ANNEX III – FINANCIAL AND CONTRACTUAL RULES

This Annex refers to Key Action 1 – vocational education and training projects for monobeneficiary and multibeneficiary grant agreements

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I. RULES APPLICABLE TO BUDGET CATEGORIES BASED ON UNIT CONTRIBUTIONS

I.1 Conditions for eligibility of unit contributions

Where the grant takes the form of a unit contribution, the number of units must comply with the following conditions:

- the units must be actually used or produced in the period set out in Article I.2.2 of the Special Conditions;
- the units must be necessary for implementing the Project or produced by it;
- the number of units must be identifiable and verifiable, in particular supported by records and documentation specified in this Annex.

I.2 Calculation and supporting documents for unit contributions

A. Travel

By default, the place of origin is understood as the place where the sending organisation is located and the place of the venue as the place where the receiving organisation is located. If a different place of origin or venue is reported, the beneficiary must provide the reason for this difference.

In case no travel took place or it was funded from other EU sources than the Erasmus+ Programme (e.g. a mobility participant is already at the place of the venue in relation to another activity than the one funded from the Agreement), the beneficiary must report that situation accordingly in the Erasmus+ reporting and management tool for each mobility concerned. In this case, no grant support for travel will be awarded.

(a) Calculation of the grant amount for travel costs: the grant amount is calculated by multiplying the number of participants accompanying persons per distance band, by the unit contribution applicable to the distance band concerned and type of travel (standard or green), as specified in Annex IV of the Agreement. The unit contribution per distance band represents the grant amount for a return travel between the place of departure and the place of arrival. In case of green travel modes (train, bus, shared car, boat), the green travel unit contributions apply, otherwise the standard travel unit contributions apply.

For the establishment of the distance band applicable, the beneficiary must indicate the distance of a one-way travel using the on-line distance calculator available on the Commission's website at:
http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/tools/distance_en.htm.

The beneficiary will calculate in the Erasmus+ reporting and management tool the grant amounts for travel based on the applicable unit contribution rates.

(b) Triggering event: the event that conditions the entitlement to the grant is that the participant has actually undertaken the activity.

(c) Supporting documents: Proof of attendance of the activity in the form of one or several documents specifying the participant's name and learning outcomes, as well as the starting and end date of the activity. In case accompanying persons have supported the participants during the activity, their names and duration of stay shall also be included. The supporting documents must be signed by the hosting organisation and the participant.

In addition, in case of use of sustainable means of transport (green travel): a declaration on honour signed by the person receiving the travel grant and the sending organisation will serve as supporting documentation.

B. <u>Individual support</u>

(a) Calculation of the grant amount: the grant amount is calculated by multiplying the number of days per participant and accompanying person by the unit contribution applicable per day for the receiving country concerned, as specified in Annex IV of the Agreement. Travel days may be added if relevant for a specific activity, and up to the limits specified in the Programme Guide.

- In case of an interruption during the stay, the period of the interruption will not be counted when calculating the individual support grant. In case of interruption due to "force majeure", the participant must be allowed to continue the activities after the interruption (if possible within the conditions established in this Agreement).

- In case of termination by the participant of the agreement with the beneficiary due to "force majeure", the participant must be entitled to receive the amount of the grant corresponding at least to the actual duration of the mobility period. Any remaining funds must be refunded to the beneficiary, except if agreed differently by both parties.

(b) Triggering event: the event that conditions the entitlement to the grant is that the participant has actually undertaken the activity for the specified period.

(c) Supporting documents: proof of attendance of the activity in the form of one or several documents specifying the participant's name and learning outcomes, as well as the starting and end date of the activity. In case accompanying persons have supported the participants during the activity, their names and duration of stay shall also be included. The supporting documents must be signed by the hosting organisation and the participant.

