Access to RI under Horizon2020

European Commission

DG Research and Innovation
Unit B4 - Research Infrastructures

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Definition of Research Infrastructures

Facilities, resources and services **used by the scientific community for conducting research and innovation in their fields.**

They include

- *major scientific equipment or set of instruments,*
- *knowledge-based resources such as collections, archives or scientific data,*
- *e-infrastructures, such as data and computing systems, and communication networks*
- *and any other entities of a unique nature …*

*…***essential to achieve excellence*** in research and innovation*

They can be "Single-sited", "distributed" or "virtual"

and, when relevant, may be used beyond research, e.g. for education or public services.

Support to Access Provision: *under which type of project ?*

- ➢ **Integrating Activities for both AC and SC**
  - ▪ *access provision is a **mandatory component** of the project*
  - ▪ *access provision should be implemented in an **integrated and coordinated way** such as to improve the overall services available, at European level, to the research community*

- ➢ **Individual support to ESFRI and OWRI projects**

- ➢ **e-Infrastructures projects under theme 1:** integration and consolidation of e-infrastructures platform ***(NEW)***
  - ▪ *EINFRA-11-2016*
  - ▪ *EINFRA-12-2016*
  - ▪ *GEANT SGA (a)*

Access provision: what is new ?

- ➢ **Terminology: virtual access instead of service activity**

- ➢ **Specific provisions for Access in art. 16 of the MGA and in the Unit Cost decision C(2013)8199: no more Annex III and SP17**

- ➢ **Cost of the access provided under the grant is no more limited to 20% of the total access costs of an installation**

- ➢ **Three ways to report trans-national access costs: on the basis of unit cost, actual costs, a combination of the two**

- ➢ **Unit cost set up during GA preparation on the basis of <u>historical data</u> (FP6 like) and not recalculated on the basis of actual costs**

- ➢ **Explicit list of categories of costs covered by the unit cost**

- ➢ **Third country users: up to 20% of the access can be provided to user teams with a majority of users working in third countries**

- ➢ **Users working for SMEs exempted from requirement to disseminate results generated under Trans-national access**

Trans-national Access (TA)

> **'free of charge' provision of access to a research infrastructure to *selected* researchers or research teams usually working in a country other than the country where the RI is located. TA can be:**

- **in person ('hands-on'), to users visiting the infrastructure, e.g. access to a research vessel, or**

- **remote scientific services, no visit needed, e.g. performance of sample analysis**

*While **ad-hoc training** on how to use an infrastructure to solve a specific research problems can be a component of the access service provided by the RI, **attendance to training courses**, summer schools or seminars is not considered access to RI.*

General training courses on how to use a RI for a set of potential users can be supported under networking activities.

Virtual Access (VA)

➢ **'Free of charge' provision of access to widely used resources needed for research that are openly and freely available through communication networks**

  ➢ *No need for a competitive selection of users and therefore no need to set up a selection panel*

  ➢ *No need to identify users either. However identification is possible when access provision is subject to specific requirements such as registration, authentication and/or authorisation of users (e.g. for access to sensitive data)*

  ➢ *No need for users to visit the infrastructure to get access*

  ➢ *No need to define a unit of access and no specific access costs attributable to a given user*

Training courses on how to use the RI for a set of potential users can be supported under networking activities

Other definitions

➢ **Installation: a part or a service of a *research infrastructure* that could be used independently from the rest. A *research infrastructure* consists of one or more installations.**

➢ **Access providers: a beneficiary or a linked third party that is in charge of providing access to one or more *research infrastructures* or *installations*, or part of them, as specified in Annex 1 to the grant agreement.**

and, for <u>trans-national access </u>only:

➢ **User group: a research team of one or more researchers, led by a 'user group leader', to whom access to the *installation* is given under the grant.**

➢ **Selected user: a researcher within a *user group***

Trans-national Access
Access provider obligations

➤ **to publicise widely the access offered** under the grant agreement and the modalities to apply,

