



Education and Culture DG

Lifelong Learning Programme



OPTIMUS PROJECT

OPERATIONAL PORT TRAINING MODELS USING SIMULATORS

(1-11-2008 / 31-10-2010)

LIFELONG LEARNING PROGRAMME

Project Handbook

November 2008

Introduction

Purpose of the Handbook

The Handbook is intended to serve as an aid to partners and a management tool for project coordinator and promoter. It is based on the Annex III of the grant agreement (where they are called the 'Guidelines for administrative and financial management and reporting'). Its principal aims are to:

- ✓ help partners manage their participation in the project and run them efficiently;
- ✓ clarify matters arising from the grant agreement and its annexes;
- ✓ provide practical information that may be referred to throughout the project's life;
- ✓ provide guidance on the methods of project monitoring and on the dissemination and exploitation of a project's results/products;
- ✓ provide guidance on how to handle the financial side of projects in such a way that financial statements can be readily drawn up;
- ✓ promote the sound financial management of a project and ensure that the best results/products are delivered at reasonable cost;
- ✓ encourage smooth relations between the parties involved by setting out an operational framework for the project.

1 Management of the OPTIMUS Project

1.1 Role of the Agency

The Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency operates as a partner for the European Commission. Whilst the Commission deals with policy setting and programme definition, the Agency is in charge of programme implementation for all centralised actions and aims to provide programme beneficiaries with a comprehensive administration and support service.

The Agency has a mandate to cover the whole lifecycle of projects. This includes publishing the Call for proposals, selecting the projects, establishing the contracts, monitoring the projects through to closure and reporting on the results.

During the project lifecycle the Agency provides support for the projects that have been launched, helping them to be successful, bringing them into contact with each other and assisting them with the dissemination of results.

The Agency manages the reporting and assessment elements of running projects and the accompanying payment of grant monies.

Once projects are complete, the Agency provides feedback to the Commission on the results of the projects and on the results of the Call in general so that this may inform future policy.

1.2 Your project in the lifecycle of the Lifelong Learning Programme

The Lifelong Learning Programme is implemented via an annual Call for proposals in response to which you submitted an application. With the help of external experts, the Agency evaluated the application and decided to allocate community funds for the realisation of the OPTIMUS project. Because OPTIMUS project is funded by the Lifelong Learning Programme, it is expected to contribute to the policy priorities for which the programme was established. The full results of the selection are published on the Agency's website.

OPTIMUS project starts with the signature of the grant agreement (contract) and then follows the workplan that is included in that agreement. Through the implementation of the project you carry out a number of activities and follow the milestones according to the workplan. The Agency co-finances the costs incurred in carrying out the project activities **from the beginning until the end of the eligibility period set out in the grant agreement. Any project activities occurring outside of the eligibility period are not eligible for funding.** The OPTIMUS project starts the 1st of November 2008 and ends the 31st of October 2010.

The co-financing of the project is implemented according to the rules set out in the grant agreement. At the beginning of the project the Agency transfers to the promoter a first pre-financing payment which amounts to the percentage of the Community's contribution to

the project costs set out in the agreement (40%). Because of OPTIMUS project has a duration of 24 months, there will be a second pre-financing payment. **At the end of the project and after approval of the project results, analysis and approval of the costs incurred, the Agency will execute the final payment which is made up of the total eligible contribution less the payments already made.**

