



# Question and Answer Sessions – Version 3

An information session was held by the Responsible Authority at *The Oaks Business Centre* in Hamrun on **Thursday, 20<sup>th</sup> July 2023** and on **Friday, 11<sup>th</sup> August 2023** during which various questions and answers were raised on the open call for applications (AMIF – Return) launched on 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2023. A summary of the list of Q&A delivered throughout the sessions can be found below:

Q: Is there a word limit for the project summary?

A: There is no word limit, although one is to keep in mind that this is a summary of the project description.

Q: Are there different levels of approvals?

A: No, the same person can draft and submit the application, without any approvals from their management.

Q: Are different work packages to be linked with different codes?

A: Depending on the activity to be financed, a work package is to be created and linked with a code as defined in Tables 2 and 3 of the AMIF Regulation.

Q: Is Title: Code 011 of Table 2 of AMIF Regulation suitable for *Activities of Forced Return*?

A: Forced return activities involve amongst others the provision of services, such as cash incentives, provision of an escort which is deemed to contribute towards that code.

Q: What will the co-financing rate be for more complex projects?

A: This is to be determined on a case-by-case basis.

Q: Would it be possible to have different work packages under the same package?

A: Yes. It is important to highlight in the application form whether the work packages have sub-criteria linked to them. It is up to the applicant to see that such sub-criteria are feasible.

Q: Regarding the budget, are there any templates or budget- breakdowns attached to the application?

A: This time round, the application form has been simplified. The normal budget breakdown that we have seen in previous programmes, have been replaced by a work package. The budget breakdown should reflect the activities foreseen in the proposal. Should there be any overheads, a dedicated

work package shall be prepared based on the same percentage of 7% as delineated in the Common Provisions Regulation.

Q: What is the total budget available and allocated for this call?

A: The total budget earmarked in this call is EUR 4.7 million EU share. It was left open as much as possible for the applicant to determine how much is required for their project. Nevertheless, it is up to the PSC to increase the budget of the call.

Q: In the AMIF national programme, the funds are split into 3 categories, can the funds per category be exceeded?

A: It is up to the Selection Committee (PSC) to see if this excess is required. However, such expense is to be demonstrated and justified. The amounts quoted in the budget breakdown of the programme shall guide prospective applicants with an idea of the costs associated with each area.

Q: With regards to Indicators, for training of information officers, why is the indicator so low?

A: The rationale behind the selected output indicator was the training envisaged to immigration officers, purely on alternatives to detention. Should there be instances where the proposed project also contributes to this output indicator, this should also be indicated in the application form.

Q: Can a result indicator be included, of how many people have been trained?

A: Yes. However, it is important to keep in mind the parameters of the programme itself.

Q: How will beneficiaries be expected to keep up with the indicators?

A: The definitions as provided by the European Commission of the indicators already stipulate the way these values are to be quantified and measured. This is also explained in the guidance document of the indicators. In 2024, Malta will have a mid-term review, where all ministries will be consulted to see that the stipulated indicators are still applicable, or whether they need to be updated, after which an explanation to the European Commission will be given to modify the indicators.

Q: Simplified cost options may be considered. In case of flights, are chartered costs included in the simplified cost option?

A: Chartered flights are *ad hoc* and have so far never been included. However, there is no guarantee that they will not be included in the simplified costs options.

Q: What level of detail is expected in section 2.2 of the application?

A: In this section, an idea of when (timeline) the activities mentioned in section 2.1 and the associated financials will be incurred is to be provided.

Q: Is section 2.3 of the application, to be completed only for tenders above Eur 100,000?

A: Yes. Therefore, RFQs are excluded from this section.

Q: Will there be another version of the Manual of Procedures that is yet to be published?

A: A harmonized approach has been adopted across all EU funded programmes which means that there will also be one MOP across the funds which is being discussed internally and not yet published.

Q: So as a guidance, should the applicant follow the old version of the MOP?

A: For the time being, until the new version of the MOP is published.

Q: In the new programme would it be possible to employ staff specifically for the project?