➤ **to take into account the gender dimension** in advertising the access and defining the support provided to users

➤ **to set up an independent selection panel** to select the users to be supported

➤ **to maintain & provide to EC appropriate documentation** to support and justify the amount of access reported (name, nationality and affiliation of users; nature and quantity of access provided to user teams, selection panel members & selection procedure)

A measurable unit of access for each installation must be identified and clearly defined in Annex I to the GA

Trans-national Access eligibility conditions

➢ **A user group is eligible** **for TA support under the grant when the user group leader and the majority of users work in countries different from where the installation is located**
*This condition is **not necessary** when:*

▪ *the access provider is an International organisation, the JRC, an ERIC or other similar legal entities representing different countries*

▪ *in case of <u>remote</u> access to a set of installations offering the same type of service and located in different countries*

Additional rules for the selection of user groups can be foreseen in the GA

➢ **Only user groups that will disseminate the results they generate under the project are eligible, unless users work for SMEs**

➢ **Access for user groups with a majority of users working in third countries is limited to 20% of the total amount of units of access provided under the *grant*,**

▪ *a higher percentage can be foreseen in Annex I, if justified;*

Access Costs for trans-national access

➢ **Access costs: costs incurred by the access provider for the provision of access. They cover:**

- *the **running costs** of the installation*
- *costs for **logistical, technological** and **scientific support** to users' access, including **ad-hoc training** and **preparatory and closing activities** necessary to carry out user's work*

and exclude:

- *all contributions to the **capital investments** of the infrastructure*
- ***travel and subsistence** costs incurred for supporting the visits of the selected users to the installation (T&S can be charged as "other costs")*

➢ **Three ways to report trans-national access:**

- *using a **unit cost** calculated on the basis of <u>historical access costs</u>*
- *eligible costs <u>actually</u> and solely **incurred** for providing access to the selected user groups*
- *a **combination** of the two, if a part of the eligible access costs, e.g. the costs for the specific support to users, varies significantly between users*

Unit Cost for trans-national access (1)

Unit Cost =

$$\frac{\text{average annual total } \textit{access costs} \text{ to the } \textit{installation}}{\text{average total quantity of access to the } \textit{installation} \text{ annually provided}}$$

➤ the *averages* are calculated over the **historical data** of last 2 closed financial years, or in exceptional and justified cases, a different reference period agreed by the EC

   ▪ *periods where the installation was not usable because out of order or under repair shall be excluded*

➤ the '**total quantity of access**' includes all the units of access annually provided by the installation, including access financed by the Union under previous grant agreements, if any.

Access Cost to be charged to the grant **=**

   units of access **provided under the project** **X** *unit cost*

Unit Cost for trans-national access (2)

Total access costs = direct historical costs + indirect costs

Direct costs:

- ✓ administrative, technical and scientific personnel directly assigned to the functioning of the installation and to the support of the users
- ✓ contracts for maintenance and repair of the installation, if not capitalised
- ✓ consumables specifically used for the installation and the users' research work
- ✓ contracts for installation management (e.g. security fees, insurance costs, quality control and certification, …)
- ✓ supply of energy power and water for the installation
- ✓ general services when they are specifically included in the access provided (library costs, shipping costs)
- ✓ software licence, internet connection or other services for data management and computing when they are needed to provide access services
- ✓ specific scientific services included in the access provided or needed for the provision of access

Indirect costs = 25% of *direct costs excluding subcontracting costs*

Unit Cost for trans-national access (3)

EXAMPLE OF CALCULATION:

➢ an infrastructure provides **6100 hours** of access in **year N-1** and **5900 hours** of access in **year N-2**

➢ the **total access costs** (for the provision of above mentioned total quantities of access) in the two years, calculated on the basis of the costs categories listed in the Decision (excluding any contribution to capital investment and travel & subsistence costs of users) are respectively **EUR 3 200 000** and **2 800 000**,

then the unit cost is:

$$\textbf{Unit cost} = \frac{\text{average } (3\,200\,000,\ 2\,800\,000)}{\text{average } (6100,\ 5900)} = \frac{3\,000\,000}{6000} = 500\ €$$

The access providers can decide to charge a lower unit cost than the one calculated on the basis of the above-mentioned formula (e.g. 450 € instead of 500 €).

