



# FAQs: Impact of the coronavirus pandemic on the IKI

*Updated on 20 April 2020*

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## Delays for projects already approved

### Fixed project expenses and cancellation expenses

#### **How to deal with fixed project expenses that need to be covered despite delays/ interruptions in project activities**

*Personnel expenses, rental expenses for project offices, etc.*

Additional expenses due to fixed expenditures can be reimbursed if they are proven to incur in connection with the project. Further, the principles of economic efficiency and thrift apply. Depending on the status of your project, we kindly ask you to cover unavoidable additional expenditures by using available funds – through e.g. savings in other expenditures – wherever possible. Please note that applications for an extension of your project should only be requested towards the end of a project (see below).

Please attempt to use the period of current restrictions as efficiently as possible for your project. In particular, please continue with those project activities that can still be prepared and/ or implemented despite the current circumstances.

#### **How to deal with cancellation expenses for project activities whose cancellation is mandatory/ strictly necessary**

*Non-cancellable bookings, costs for the cancellation of workshops and events, etc.*

Please cancel contractual commitments (e.g. for events or travel, etc.) as far as possible and proactively seek reimbursement for any expenses incurred from your contractual partners. Kindly check, whether insurance coverage is applicable.

Please inform your project managers at the IKI Secretariat of any foreseeable cancellation expenses. Non-cancellable bookings/ cancellation expenses must be proven in writing (it needs to be shown that efforts have been made to obtain a refund). Expenditures incurred due to cancellations (e.g. for rent, technical equipment, services, speakers, catering, etc.) are subject to the audit of your final report. Depending on the audit, they may be eligible for funding. Please document all unavoidable additional expenditure caused by COVID-19 as reference for your request for reimbursement.

Please carry out your planned workshops or events in the form of video conferences if possible. Further, in case bookings have to be cancelled, we kindly ask you to cancel contractual commitments (e.g. for venues etc.) as early as possible accordingly.

Please use savings during the course of the project wherever possible to finance unexpected expenditures. Please check, if savings in the budget are possible through adjustments (e.g. reducing travels, reconsidering certain activities). Please ensure that the considered adjustments do not compromise the aims of the project / the aims of the preparation phase. In case of doubt, please get in touch with your responsible contact person at the IKI Secretariat.



## **How to deal with cancellation expenses for business trips whose cancellation was mandatory/ strictly necessary**

*Business trips (e.g. for country missions, kickoff meetings, events, etc.)*

Please cancel contractual commitments (hotels, rail travel, flights, etc.) as far as is feasible and proactively seek reimbursement of any expenses incurred from your contractual partners. Kindly check, whether valid insurance cover is applicable. Please inform your project manager at the IKI Secretariat of any foreseeable expenses. Non-cancellable bookings/ cancellation expenses must be proven in writing (it needs to be shown that efforts have been made to obtain a refund). Depending on the audit of your final report, expenditures incurred due to cancellations (e.g. for hotels, flights, rail travel etc. etc.) may be eligible for funding. Please document all unavoidable additional expenditure caused by COVID-19 as a reference for your request for reimbursement.

If possible, please carry out your planned workshops or events in the form of video conferences.

## **Are measures to protect health (e.g. the procurement of masks as well as other protective equipment or protective measures in general related to COVID-19) eligible for funding?**

Yes, these kinds of expenditures are eligible. The measures have to be directly connected to the aims of the project and the project activities. For example, the procurement of protective equipment would enable to carry out a certain project activity or event, which would not be possible without the equipment. Like for all other kind of project expenditures: The expenditures for protective equipment must be necessary (also in terms of quantity) and financially reasonable.

## **How to handle project funds that cannot be spent as planned due to the general conditions caused by COVID-19**

Transferring unused funds from 2020 to the following year(s) may be requested informally by E-mail. Please, also see the question below on “How to request necessary amendments during the course of a project”.

Funds that have already been disbursed, but cannot be spent within six weeks must be returned to the BMU if you are a Non-UN-Organisation. In cases like this, a cash reference number must be requested from the IKI Secretariat. In case of doubt, please check your grant agreement or contract or get in touch with your responsible contact person at the IKI Secretariat.

## **In which budget positions (according to experience) does usually exist potential for financial savings to finance unavoidable additional expenditures?**

Due to the vast variety of IKI projects (consultancy projects vs. projects in the field), a possible potential for savings depends on the kind of project and has to be identified individually. The expertise at this point lies within the projects themselves. However, overall experience has shown that there is significant potential for savings, especially in the category “travel expenses”. Carrying



out meetings virtually with the help of video conferences can save significant amounts of expenditures, which could be used for additional expenditures at other positions. Example: Expenditures of avoided intercontinental travel may cover the e.g. salary of a team member or similar expenditures. Please note that if the grant for your project is not made available through a so-called “fixed financing mode” (see: Grant Agreement), BMU has to formally approve budget changes in case that the main budget lines A (personnel), B (administratives) and C (Items > EUR 410 / 800) will be exceeded by more than 20 percent.