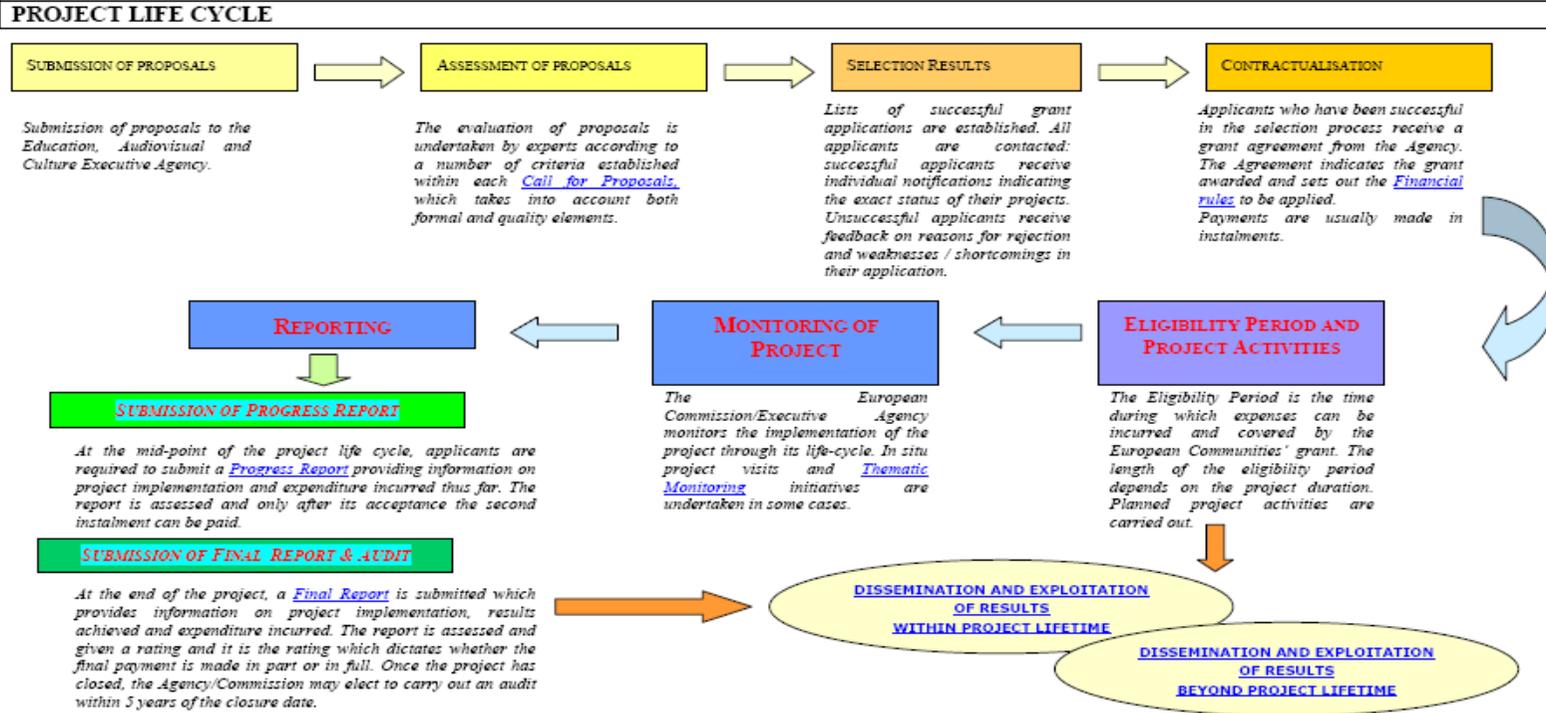
To enable the Agency to monitor and assess the achievements of the project, the promoter (FEPORTS) are required to submit a Progress Report and a Final Report. Generally speaking, the Agency uses external expertise to assess the progress of a project and the quality of its results.

If during the project's lifetime the need for modifications to the grant agreement arises, FEPORTS may request an amendment to the Agency.

Dissemination and exploitation of the OPTIMUS project and its results are very important as they determine the extent to which the results reach their intended audience and are subsequently utilised. Poor dissemination in particular can lead to duplicated effort and wasted resources. It is important therefore that the plan thoroughly your dissemination and exploitation strategy from the beginning of the project.

After the project's closure, the Agency reserves the right to launch an audit to verify the accounts. The grant agreement includes a specific requirement to keep records for a number of years after the closure of the project.

PROJECT LIFE CYCLE



1.3 Monitoring of the Project by the Agency

The Agency is responsible for monitoring all the projects that have been successful in securing funds from the Lifelong Learning Programme. The main purpose of the monitoring is to provide support for each project, offering guidance and advice that can be integrated by the project team as it endeavours to achieve a successful outcome. The monitoring is also aimed at ensuring that projects are aligned with and fulfilling their stated objectives and continue to merit the public funds that have been allocated to them. Monitoring also allows good practices and lessons learned to be identified so that others may benefit from them.