(d) Reporting: participants must provide their feedback in terms of factual information and their appreciation of the activity period, its preparation and follow-up. The participants must use the standard on-line questionnaire provided by the European Commission (the participant report) when submitting their feedback.

Participants who fail to submit their report may be required to partially or fully reimburse the financial contribution received from Erasmus+.

C. Organisational support

(a) Calculation of the grant amount: the grant amount is calculated by multiplying the total number of participations in mobility activities by the unit contribution applicable, as specified in Annex IV of the Agreement. Accompanying persons and persons taking part in preparatory visits are not considered to be participants of mobility activities and are therefore not considered for calculation of the organisational support grant.

(b) Triggering event: the event that conditions the entitlement to the grant is that the participant has actually undertaken the activity.

(c) Supporting documents: proof of attendance of the activity in the form of one or several documents specifying the participant's name and learning outcomes, as well as the starting and end date of the activity. In case accompanying persons have supported the participants during the activity, their names and duration of stay shall also be included. The supporting documents must be signed by the hosting organisation and the participant.

D. Inclusion support for organisations

(a) Calculation of the grant amount: the grant amount is calculated by multiplying the total number of participants with fewer opportunities in mobility activities by the unit contribution applicable, as specified in Annex IV of the Agreement.

(b) Triggering event: the event that conditions the entitlement to the grant is that the participant has actually undertaken the activity.

(c) Supporting documents: proof of attendance of the activity in the form of one or several documents specifying the participant's name and learning outcomes, as well as the starting and end date of the activity. In case accompanying persons have supported the participants during the activity, their names and duration of stay shall also be included. The supporting documents must be signed by the hosting organisation and the participant.

In addition: documentation specified by the relevant National Agency as relevant proof that the participant belongs to one of the categories of fewer opportunities listed in the Programme Guide.

E. Online Linguistic Support (OLS)

The following provisions shall only apply to mobility activities where the main language of instruction or work is one of the languages available in the Online Linguistic Support tool, and where the participant is not a native or fully proficient speaker of the language in question.

OLS language assessments

- The beneficiary must distribute OLS accesses to participants (after their selection for the mobility activity), and must make every effort to ensure that all the allocated accesses are used by the selected participants.

- The beneficiary must ensure that mobility participants take the OLS language assessment before their mobility period.

- The beneficiary will be notified of the assessment results by the service provider.

OLS language courses

- Participants must have taken an OLS assessment before they can be awarded an access to follow an OLS language course (if available). Accesses to OLS language courses must be awarded to all participants willing to follow the course and according to the participant's linguistic needs.

- OLS course accesses must be distributed among the participants according to their needs. All participants having taken the language assessment have the opportunity to follow a language course, if the required language and level is available in the OLS tool.

- Participants with level B2 or higher in their main language of instruction or work (according to the result of the language assessment) have the opportunity to follow an OLS course either in that language or in the local language of the country, provided it is available in the OLS. It is up to the beneficiary to indicate this choice in the OLS tool.

- OLS language course accesses must be used in the period between the OLS assessment and the end of the mobility activity.

- The beneficiary must monitor the use of accesses on the basis of the information provided by the service provider.

- The beneficiary must make every effort to ensure that all the allocated accesses are actively used by the selected participants.

All accesses

- By signing the individual mobility grant agreement, mobility participants commit to complete the OLS language assessment before the mobility period and to follow the OLS language course, if awarded.

- The beneficiary must act in line with the guidelines for use of OLS provided by the service provider.

- The beneficiary must report on the number of used language assessment and language course accesses in their reports.

- In case of unused or non-allocated accesses at the time of final report submission, the NA may decide to take this into account for the allocation of accesses awarded to the beneficiary in the subsequent call years.

F. Linguistic support

(a) Calculation of the grant amount: the grant amount is calculated by multiplying the total number of participants receiving linguistic support by the unit contribution as specified in Annex IV of the Agreement. Participants that have received Online Linguistic Support will be excluded from this calculation. Learners in long-term mobility will receive further linguistic support equivalent to the same unit contribution as specified in Annex IV.

