Interreg Finance Management Camp

24 – 27 September 2019
Dublin, Ireland

Outline

In response to the high level of interest people have shown in our previous Finance Management Camps (FMCs), we have decided to hold a 7th camp on 24-27 September 2019.

As with our previous camps, the training will address all phases of the project management lifecycle, providing you - the participants - with an understanding of the financial requirements of each phase of the cycle, in the context of the 2014-2020 Interreg programmes. All discussions during the camp will be based on a case study.

In addition, you will work on developing your Plain Language and Presentation skills. In these sessions, we will focus on practical tips to help you improve/strengthen your work with project applicants and beneficiaries.

Objectives

During the event participants will:

- Discuss all stages of an Interreg project financial management cycle, and identify the most challenging aspects that require programme officers' assistance and guidance.
- Identify ways of addressing the most challenging aspects in project financial management through exercises based on a case study.
- Recognise the most common challenges project partners may face during project implementation.
- Practice their Plain Language skills and learn about different presentation methods to improve communication with project applicants and beneficiaries.

Target group

This event is targeted towards work at *project level*, not programme level. It is targeted at new staff, or staff new to finance, from Joint Secretariats and Managing Authorities who are interested in learning more about project financial management. The focus of the event is to allow Programme (Finance) Managers to better understand the challenges of the project financial implementation, thus be able to provide higher quality support to the projects. The event will not be dedicated to programme-level financial procedures and how to set them.

Timetable

Day 1: Tuesday 24 September 2019

08.30 – 09.00   **Registration and welcome coffee**

09.00 – 10.30   **Welcome and introduction to Project Management**
- Welcome and introduction to the Finance Management Camp
- Objectives for the event, working agreement and method
- Introduction of participants
- Project lifecycle
- Introduction of the case study

10.30 – 11.00   **Coffee break**

11.00 – 11.30   **Project Idea Generation**
- Partnership set-up

At the end of this session participants will be able to:
- *Describe obligations and responsibilities of the partners in the project (LPs and PPs).*
- *Identify (financial) challenges of involving different types of partners in the project.*

11.30 – 12.30   **Project Development – Eligibility of Expenditure**
- Hierarchy of rules
- Simplified cost options
- Eligibility rules per budget line

At the end of the session participants will be able to:
- *Explain the main rules and requirements that define the eligibility of costs included in a project budget.*
- *List simplified cost options and explain the difference between them.*

12.30 – 13.30   **Lunch**

13.30 – 15.30   **Project Development – Eligibility of Expenditure (continued)**

15.30 – 16.00   **Coffee break**

16.00 – 17.00   **Presentation Skills – Part 1**
- You in your role of presenter
- Your participants

At the end of the session participants will have a set of hands-on methods and tips to:
- *Help them improve their style as a presenter*
- *Deal with nerves and be aware of the dynamics that can exist in the room*

19:00   **Networking dinner**

Day 2: Wednesday 25 September 2019

08.45 – 09.00   **Recalling the main learning points from day 1**

09.00 – 10.30   **Presentation Skills - Part 2**
- Designing presentations
- Presenting complex messages to applicants and beneficiaries
- Techniques/methods for delivering information
- Using visuals and media

At the end of the session participants will have a set of hands-on methods and tips for:
- *Designing engaging presentations.*
- *Conveying complex financial information effectively and efficiently with a focus on their target groups.*

10.30 – 11.00   **Coffee break**

11.00 – 12.30   **Project Development – Budget Planning**
- How to plan a project budget
- Sources of financing (co-financing, partner contribution)
- Budget planning tips

At the end of the session participants will be able to:
- *Plan a project budget following the planning steps.*
- *Point out important matters to take into account when developing a project budget.*

12.30 – 13.30   **Lunch**

13.30 – 15.00   **Contracting and Start-up**
- Project selection process overview
- Assessment of project budget
- Project selection decisions and budget clarifications

At the end of the session participants will be able to:
- *List the main stages of the project selection process.*
- *Summarize the main tips for assessing the financial feasibility of the project.*
- *Give examples of how a project can address conditions connected to project approval set by the programme.*

15.00 – 15.30   **Coffee break**

15.30 – 17.00   **Project Implementation - Financial Management**
- Financial management of the project
  - how to do it and who does what
  - who reports to whom
  - common mistakes made
- Project implementation and reality – revising the workplan
  - delays in spending
  - project budget modifications

At the end of the session participants will be able to:
- *Identify the main stages of financial flows and the roles of different actors.*
- *Recognise the signs of poor financial project performance which could influence programme spending, and know methods for preventing them.*
- *List different types of pitfalls in connection with project modifications.*

Day 3: Thursday 26 September 2019

08.45 – 09.00   **Recalling the main learning points from day 2**

09.00 – 10.00   **Project Implementation - Financial Management (continued)**

10.00 – 10.30   **Coffee break**

10.30 – 12:00   **Project Implementation – Finance Reporting and Eligibility of Expenditure**
- Expenditure rules
- Verification of expenditure, including simplified cost options
- Examples of expenditure (Matrix of Costs)

At the end of the session participants will be able to:
- *Give examples of expenditure eligible under different budget*

lines, and be able to differentiate between expenditure of a similar nature.
- *List supporting documents for different expenditure items needed for the audit trail.*

12.00 – 13.00   **Lunch**

13.00 – 14.30   **Project Implementation – Management Verifications**
- Focus of controls, what is controlled, risky areas
- Management verification systems
- On-the-spot checks

At the end of the session participants will be able to:
- *Explain the need for good cooperation between the controller and the project.*
- *Outline the difference between administrative check and on-the-spot check.*
- *Give advice to projects on what the controllers look at.*

14.30 – 15.00   **Coffee break**

15.00 – 16.30   **Plain Language**
- The importance of using Plain Language
- Recap of guidelines for writing in Plain Language
- Practical tasks

At the end of the session participants will be able to:
- *Describe the differences between non reader-friendly writing and Plain Language writing.*
- *Recognise the elements of Plain Language that they can use to write reader-friendly text.*
- *Use these elements to write a text in Plain Language.*

Day 4: Friday 27 September 2019

08.45 – 09.00   **Recalling the main learning points from day 3**

09.00 – 09.30   **Project Implementation – Audit and Financial Corrections**
- Errors and financial corrections
- Audit Authority, Group of Auditors, Audits by EC.
- Recoveries and withdrawals

At the end of the session participants will be able to:
- *Explain the purpose and impact of audit.*
- *State the main difference between an error and a financial irregularity.*
- *Describe the impact of recoveries and withdrawals on the*

project partnership.

09.30 – 10.30   **Project Closure**
- Project closure – steps to be taken
- Time and resources needed
- Obligations after project closure

At the end of the session participants will be able to:
- *List obligations related to project closure.*
- *Name a few good examples based on projects already closed.*

10.30 – 11.00   **Coffee break**

11.00 – 12.00   **Peer Learning**
- Exchange on useful practices in project management
- Exchange on practices used for different types of challenges in Interreg Programmes

The purpose of the session is for participants to exchange on project and programme management practices not covered in other sessions.

12.00 – 12.30   **Closure of the Event**

12.30 – 13.30   **Farewell lunch**