The monitoring may be performed in one or more of the following ways:

- ✓ assessment of the work carried out and reported by the project (for this the Agency normally uses external expertise to analyse and assess the reports);
- ✓ visit by Agency representatives to the premises of the beneficiary/coordinating organisation (*in situ* visit);
- ✓ visit by Agency representatives to a project event or partnership meeting;
- ✓ visit by experts to review the work of the project and report back to the Agency;
- ✓ visit by project representatives to the Agency;
- ✓ invitation to project representatives to visit the Agency to participate in an event organised by the Agency.

1.4 Progress Report and Final Report

We will be required to either submit a Progress Report *and* a Final Report. The Progress Report provides the Agency with a mid-term update on how a project is advancing against original plans and budgets whilst the Final Report is due at the end of the project thus allowing an overall evaluation of the project.

In order to provide a practical and structured means for a project to report its progress and achievements, the Agency has prepared a pair of report templates – including a financial reporting table – accompanied by instructions on how to complete them.

Reporting period

- ✓ The reporting period for the **Progress Report** runs from the start date of the project until **one month prior** to the submission date of the report: **1.11.2008 – 1.12.2009**
- ✓ For the **Final Report**, the reporting period covers the entire project duration and the submission date falls **two** months after the end of the project: **31.12.2010**

Structure of the Reports

Both the Progress Report and the Final Report have the same basic structure consisting of 2 parts:

- a *Public Part*, including an Executive Summary;
- a *Confidential Part*.

The Public Part presents the content of the project and its achievements. It is aimed at peers and is intended for widespread public dissemination. The Confidential Part presents information about the management of the project, the contract and the finances. It is aimed at the Agency and remains private.

The Public Part contains the description of the project's objectives and results, how they were achieved, how they will be exploited and how they contribute to EU policies. It is a document intended for general, external communication, including people who will not be familiar with the sector your project addresses. Consequently, this part of the report should contain as little jargon as possible and be readily understandable to any interested reader. It must also be of a suitable quality that it can be directly published by the Agency and the project/beneficiary organisation.

The Confidential Part contains administrative and management information including for example workplan deviations, mandatory statistical data, any confidential results and a detailed financial report. This document will only be viewed and analysed by representatives of the Agency and by the external experts engaged in project evaluation. It will provide the main source of information to enable the Agency to judge the project's performance and decide upon the continuation of the project and/or the payment of the due part of the grant.

The report is submitted on behalf of all the organisations participating in the project. The declaration page, which must be included in the Confidential Part and signed in original by the legal representative of the FEPORTS, confirms that a process of consultation and approval has been carried out throughout the partnership.

Project Outcomes and Results

Three copies of each product generated by the project should be submitted with the Progress and Final Reports. Any other piece of information that the project deems to be relevant for the assessment such as meeting minutes, testing results etc should be attached to the Confidential Part.

Processing the Reports

Each report must be submitted to the Agency by the deadline indicated in the grant agreement. Late submission may considerably delay the process of analysing and assessing the report which may in turn cause payment of due funds to be delayed.

In general, the Agency uses external experts to help with the analysis of the report, the evaluation of the quality of the work accomplished and the formulation of an overall assessment. The experts engaged by the Agency are obliged to declare up front (i.e. in advance) that no conflict of interest exists in relation to the projects they will assess.

If a report is incomplete (for instance, some parts are missing or incorrect) the Agency may request that further information be supplied and provided through the submission of a new,

updated version of the report.

Based on the experts' assessment and the recommendations they make, the Agency takes a final decision with regard to the payment of the due part of the grant. In the event that the report is not complete and additional information needs to be submitted, the payment that is dependent upon the report's positive evaluation is likely to be delayed.

Once the assessment is complete, the Agency will inform the project of the final evaluation i.e. its decision and feedback on the project's progress and achievements.

Specific requirements for the Final Report

The Final Report becomes due after the formal end of the project allowing the project to be reported on and evaluated in its entirety. Consequently, all contracted project activities should be complete and products finalised by the time the report is submitted.

The assessment of the Final Report includes the following elements.

- An appraisal of the quality of the project's results and products. In addition to analysing the quality of individual results, this includes checking that the activities carried out correspond to the activities that were defined in the original plan.
- An evaluation of the eligibility of declared expenditure and of the project's adherence to its budget.
- A verification of the measures taken to guarantee the successful dissemination and exploitation of the project's results and products.