(b) Triggering event: the event that conditions the entitlement to the grant is that the participant has actually undertaken language preparation in the language of instruction or work.

(c) Supporting documents:

- proof of attendance of language courses in the form of a declaration signed by the course provider, specifying the name of the participant, the language taught, the format and duration of the provided courses, or
- invoice for the purchase of learning materials, specifying the language concerned, the name and address of the body issuing the invoice, the amount and currency, and the date of the invoice, or
- in case the linguistic training is provided directly by the sending or receiving organisation: a declaration signed and dated by the organisation providing the training, specifying the name of the participant, the language taught, the format and duration of the linguistic training provided.

G. Course fees

(a) Calculation of the grant amount: the grant amount is calculated by multiplying the total number of days per course by the unit contribution applicable as specified in Annex IV of the Agreement. Only the days during which the course actually takes place are considered for the calculation of the grant support for course fees.

(b) Triggering event: the event that conditions the entitlement to the grant is that the participant has participated in a structured course requiring the payment of a course fee.

(c) Supporting documents: proof of enrolment in the course and of payment of a course fee in the form of an invoice or other declaration issued and signed by the course provider specifying the name of the participant, the name of the course taken, as well as the start and end date of the participant's participation in the course.

H. Preparatory visits

(a) Calculation of the grant amount: the grant amount is calculated by multiplying the total number of persons participating in preparatory visits by the unit contribution applicable, as specified in Annex IV of the Agreement and with the limitations specified in the Programme Guide.

(b) Triggering event: the event that conditions the entitlement to the grant is that the person has actually undertaken the preparatory visit.

(c) Supporting documents: proof of attendance of the preparatory visit in the form of an agenda and a declaration signed by the participant and by the hosting organisation specifying the name of the person, the purpose of the activity.

II. RULES APPLICABLE FOR THE BUDGET CATEGORIES BASED ON REIMBURSEMENT OF ACTUAL INCURRED COSTS

II.1. Conditions for the reimbursement of actual costs

Where the grant takes the form of a reimbursement of actual costs, the following conditions must apply:

(a) they are incurred by the beneficiary;

(b) they are incurred in the period set out in Article I.2.2;

(c) they are indicated in the estimated budget set out in Annex II or eligible following budget transfers in accordance with Article I.3.3;

(d) they are incurred in connection with the Project as described in Annex II and are necessary for its implementation;

(e) they are identifiable and verifiable, in particular are recorded in the beneficiary's accounting records and determined according to the applicable accounting standards of the country where the beneficiary is established and with the beneficiary's usual cost accounting practices;

(f) they comply with the requirements of applicable tax and social legislation;

(g) they are reasonable, justified, and comply with the principle of sound financial management, in particular regarding economy and efficiency;

(h) they are not covered by a unit contribution as specified in Section I of this Annex.

II.2. Calculation of actual cost

A. <u>Inclusion support for participants</u>

(a) Calculation of the grant amount: the grant is a reimbursement of 100% of the eligible costs actually incurred.

(b) Eligible costs: costs directly related to participants with fewer opportunities and their accompanying persons that are additional to costs supported by a unit contribution as specified in Section I of this Annex. Costs related to travel and subsistence may be requested under this budget category if a grant for the same participants has not been requested through budget categories Travel and Individual support.

Applicable for accredited organisations: Funds for inclusion support for participants, once the participants have been selected, may be made available in two ways. The beneficiary may either submit a funding request to the NA or do a budget transfer according to article I.17.

(c) Supporting documents: proof of payment of the related costs on the basis of invoices specifying the name and address of the body issuing the invoice, the amount and currency, and the date of the invoice.

(d) Reporting: for each cost item in this budget category, the beneficiary must report the type of costs and the real amount of costs incurred.

