to be made by the contractor after the event, via bank transfer. The table with the calculation of DSA shall be prepared by the ETF logistics coordinator and provided to the contractor at least 10 days before the event takes place.

On site procedure

The contractor:
- asks the participant to sign the Refund form.
**Procedure after the event**

The contractor:
- pays the DSA by bank transfer.

In order to be refunded by the ETF, the contractor includes the following annexes in the invoice file:
- *List of participants’ signatures*;
- DSA table;
- *Refund form* signed by participant.

### 4.5 Administrative procedures for pre-paid tickets

Even if pre-paid tickets are not an expense reimbursed to participants, the administrative procedures that the contractor should follow is here described for completeness of information.

**On site procedure**

The contractor:
- collects the original boarding card of the inbound flight(s) (or copy of train/bus ticket) from the participant;
- verifies that the participant has signed the *List of participants’ signatures* as proof of his/her attendance.

**Procedure after the event**

In order to be refunded by the ETF, the contractor includes the following annexes in the invoice file:
- *List of participants’ signatures*;
- copy of the electronic ticket, or print-out produced by the travel agency indicating participant name, flight ticket number, complete flight schedule and ticket price;
- original boarding cards of the inbound flight(s);
- copy of the ticket if they travelled by train/bus.

### 5. MORE ABOUT...

This section clarifies how to deal with issues frequently recurring in the management of the framework contract. Topics are listed by alphabetical order.

#### 5.1 Calculation of the contractor’s daily fee

The contractor’s daily fee is intended as a whole and shall not be split (for example, to calculate a proportional fee for half a day, as is the case with the daily allowance). A cut off time for calculating the numbers of applicable days/fees is established as follows: fee per day is provided to contractor staff in case of arrival before 16.00 and departure after 11.00.

Travel time is not included in the calculation of the daily fee.

#### 5.2 Calculation of the contractor’s DSA

For complete information on the DSA to be budgeted for an event, the contractor will indicate in the budget proposal the estimated time of arrival and departure of its staff. Exact DSA amounts will be calculated after the event on the basis of the contractor staff’s travel documents and time sheets.

Travel time is included in the calculation of the DSA.

#### 5.3 Cancellation policies

Full and clear information about cancellation policies applied by suppliers (hotels or other service providers) shall be communicated by the contractor to the ETF, through the ETF Event Management System (Correspondence).
In case specific actions are required by the ETF (such as confirmation of number of hotel rooms by a certain deadline), the contractor will ensure that the ETF logistics coordinator is informed well in advance, ideally from the start of the contracted service. Penalties for cancellation/changes of hotel reservations/pre-paid flight tickets, in case of the participants’ responsibility, will be covered by the ETF.

5.4 Catering for organisational staff
For organisational reason, organisational staff with technical and logistical tasks are entitled to lunch in the premises where the event is held (the contractor will negotiate where possible with the caterer complimentary lunches). An average amount will be reserved in the budget as an estimate of this specific cost (Catering for organisational staff).

5.5 Database of invitees
Preliminary detailed information about invitees is needed in order to have a sound cost estimate, in particular in view of the fee structure (fee per participant/category) applied by the contract. Therefore the ETF shall provide a near definite Database of invitees early in the event kick off, ideally at the moment when the Event Profile is delivered to the contractor. The ETF template shall be used to provide participants details to the contractor. As for external participants, some flexibility shall be allowed in specific cases, for example if representatives from specific organisations are yet to be nominated when preparatory event activities kick off. In such cases, the indication of the country of origin and treatment policy of the expected participant is however requested.

5.6 Euro exchange rate
In principle the contractor shall use the EC’s official InforEuro for calculating the exchange rate for currencies other than Euro. If this is not possible, a supporting document (copy of the financial page of a newspaper or bank’s daily exchange rate) proving that a different exchange rate has been applied by a supplier will be accepted. The InforEuro monthly exchange rates can be found on http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/budget/inforeuro/index. The exchange rate to be applied is that of the month in which the event takes place.

5.7 Minimum guaranteed number of participants
Specific information such as minimum guaranteed number of participants requested by restaurants shall be clearly indicated in the budget proposal, pre-final balance and final balance. Furthermore, the deadline for the confirmation of figures for meals shall be clearly communicated to the ETF through the ETF Event Management System (Correspondence).

5.8 Number of offers to be submitted by the contractor
In principle, the contractor shall present up to three offers only upon specific request from the ETF (see contract, Attachment 1, Terms of reference, 7.74, Requirements and rules for the execution of tasks, point 7.7.3). The Event Profile will indicate if more than one offer is required by the ETF logistics coordinator. This is especially recommended for large events or events being hosted in a new location.

5.9 Prepaid flight tickets: ceilings and exceptions
Ceilings for prepaid flight tickets are to be indicated in the budget proposal made by the contractor for each event. A tolerance of 10% of the ticket cost will be accepted, budget allowing, in which case the contractor can issue the ticket without prior approval from the ETF. In all other cases, the contractor shall seek the ETF logistics coordinator’s written approval.

The ETF logistics coordinator shall request the Authorising Officer’s approval only in the following specific cases:

1. ticket to be issued before participants receive a visa
2. business fare ticket
3. exceptionally high ticket fare (fare above 1,000 € for EU/fare above 1,200 € for partner countries).

As for prepaid tickets to Europe, the ETF defines the 2009 ceilings as follows:
- € 700 EU
- € 850 MEDA
- € 1000 ESEE
- € 1200 DCI

These figures are subject to future assessment and possible modifications.

5.10 Proof of payment
Proof of payment in relation to costs paid by the contractor to third parties is not required for each individual assignment, including experts’ reimbursement. However, the contractor is required to keep all proofs of payment for five years and make them available upon request (see also contract, Art. II.17.2).

5.11 Subcontracting
A subcontractor is defined as another PCO agency which, in particular circumstances and upon approval of the ETF, deals with the coordination of an event outsourced to the contractor. An activity is considered to be subcontracted when there is a remuneration for the subcontractor for coordination activities (which can be expressed differently depending on local customs).

Please also refer to contract, Art. II.13 and Attachment 1, Terms of reference, Section 7.6, Supplier and subcontractors selection.

5.12 Tariffs of suppliers in Turin
Special rates valid in Turin will be provided every year by the contractor for the different services typically required in event organisation:
- Ancillary services (hostess)
- Interpreters
- Local transport
- Technical equipment.

5.13 Time sheet for contractor staff
See above, 3.3.1 – Supporting document, bullet c).

5.14 Time sheet for occasional staff
Working hours of occasional staff (ancillary services) will be quoted as a daily fare, calculated in advance on the basis of the needs (for example: for a standard meeting day from 8.00-21.00, 13 hours will be budgeted). The contractor will produce a timesheet form for occasional staff which should be completed by the end of the event and approved by the ETF logistics coordinator on site. The original will be kept by the contractor and used as supporting documents when invoicing the service.