Weak implementation of a project

As stated in the grant agreement, the Agency "may reduce the amount of the final grant taking into consideration the final assessment of the project outcomes, based upon the opinion of external experts."

The experts carrying out the final assessment will give an overall judgement on the project made up of a 'qualitative' grade and a numerical rating. The values given will reflect the quality of the products as well as the performance of the partnership. They will also take into consideration the project objectives defined in the workplan.

The rating values – which dictate the precise level of reduction of the grant, if any – run from 0 to 10, where 0 is at the bottom of the rating scale and 10 is at the top. Where the rating recommended by the external experts and confirmed by the Agency lies between 0 and 4, the Agency may decide to have the project reassessed. If a reassessment is carried out and the views of the experts differ, the final consolidated rating will be determined by the Agency.

As mentioned above, the reduction will be applied to the total eligible staff costs. Once this amount is identified, the corresponding grant to the staff costs will be calculated in accordance with the co-financing ratio established in the grant agreement.

1.5 Dissemination and Exploitation of Results

1.5.1 Purpose of dissemination and exploitation activities

Significant emphasis is placed on the impact of EU co-financed projects and on the concrete plans for ensuring that what they produce will be widely known about and widely used. The results generated, the lessons learned and the experience gained by each project team should be made available to the widest possible audience.

The primary means of making this happen are the twin activities of dissemination and exploitation, also known together as *valorisation*. Their key objective is to maximise the impact of project results by optimising their value, strengthening their impact, transferring them to different contexts, integrating them in a sustainable way and using them actively in systems and practices at local, regional, national and European levels.

Well-planned and well-executed dissemination and exploitation ensure that project results have a reach beyond those directly involved in the consortium and an impact that is sustained beyond the project's lifetime.

1.5.2 What are project results?

Project results are the products, methods, experiences and policy lessons that projects may realise. Broadly speaking, there are five main categories of result of which the first three are direct project results and the second two are indirect project results or programme-level results.

1.5.3 What are the dissemination and exploitation of results?

The activities of dissemination and exploitation are closely related but distinct from one another.

Dissemination can be defined as "a planned process of providing information to key parties on the quality, relevance and effectiveness of the results of programmes and initiatives. It occurs as and when the results become available."

Exploitation means "making use of and deriving benefit from (a result)". In the context of project results it primarily involves the two processes of 'mainstreaming' and 'multiplication', where:

Mainstreaming is the planned process of transferring the successful results of programmes and initiatives to appropriate decision-makers in regulated local, regional, national or European systems; and

Multiplication is the planned process of convincing individual end-users to adopt and/or apply the results of programmes and initiatives.

1.5.4 How to plan your dissemination and exploitation

In planning these activities, the project team should be addressing the following kinds of questions:

- What needs does the project meet?
- What are the expected results?
- Who are the users/interested sectors who will benefit from the project's results?

The key elements of the plan are:

- The types of dissemination and exploitation activity that will be used – the methods and mechanisms;
- The resources that will be required – people and budget;
- The timetable for the different activities;
- The strategy for extending the activities beyond the project's lifetime.

The dissemination and exploitation plan should be regularly reviewed and where necessary revised in light of the project's evolution. Any adjustments to the plan should be described in the Progress and Final Reports that you submit.

There are special conditions in the grant agreement that relate to dissemination. The first is the requirement for beneficiaries to establish and maintain a **project website**. The second is for them to provide information on request that would allow the Agency and/or the Commission to promote the Lifelong Learning Programme and to disseminate results.

1.5.5 Recognition of Commission funding and use of LLP logo

Project publications and results that are distributed must make reference to the co-financing that the Commission has provided and should incorporate the LLP logo. This visibility helps increase awareness of the Lifelong Learning Programme and helps ensure the continuation and longevity of its operation.

The LLP logo can be found at:

http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/about/logos_en.html

The funding disclaimer text is available in all languages at:

http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/education_culture/publ/graphics/agencies/use-translation.pdf

Failure to acknowledge the Community funding may lead to the costs related to a particular activity being declared ineligible. For example, in the case where the activities included research and publication, if the publication fails to mention EU funding, then the costs of research would still be eligible but the costs of publication would be declared ineligible.

1.6 Amendment Requests

Any amendment to the grant conditions must be the subject of a written supplementary agreement. The amendment request must duly justify the reasons for the proposed changes. The Agency reserves the right to reject an amendment request that is not justified.