B. <u>Exceptional costs</u>

(a) Calculation of the grant amount: the grant is a reimbursement of 80% of the following eligible costs actually incurred.

(b) Eligible costs:

- Costs relating to a pre-financing guarantee lodged by the beneficiary where such guarantee is required by the NA, as specified in Article I.4.2 of the Agreement.

- Costs of travel in the most economical but also effective way for eligible participants for which the standard funding rule does not cover at least 70% of the eligible costs. The exceptional costs for expensive travel replace the separate travel grant.

(c) Supporting documents:

- Proof of the cost of the financial guarantee issued by the body providing the guarantee to the beneficiary, specifying the name and address of the body issuing the financial guarantee, the amount and currency of the cost of the guarantee, and providing the date and signature of the legal representative of the body issuing the guarantee.

- In the case of travel costs: proof of payment of the related costs on the basis of invoices specifying the name and address of the body issuing the invoice, the amount and currency, the date of the invoice and the travel route.

III. CONDITIONS OF ELIGIBILITY OF PROJECT ACTIVITIES

(a) The beneficiary must ensure that the activities of the project for which grant support was awarded are eligible in accordance with the rules set out in the Erasmus+ Programme Guide.

(b) Travel time will not be considered when determining compliance with minimum eligible duration of mobility activities specified in the Programme Guide.

(c) Activities that are not compliant with the rules set out in the Erasmus+ Programme Guide (as complemented by the rules set out in this Annex) must be declared ineligible by the NA and the

grant amounts corresponding to those activities must be recovered in full. The recovery must cover all budget categories for which a grant was awarded in relation to the activity that is declared ineligible.

IV. FINAL REPORT

For non-accredited beneficiaries:

The final report will be assessed in conjunction with the participant reports, and it will be scored on a total of maximum 100 points. A common set of evaluation criteria will be used to measure the extent to which the project was implemented in line with the approved grant application and the Erasmus quality standards.

The beneficiary must submit the final report after the project end date. Earlier submissions of the final report will be considered as a request for premature termination of the Grant Agreement and may result in a lower evaluation score.

For accredited beneficiaries:

The final report will be assessed in conjunction with the participant reports, and it will be scored on a total of maximum 100 points. A common set of evaluation criteria will be used to measure the extent to which the project was implemented in line with the targets defined in Annex II of this Agreement, the approved Erasmus Plan, and the Erasmus quality standards.

The beneficiary must submit the final report after the project end date. Earlier submissions of the final report will be considered as a request for premature termination of the Grant Agreement and may result in a lower evaluation score.

V. GRANT REDUCTION FOR POOR, PARTIAL OR LATE IMPLEMENTATION

Poor, partial or late implementation of the Project may be established by the NA on the basis of the final report submitted by the beneficiary (including reports from individual participants taking part in the mobility activities).

In addition, the NA may also consider information received from any other relevant source, proving that the Project is not implemented in accordance with the contractual provisions. Other sources of information may include monitoring visits, accreditation interim reports, desk checks or on-the-spot checks undertaken by the NA.

If the final report scores below 60 points in total, the NA may reduce the final grant amount for organisational support on the basis of poor, partial or late implementation of the action even if all activities reported were eligible and actually took place. In that case, a grant reduction may correspond to:

- 10% if the final report scores at least 50 points and below 60 points;

- 25% if the final report scores at least 40 points and below 50 points;
- 50% if the final report scores at least 25 points and below 40 points;
- 75% if the final report scores below 25 points.

In addition, the NA may reduce the final grant amount for organisational support up to 100% in case the final report evaluation, a monitoring visit or on-the-spot check shows that Erasmus quality standards on good management of mobility activities have not been respected.

VI. GRANT MODIFICATIONS

For accredited beneficiaries:

The total maximum grant amount indicated in Article I.3.1 may be increased with an amendment to the Grant Agreement in the following cases:

(a) If additional funds become available to the NA for redistribution to accredited beneficiaries and under the condition that information provided by the beneficiary through the Erasmus+ reporting and management tool shows that they are able to implement additional mobility activities.