Actual access costs for TA

Actual:
- ➢ **necessary for provision of access <u>to the selected users</u>**
- ➢ **incurred during the project lifecycle**
- ➢ **identifiable, verifiable and recorded in the access provider's accounts**
- ➢ **reasonable, justified and sound**

Direct costs (personnel, sub-contracts, goods, services):
- ✓ costs of administrative, technical and scientific personnel directly working for the provision of access <u>to the selected users</u> and their support (hours worked for the grant must be recorded)
- ✓ costs of consumables and supplies specifically incurred for the provision of access <u>to the selected users</u>, in particular for carrying out their research work
- ✓ cost of services included in or needed for the provision of access, that are specifically incurred for providing access <u>to the selected users</u>

Indirect costs = 25% of *direct costs excluding subcontracting costs*

Combination of actual & unit costs for TA

➢ **To be used when the cost of some component of the provided access service varies significantly between users or this component is not always requested/ needed. Usually the more variable components are within the specific support to users.**

➢ **For the calculation of the unit cost only the eligible categories of direct costs referred to in the Decision that are not reimbursed on an actual cost basis may be taken into account.**

➢ *e.g. in an ocean observation network the costs to mount and dismount a specific sensor in observation points/stations needed for a user work can vary according to the type of sensor and of the location of the station. These costs could be reimbursed as actual costs while the running cost of the observatory network as unit cost*

Virtual Access
Access provider obligations

➢ **publicise widely the access offered**

➢ **set up an external board to periodically assess the services offered,** as only virtual services <u>widely used </u>by the community of European researchers will be supported. The assessment report must be provided to the EC;

➢ **provide to the EC statistics on the access offered** during the project, e.g. quantity, geographical distribution of users and, when possible, information/statistics on scientific outcomes acknowledging the use of the infrastructure (publications, patents, etc.);

No need to define a unit of access nor to identify users in the reports

Costs for virtual access

➢ **Costs for virtual access**: <u>actual</u> **costs incurred by the access provider for the provision of virtual access to resources.**
Only eligible costs that can be <u>clearly attributed </u>to the provision of access will be reimbursed.

The eligible costs include:

▪ *the **operating costs** of the installation*

▪ *costs for **technological** & **scientific support** to users' access (e.g. help desk)*

and exclude:

▪ *all contributions to the **capital investments** of the infrastructure*

➢ **Actual means:**

▪ *necessary for provision of access to the offered resources*

▪ *incurred during the project lifecycle*

▪ *identifiable, verifiable & recorded in the VA provider's accounts*

▪ *reasonable, justified and sound*

Actual costs for Virtual Access

Direct costs :

✓ administrative, technical and scientific personnel directly working for the provision of access to the offered resources or for the general support to users (hours worked for the grant must be recorded)

✓ consumables and supplies for the provision of access to the offered resources

✓ contracts for maintenance and repair of the offered resources, if not capitalised

✓ contracts for the management of the offered resources (e.g. insurance costs, quality control and certification, …)

✓ supply of electricity needed for the provision of access to the offered resources

✓ software licence, internet connection or other specific services, e.g. for data management and computing, when they are needed to provide or are included in the access services

Indirect costs = 25% of *direct costs excluding subcontracting costs*

The cost items charged to the grant **must not be covered by other <u>EU</u> funds**. When they are covered **by other <u>non-EU</u> funding sources**, specifically provided to support them, they must be declared as **receipts**

Thank you for your attention

Questions ? .....