It is important to understand that the amendment request should not be used retrospectively i.e. changes that have in reality already been carried out prior to the submission of the request should not be retroactively requested. In particular, retroactive changes to the eligibility of costs through an amendment will only be accepted in exceptional cases due to extenuating circumstances. Any amendment request must be submitted to the Agency by an official letter or form signed by FEPORTS.

Amendment to the grant agreement for the following circumstances:

- A - Change of the beneficiary organisation
- B - Partner(s) withdrawal
- C - New / replacement partner(s) joining the project
- D - Changes to the work programme
- E - Change of bank account
- F - Changes to the eligibility period
- G - Changes to the budget breakdown. An amendment request relating to an adjustment to the budget breakdown is not necessary when the transfer between items does not exceed:
 - 10% of the amount of each increased category of costs for which the transfer is intended or
 - EUR 5.000

This rule is not applicable to indirect costs as they are calculated on the basis of a flat rate amount. Please note: even when changes to the budget breakdown do not necessitate a formal amendment request it is still necessary to inform the Agency in writing of changes that have been made.

2 LLP programme financial rules

2.1 General Provisions on Eligibility of Costs

The general context, nature and amount of expenditure will be considered when assessing eligibility.

To be considered as eligible costs of the project, costs must satisfy the following **general criteria**:

- They must relate to activities involving the **eligible countries** in the Lifelong Learning Programme. Any costs relating to activities undertaken outside these countries or by organisations that are not registered in an eligible country are not eligible unless they are necessary for the completion of the project and duly justified in the application form and in the report and/or agreed in advance with the Agency through the exchange of letters.
- They must be incurred by **legal bodies/institutions or by natural persons** depending on the project concerned, and in the case of consortia, by the official partners of the consortium;
- They must be **connected** with the project (i.e. relevant to the project and be directly connected with the execution of the project in accordance with the approved work plan);
- They must be **necessary** for the execution of the project;
- They must be **reasonable and justified** and they must accord with the principles of **sound financial management**, in particular in terms of value for money and cost-effectiveness;
- They must be **generated** during the lifetime of the project;
- They must be **actually incurred** by the beneficiary and be recorded in his accounts in accordance with the applicable accounting principles, and be declared in accordance with the requirements of the applicable tax and social legislation;
- They must be identifiable and verifiable.

The beneficiary's internal accounting and auditing procedures must permit direct reconciliation of the costs and revenue declared in respect of the project with the corresponding accounting statements and supporting documents. For scales of unit costs, this implies that the "number of units" must be recorded in appropriate documents (e.g. timesheets, attendance lists, etc.).

Where national taxation and accounting rules do not require an invoice, an accounting document of equivalent value means any document produced in order to prove that the accounting entry is accurate and complies with the applicable accounting law.

2.2 Non-eligible Costs

Under no circumstances can the following types of costs be considered as eligible:

- return on capital;
- debt and debt service charges;
- provisions for losses or potential future liabilities (provisions for contractual and moral obligations, fines, financial penalties and legal costs);
- interest owed;
- doubtful debts;
- exchange losses;
- VAT, **unless** the beneficiary organisation can prove that it is unable to recover it;
- costs declared by the beneficiary and covered by another project or work programme receiving a Community grant;
- excessive or reckless expenditure;
- purchase of capital assets;
- in the case of rental or leasing of equipment, the cost of any buy-out option at the end of the lease or rental period;
- costs associated with the preparation of the application for the Lifelong Learning Programme;
- costs of opening and operating bank accounts (transfer costs are eligible);
- costs incurred in relation to any document required to be submitted with the application (audit reports, etc.);
- costs incurred by silent / ineligible partners;
- contributions in kind;

2.3 Categories of Eligible Direct Costs

The eligible direct costs for the project are those costs which, with due regard for the conditions of eligibility set out above, are identifiable as specific costs directly linked to performance of the project and which can therefore be booked to it directly.

2.3.1 Staff

Costs relating to the following categories of staff are considered:

- Statutory staff, having either a permanent or a temporary employment contract with the partner.
- Temporary staff, recruited through a specialised external Agency.

Costs related to staff working through subcontracting shall be included under the appropriate category.

Staff members of project partners are not allowed to operate in a subcontracting capacity for the project.