(b) Up until the expiry of 12 months from the start of the project, the beneficiary may submit justified requests for additional funds for exceptional costs and inclusion support for participants if these additional needs cannot be covered with a transfer of funds within the existing grant amount without negatively affecting the delivery of targets specified in Annex II.

The National Agency will consider such requests if funds remain available for this purpose. In case a request for additional funds is approved, the National Agency shall assess if the amendment for additional funds must be made immediately, or at a later stage.

The National Agency shall make its assessment based on the pre-financing amount already available to the beneficiary, the amount of additional funds required, and the nature of the approved expenses. The National Agency shall issue the required amendment as a matter of urgency if it is necessary for the beneficiary to comply with rules on provision of inclusion support for participants, as specified in the Special Conditions.

VII. CHECKS OF GRANT BENEFICIARY AND PROVISION OF SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

In accordance with Article II.27 of the Annex I of the Agreement, the beneficiary may be subject to checks and audits in relation to the Agreement. Checks and audits aim at verifying whether the beneficiary managed the grant in respect of the rules set out in the Agreement, in order to establish the final grant amount to which the beneficiary is entitled.

A final report check must be performed for all projects. In addition, the project may be subject to further desk check or on-the-spot check if the project Agreement is included in the NA sample required by the European Commission or if the NA has selected it for a targeted check based on its risk assessment.

For final report check and desk check, the beneficiary must supply to the NA physical or electronic copies of supporting documents specified in the section I.2, unless the NA makes a request for originals to be delivered. The NA must return original supporting documents to the beneficiary upon its analysis thereof. If the beneficiary is legally not authorised to send original documents for final report or desk checks, a copy of the supporting documents may be sent instead.

For any type of check the beneficiary may be requested by the NA to provide additional supporting documents or evidence that are typically required for another type of check, as specified in article II.27 of the General Conditions.

The different checks must include the following:

(a) Final report check

The final report check is undertaken at final report stage at the NA premises in order to establish the final grant amount to which the beneficiary is entitled.

The beneficiary's final report to the National Agency must include the following information (if applicable within the action format and project concerned):

- Unit contributions consumed for budget categories:
  - Organisational support
  - Travel support
  - Individual support
  - Inclusion support for organisations
  - Preparatory visits
  - Course fees
  - Linguistic support
- Actual costs incurred for budget categories:
  - Inclusion support for participants
  - Exceptional costs

(b) Desk check

Desk check is an in-depth check of supporting documents at the NA premises that may be conducted at or after the final report stage. Upon request, the beneficiary must submit to the National Agency the supporting documents for all budget categories.

(c) On-the-spot checks

On-the-spot checks are performed by the NA at the premises of the beneficiary or at any other premises relevant for the execution of the Project. During on-the-spot checks, the beneficiary must make original supporting documentation for all budget categories available for review by the National Agency, and must enable the National Agency access to the recording of project expenses in the beneficiary's accounts.

On-the-spot checks can take the following forms:

(a) **On-the-spot check during project implementation**: this check is undertaken during the implementation of the Project in order for the National Agency to directly verify the reality and eligibility of all project activities and participants;

(b) **On-the-spot check after completion of the project**: this check is undertaken after the end of the Project and usually after the final report check.

For accredited beneficiaries:

(c) **Systems check:** The systems check is performed to establish the beneficiary's system for making its regular grant claims in the context of the programme as well as it compliance with the commitments undertaken as a result of their accreditation. The systems check is performed to establish the beneficiary's compliance with the implementation standards committed to in the framework of the Erasmus+ Programme. The beneficiary must enable the National Agency to verify the reality and eligibility of all project activities and participants by all documentary means, including video and photographic records of the activities undertaken, in order to rule out double funding or other irregularities.