## How to deal with amendments, delayed submission of project reports or project applications

### How to proceed in case of foreseeable delays of planned project activities

*e.g. Specific project activities are delayed, but can probably be carried out at a later time, uncertainties exist regarding the fulfilment of contractual obligations*

Please inform your responsible project managers at the IKI Secretariat about any foreseeable delays or bottle necks in the project implementation as soon as possible.

Amendments during the course of a project need to be reported, if:

- They affect the outputs or the outcome of the project or
- They cause additional expenditure in the project budget or
- They cause an extension of the project duration or
- They affect the agreed allocation of funds per year (note: funds that were not requested within a certain fiscal year shall be reallocated to the following fiscal year/s).

### How to request necessary amendments during the course of a project

To request necessary amendments during the course of a project, please use the template for amendment requests available on the [IKI website](#).

You can currently send your amendment request by E-mail. Kindly note, that a personal signature and an official stamp on the amendment form are required for this procedure. If this is not possible due to the current circumstances, please get in touch with your responsible project manager at the IKI Secretariat to find an individual solution.

Please, also read the further instructions carefully for further clarification of the processes.

### In which cases is the template for amendment requests mandatory?

The template for amendment requests should be used for the following cases (note: a combination of different cases is possible as well):



- An extension of project duration exceeding six months or an extension of project duration exceeding a financial year or an extension of project duration in combination with a shift of funds from one financial year into (an)other, or
- An amendment on the output / outcome level, or
- Inevitable additional funding to complete the aims of the project.

Please, contact your responsible project managers at the IKI Secretariat for any other cases or constellation of amendments.

### **When is an informal amendment request possible?**

In two exceptional cases, an amendment request may be submitted by E-mail, provided that one of the following two scenarios applies:

- An extension of project duration up to six month (within a financial year and without any other amendment), or
- A shift of funds from one financial year into (an)other financial year(s) (without any other amendment)

Please name the requested amendment in your E-mail and provide a short but comprehensible explanation for your request (two or three sentences are sufficient). Please, state the affected / delayed project activities and make use of this type of request, if applicable for your project.

Extensions of the project duration should only be requested, when the delays are finally foreseeable.

### **Are there any other exceptions due to the COVID-19 pandemic situation?**

It is also possible to request a shift of funds and an extension of the project duration via E-mail if delays are related to COVID-19 only. In this case it is absolutely necessary that the funding volume of the project will not increase. Therefore, we kindly ask you to explicitly refer in your E-mail to COVID-19 being the reason for the delay in your project. Any further explanation is not necessary! Please use this simplification, if applicable for your project. This procedure will ensure a quick processing of your request.

### **Do these statements also apply to preparation phases (former scoping missions)?**

Yes, these procedures described above apply to preparation phases as well.



## **How to proceed if deadlines for the submission of project reports cannot be met**

### *Interim reports or, final reports*

Please timely inform us if deadlines for interim reports or final reports cannot be met. We will reach out to you to find a solution.

## **How to proceed if project applications are submitted with delay**

We fully understand that delays in the preparation of project applications occur due to the current situation caused by COVID-19. This particularly applies to the coordination with the consortium and partner organisations or countries. Kindly inform us if deadlines cannot be met. We ask you to use video conferencing and other virtual formats wherever feasible to ensure project preparation and to avoid delays.

## **How to proceed with funding requests**

You can currently submit your funding requests by e-mail to [IKI6@bmu.bund.de](mailto:IKI6@bmu.bund.de).

Please note that such requests for funding must be made in parallel with the regular procedure, which requires the subsequent submission by post or fax. In addition, the request for funds must still be personally hand-signed with a legally binding signature and officially stamped. If this is not possible due to the current circumstances, please contact your contact person at the IKI Secretariat. We will ensure that we find an individual solution.

## **Delays for projects not yet approved**

### **How to deal with content or concept amendments in the project/ application**

Please let us know if you are considering amending the project activities.

### **How to deal with delays in agreements with partner organisations or political partners**

We understand that the current situation is causing delays, particularly in coordination with the consortium and partner organisations or countries. Kindly let us know if deadlines cannot be met. We kindly ask you to use video conferences and other virtual formats as far as possible to ensure project preparation and avoid delays to the extent possible.

Please inform us of any foreseeable delays or bottlenecks in the project.



## **How to deal with delays regarding the endorsement of new projects**

In general, projects can only be commissioned after they have been endorsed. Exceptions can only be made in duly substantiated individual cases.

## **Next steps in ongoing selection procedures**

### **How to deal with delays in the selection of new projects**

We will inform you about intermediate steps in the respective selection procedures on our [website](#). For this reason, we ask you to refrain from making individual enquiries to the IKI Secretariat.