Beneficiaries should report staff costs based on **real daily staff cost rates**, which cannot

exceed the maximum rates published in the Call for proposals. Any surplus will be considered as ineligible. The veracity of these costs may be the subject of an audit.

The rate of the country in which the partner organisation is registered will be applied, independent of where the tasks will be executed.

Real daily staff cost rates are based on average rates corresponding to the Beneficiary's usual policy on remuneration, comprising **actual salaries plus social security charges** and other statutory costs included in the remuneration. Non-statutory costs like bonuses, lease car, expense account schemes, incentive payments or profit-sharing schemes are excluded.

2.3.2 Travel and Subsistence

a) Travel costs

Travel costs for staff taking part in the project are considered, provided that they are in line with the partner's usual practices on travel costs. Costs may be claimed only for journeys directly connected to specific and clearly identifiable project-related activities.

Reimbursement must be based on real costs, independent of the means of travel chosen (rail, bus, taxi, plane, hire car). Partners are required to use the cheapest means of travel.

The travel cost for a journey should include all costs and all means for travel from the point of origin to the point of destination (and vice versa) and may include visa fees, travel insurance and cancellation costs.

Expenses for private car travel (personal or company cars), where substantiated and where the price is not excessive, will be reimbursed as follows (whichever is the cheapest):

- Either a rate per km in accordance with the internal rules of the organisation concerned up to a max of EUR 0.22.
- Or price of a rail, bus or plane ticket. Only one ticket shall be reimbursed, independently of the number of people travelling in the same vehicle.

For hire cars (maximum category B or equivalent) or taxis: the actual cost where this is not excessive compared with other means of travel (also taking account of any influencing factors e.g. time, excessive luggage). Reimbursement takes place independently of the number of people travelling in the same vehicle.

b) Subsistence costs

Subsistence costs for staff taking part in the project are eligible.

The reported expenses should respect the maximum rates published in the Call for proposals. Any surplus will be considered as ineligible. The rate to be applied is the one from the destination country. Costs may be claimed only for journeys directly connected to specific and clearly identifiable project-related activities.

Reimbursement must be based on the existing internal rules of the partner organisations, which may be on an actual cost (reimbursement of receipts) or daily allowance basis. In

either case, **proof of attendance and overnight accommodation** will be required to substantiate declared costs.

Subsistence rates cover accommodation, meals and all local travel costs (but not local travel costs incurred to travel from point of origin to point of destination). A full day normally includes an overnight stay. In duly substantiated cases, a full day's allowance without an overnight stay may be allowed with a pro rata reduction for accommodation. A corresponding reduction must be applied if accommodation, meals and local travel costs are provided for by a third party.

2.3.3 Equipment costs

Purchase, rent or lease of equipment (new or second-hand), including the installation, maintenance and insurance costs, are considered:

- Only when specific and necessary for achieving the goals of the project. Proposed equipment costs must always be duly justified. The rules for procurement under section 2.3.4 apply.
- Provided that it is written off in accordance with the tax and accounting rules applicable to the beneficiary and generally accepted for items of the same kind. Only the portion of the equipment's depreciation corresponding to the duration of the project and the rate of actual use for the purposes of the project may be taken into account. The beneficiary shall explain the rules applied. If the nature and/or the context of its use justify different treatment, this should be duly justified.

All equipment related to the administration of the project (e.g. PCs, portables, etc.) and all equipment purchased before the start of a project is covered by indirect costs of the project.

The total reported expenses for equipment **may not exceed 10%** of the total direct costs reported for the project.

2.3.4 Subcontracting costs

Costs entailed by procurement contracts for the purposes of carrying out a part of the project are considered when awarded by a partner to an external body, organisation or individual (only if not employed by any of the Partner organisations of the consortium).

In order to maintain the concept of the project partnership, the management and the general administration of the project may not be subcontracted.

Costs are based on a verifiable estimate or, if the subcontractor is identified, on the basis of an offer. The estimate/offer will cover all costs (i.e. staff costs plus travel costs, etc.).

The Beneficiary shall award the contract to the tender offering best value for money, that is to say, to the tender offering the best price-quality ratio, in compliance with the principles of transparency and equal treatment for potential contractors, care being taken to avoid any conflict of interests.