A: The regulation gives us a possibility to apply up to 25% of direct costs in order to cover project admin and other indirect costs. A study by the MA is currently being undertaken to see which percentage will be applied.

Q: Will the contact person be assisting the PL? and in this regard, could the contact person be in touch with the RA? Can the delegation of authority be given to another person who is not the contact person?

A: The contact person is expected to be different from the PL and is meant to assist the PL, including communication with the RA. Although the project leader is expected to input information on the online database related with payments, the RA reserves the right to discuss further the case in question should there be other applicants who will be requested to upload the relevant documentation on the online database.

Q: Can the applicant include additional documents considering personnel and any other ministries' CVs and past experiences?

A: Yes. There is no limit to how many documents can be annexed to the application form. Any relevant experience should be noted in the first part of the application form (sections 5 and 6).

Q: If an applicant is working with other entities, will applications be expected to have separate working package per entity?

A: A work package can be done by area, and not by entity. The same work package can be provided by different entities as long as the same area and codes are being covered.

Q: Can the activity section be modified?

A: An applicant is free to add as many details as they wish with regards to the description of the activities listed in section 2.1.

Q: With regards the contractual arrangement and conditions applied to the use of the funds, are there any templates in place of a Grant Agreement?

A: The applicant will be consulted bilaterally on the drafting of the respective documentation.

Q: Section 7 mentions a letter of intent between partners, are there any templates available for this?

A: This is left at the discretion of the beneficiary to choose the best available method.

Q: In the previous project, admin costs such as telephone bills, electricity and water fees were not specified. Will there be any changes to this?

A: All of these costs will be covered through the flat rate percentage applied for indirect costs.

Q: In case of non-governmental organisations, is there still the need to provide the remaining 25% co-financing rate?

A: Yes, the Managing Authority requires assurance for covering the remaining 25% of the budget.

Q: What other eligible documents are required?

A: Within the application form, applicants are invited to provide a breakdown of the costs envisaged to be incurred. It is then up to the PSC to determine the eligibility of the costs. In addition, the guidance notes on eligibility (pg. 6) provides an indication of the eligibility criteria linked with the call for applications.

Q: Is it a requirement to be VAT registered?

A: Yes, the applicant needs to be registered with the VAT department.

Q: Can the project leader reside in a foreign country other than Malta?

A: If the necessary assurance is provided at application stage that the person will be available, then there is no issue with having a project leader residing in another country.

Q: Should partners also be officially registered?

A: Yes, they have to be registered and governed by a statute.

Q: What is the rationale behind the indicators as set out in the AMIF Programme?

A: The indicators are based on past activities involving voluntary return financed through 2014 – 2020 AMIF National Programme.

Q: Is the co-financing rate 75% / 25% or can it be increased up to 90%?

A: Reintegration and voluntary return can be financed up to 90% co-financing rate in line with Annex IV however this depends on the discretion of the project selection committee.

Q: The tables for the Work Packages require codes. Where are these codes found?

A: The codes for the type of action and implementation dimension can be found in Annex VI *Types of Intervention*, tables 2 and 3 of the AMIF Regulation which can be accessed from the following link:

<https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32021R1147>

Q: Will a dedicated bank account for the project be required on our part for the financial guarantee?

A: The bank account can be opened at a later stage once the project is successfully awarded by the Project Selection Committee.

Q: Actions supporting reintegration programmes and assisted voluntary return can be subject to a higher co-financing rate, up to 90%. Will there be a need for an additional letter justifying the need to apply this higher co-financing rate?

A: Although the AMIF Regulation enables the possibility to increase the co-financing rate for actions supporting reintegration and voluntary return assistance up to 90%, the final rate is determined by the Project Selection Committee. In this case, no additional letters are required to justify the need for higher co-financing rates, since the types of actions are already delineated in the respective Regulation.

Q: Is an electronic copy of our bank statement enough as proof of our financial guarantee?

A: A copy of the bank statement showing proof of the 25% co-financing amount is sufficient.



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