The following specific **Community rules** with regard to procurement apply:

- ✓ Contracts with a value below EUR 500 can be paid simply on presentation of an invoice.
- ✓ Contracts with a value between EUR 500 and EUR 3.500 are subject to a restricted procedure involving one tenderer (i.e. it is sufficient to seek one offer only).
- ✓ Contracts with a value between EUR 5.000 and EUR 25.000 are subject to a procedure involving at least three tenderers.
- ✓ Contracts between EUR 25.000 and EUR 60.000 are subject to a procedure involving at least five tenderers.
- ✓ For contracts of a value over EUR 60.000, national rules with regard to procurement apply.

The total reported costs for subcontracting **may not exceed 30%** of the total direct costs reported for the project.

2.3.5 Other Costs

Costs arising directly:

- ✓ From requirements imposed by the grant agreement are eligible (dissemination of information, specific evaluation of the project, audits, translations, reproduction, website, etc.), including the costs of any financial services (especially the cost of financial guarantees).
- ✓ From the realisation of specific actions or of products/results of the project are eligible i.e. the organisation of seminars (where the seminar is foreseen as a product/result and where task-related costs are easily identifiable), the production of proceedings of a seminar, the production of a video, the purchase of product-related consumables (reams of paper for printing of publications, blank DVDs), etc.

Only activities which are specific and necessary for achieving the goals of the project are considered.

When travel and/or subsistence costs are reimbursed to third parties (subcontractors, speakers, etc.), the rules applicable to staff of partners will be applied.

Costs which are not covered by the other categories are also considered as other costs. Some examples are: one-off costs for press releases and publicity, purchase of copyrights and other Intellectual Property Rights, purchase of information materials (books, studies and electronic data), conference fees; meeting registration costs; rental of exhibition space, etc.

All costs related to the administration of the project e.g. consumables, supplies, photocopying costs, telephone costs, internet access, paper, etc., are covered by indirect costs of the project.

2.4 Indirect costs

The eligible indirect costs for the project are those costs which, with due regard for the conditions of eligibility described above, are not identifiable as specific costs directly linked to performance of the project which can be booked to it direct, but which have nevertheless been incurred in connection with the eligible direct costs for the project. They may not include any eligible direct costs.

The indirect costs of the project eligible for Community funding is a **flat rate amount set at a maximum of 7% of the total amount of eligible direct costs**. This indirect costs rate was contractually agreed and is given in Annex II of the grant agreement. The corresponding costs **need not be justified by accounting documents**.

In principle, indirect costs shall not be eligible under a project grant awarded to a beneficiary who already receives an operating grant from the Commission during the period in question.

Examples of indirect costs are:

- ✓ All costs for equipment related to the administration of the project (e.g. PCs, portables, etc.);
- ✓ Communication costs (postage, fax, telephone, internet access, mailing, etc.);
- ✓ Infrastructure costs (rent, electricity, etc.) of the premises where the project is being carried out;
- ✓ Office supplies;
- ✓ Photocopies.

2.5 Calculation of the Final Community Grant

In short, the final grant is determined as follows:

Declared expenditures from the final statement
LESS Ineligible costs found during assessment of your final statement. Costs may be ineligible by nature or Limited by application of the "10% rule" or Limited by maximum ceilings from the Call (Equipment, Subcontracting and Indirect costs) or Limited by maximum rates from the Call (Staff & Subsistence)
X percentage of co-financing from the agreement
LIMITED to the maximum Community contribution from the agreement

Indeed, to avoid profit, the calculated grant will be reduced accordingly if:

Final Community grant + other sources of financings (own funds not included) is higher than Declared expenditures from the final statement
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Please note also that the grant may be reduced in case of weak implementation of the project.

Finally, the balance payment or recovery will be calculated as follows:

Final Community Grant	
LESS	Pre-financing amounts already received
LESS	Interests earned on pre-financing amounts (article II.16.4 of the grant agreement)
EQUAL	Balance payment if positive or Recovery if negative

2.6 Checks and Audits

Please refer to Article II.19 of the agreement for more information on possible checks and audits.

3 OPTIMUS management

3.1 Partnership

Summary table of partners			
Partner number	Country	Legal name	Type
P1 Applicant Organization	Spain	Port Institute of Studies and Cooperation of the Valencian Community (FEPORIS)	Public body
P2 Coordinating Organization	Italy	Livorno's Port Authority	Public body
P3 Partner	Spain	State society of load and unloading of the port of Valencia (SEVASA)	Public body
P4 Partner	France	Marseille Autonomous Port	Public body
P5 Partner	Italy	Scuola Superiore di Studi Universitari e di Perfezionamento Sant'Anna	Public body
P6 Partner	Slovenia	Agency of regional development of Koper (RRC)	Not for profit

3.2 Management and decision-making

FEPORIS promotes the OPTIMUS Project and relies for its management on the Livorno Port Authority, as coordinating organization. All the partners participate in the management of the project through the Steering Committee, whose operation is governed by the Regulations of Annex I. The Committee consists of a representative of each partner organization. Decisions are made, as a general rule, by consensus. In the event of disagreement, decisions are adopted by majority.

The Steering Committee will meet every 6 months (4 times during the project). Meeting locations will depend upon the phase of the project. Meeting calls will be done in writing and will include the corresponding agenda including at least:

- Project Progress – Review of the Reports of each phase.
- Planning of Actions and future meetings.
- Corrective measures.
- Other actions requiring the agreement of all the participants.
- Review and discussion of the tasks accomplished within the period and difficulties found.
- Review of pending tasks. Re-planning.
- Task assignment for the next period.

At least two weeks in advance, the Coordinator will send the Agenda along with any relevant documents to each one of those summoned. After the meeting, the Coordinator will send to each participant the pertaining Minutes. External collaborators who can be of

asset to the meeting may be invited, but will have no vote.

3.3 Management

The promoter or beneficiary is FEPORTS. Its main role is to manage the project (Workpackage 8).

Project management deals with the governance structure, the role and responsibilities of the various committees and actors, and the contacts with the EC. It includes the overall management, communication and co-ordination of the different partners, as well as monitoring the technical progress of the entire project through the supervision of the goals met and other non technical aspects.

The project management activities, lead by FEPORTS (with the technical support of the Coordinating Organization, Livorno Port Authority), will cover all the decisional aspects of the project's development, such as:

- following up and overseeing the different WP activities through the WP leaders, assisting them if difficulties should arise;
- reviewing and validating periodic and supplementary reports (technical and financial) and the outcomes;
- overseeing the exchange of information and methods between co-ordinator and WP leaders;
- approving official communications with the EC;
- requesting of the EC eventual changes in the project, under the initiative of any partner and upon prior approval by the S.C.
- establishing calendar and agendas of the meetings;
- overseeing dissemination and exploitation activities,
- soliciting the documents from the partners to draw the reports and their subsequent follow up. To do this, a time limit to be respected by all partners should be established;
- eventually undertaking control and follow up actions in regards to the partners.

All partners are required to assign resources to this task in order to properly participate in the decision making phases (as Steering Committee) and for the delivering of the requested official documentation.

FEPORTS also takes responsibility for the tasks of communication and dissemination.

Any matter related to the OPTIMUS Project will be presented at the Follow Up Committees or via e-mail, in this last case only if the partners are not required to vote or agree.

FEPORTS and LPA will request the partners as many documents as necessary to carry out the reports, both for the public and confidential parts, as well as a copy of the products that each partner has made. The partners must complete the time-sheets for each period and the tables for the financial report.

3.4 Secretarial Work and Coordination.

The coordinating member is the Livorno Port Authority (LPA), leader of WP 7.

Coordination and Secretarial work will imply: coordinating the different WP's through the WP leaders; organizing and ensuring the flow of information and methods between coordinator and WP leaders; carrying out the day to day communications with FEPORTS and the Steering Committee; submitting all the periodic reports (technical and financial) and all supplementary reports.

All partners are required to assign resources to this task in order to properly manage documentation production and communication issues. For this purpose, the Web-based Intranet Communication System, that will be available for all partners at the inception of the project, must be used.

The following are included amongst the tasks of the Coordinating member:

- preparation and management of the Web Forum and Communication System (Intranet);
- Development of computer-based templates (documents and sheets for the day-to-day activities);
- manual for Financial Rules;
- workpackages coordination;
- communication with partners and EAC-EA, in coordination with FEPORTS;
- technical assistance for financial issues;
- drawing up of meeting programs and minutes.