HERA

Humanities in the European Research Area

HERA Joint Research Programme – Cultural Encounters

Financial Reporting – Frequently Asked Questions

Last updated on 20th December 2013

How do I fill out the expenditure statement?
The expenditure statement must first be filled out **electronically**, and then sent by email to the Handling Agency HERA@research.ie. The Handling Agency will analyse the reported costs with reference to the approved budget and the reporting guidelines. The Handling Agency will confirm if any amendments are required. Once approval has been given by the Handling Agency, the expenditure statement should be printed out, **signed** by **the authorised financial officer** and **stamped** by the organisation.

All costs must be submitted in EUROs. For Non-Euro zone partners, costs must be converted to Euros using the following principles.

Costs shall always be reported in EUR in the financial statements submitted to HERA. Beneficiaries with accounts in currencies other than EUR shall report in EUR on the basis of the exchange rate that would have applied either:

- on the date that the actual costs were incurred or
- on the basis of the rate applicable on the first day of the month following the end of the reporting period. *For the first report these will be the rates as at 2nd January 2014.*

For both options, the daily exchange rates are fixed by the European Central Bank (ECB) and may be obtained at the following internet address: http://www.ecb.int/stats/eurofxref/ or, for the rate of the first day of the month following the reporting period, in the relevant OJ of the European Union. **The choice must be the same for all reporting periods in a given HERA grant agreement.** For the days where no daily exchange rates have been published, (for instance Saturday, Sunday and New Year's Day) you must take the rate on the next day of publication. The use of other sources for exchange rates (other than the ECB) is admissible only when ECB does not include the daily exchange rates for a particular currency. In case the ECB does not publish exchange rates for a particular currency, beneficiaries could use the exchange rates published by the Directorate General Budget of the European Commission, (Euroinfo):

http://ec.europa.eu/budget/inforeuro/index.cfm?Language=en or alternatively the internal practice of the beneficiary provided it is not used only for EU grants reporting purposes.

General Data
Please fill out general data concerning your organisation directly in the excel spreadsheet.

- Title of the Collaborative Research project
- Name of the Principal Investigator (PI)
- Research Organisation of the Principal Investigator
- Country of the P.I
- Period of reporting "start date of the reporting period – end date of reporting period"
    - example: 30th September 2013 – 31st December 2013

Employment Costs
You are kindly asked to provide the number of hours spent on the project and the hourly rate (including all costs) for each position linked to the project. The "TOTAL for position" will be automatically calculated.

Equipment
Equipment/ Materials dedicated to the project are considered as "Major Items" if their cost is above 1,000 €. Each "Major Item" must be listed for its price AND the percentage of allocation to the project.
- *A computer bought by the organisation and being equally used for 4 different projects would represent a 25% of use for this focused project.*

Equipments/ Materials with a price below 1,000€ can be listed under the expenditure line "Other Items".

Travel Costs
Please indicate the following identification criteria for each meeting:
- Date / Location / No. of participants from our organisation.
- Travel Costs / subsistence costs must be listed according to the reimbursement rules applied in your organisation (subsistence costs correspond to accommodation, food and drinks expenses)

- "Other type of expenses" refers to any other cost directly linked to the meeting.
    - *Example: the hire of a conference room dedicated to the meeting.*

Publication / Dissemination Costs.
Please list these expenditures.

Other Costs
All the remaining costs DIRECTLY linked to the project can be listed here with a brief description.

Overheads (Financial, Scientific, Administrative Support Fee)
These costs cover indirect costs from your organisation such as support services (scientific, administrative, financial, IT) linked to the HERA programme. These indirect costs may also be called "overheads" in your organisation.

How do I submit a financial report?
The financial reports should be submitted as part of the Annual/Final reports, which include:

- **A progress report and a publishable summary** explaining the research outcomes, progress of work and management issues
- **A financial report from each Principal Investigator** explaining the use of resources and major costs of the project
- **An expenditure statement from each Principal Investigator** and **a summary financial report prepared by the Project Leader** on the basis of expenditure statements provided by all Principal Investigators.

What is the reporting deadline?

28th of February of each year (for Annual reports) and within 30 days after the end of the grant (for the Final report).

What are the reporting periods?
In each expenditure statement, please only report on the costs incurred during the relevant reporting period:

- Start of the project – 31st December 2013 (1st Annual report)
- 1st January 2014 – 31st December 2014 (2nd Annual report)
- 1st January 2015 – 31st December 2015 (3rd Annual report)
- 1st January 2016 – end of project (Final report)

What templates do I use? What level of detail is there in the financial reports?
Templates for reporting are provided and must be used. All financial reports must be provided in excel as well as the templates for expenditure statements and a summary financial report in Excel are provided via the HERA JRP Handling Agency (hera@research.ie).

Can I transfer the funds from one budget line to another within on Individual Project budget?
Yes, provided it is well justified. If the transferred sum is less than 10% of the total budget line amount for the grant duration, this can be done without consulting the HERA JRP Handling Agency. However all changes must be explained in the justification of the use of resources. If the transferred sum exceeds 10%, please contact the Handling Agency at hera@research.ie.

Can I transfer the funds from Individual Project budget to another?
No. Budgets have been set for each HERA partners contribution. If an instance arises where is it absolutely essential to transfer costs you must detail the case in writing to the handling agency (HERA@research.ie).

Where are the *receipts* of Individual Projects to be kept and for how long?
The receipts of the projects, the originals or duly authenticated copies of all documents relating to the project and the accounting data should be kept by the hosting organisation of each Principal Investigator for at least five years after the end of the project. These documents shall be made available to the HERA JRP Handling Agency, the HERA JRP partner funding agencies or the EC upon request.

Will there be any audits of our project?
HERA JRP-CE Handling Agency, the HERA JRP-CE funding agencies and the European Commission reserve the right to have reasonable access to audit the records and financial procedures associated with research grants or to appoint any other body or individual for the purpose of such audits.

Can I charge costs to the HERA JRP grant before the start date or after the official end date?
No, expenditure may only be charged to the grant if it was incurred during the lifespan of the grant, i.e. in the time period between the start date of the grant and before the end date of the grant, as noted on the *Acceptance of Grant Certificate.*

Do we have to submit the records of time allocated to the project by the project members?
Only hours worked on the project can be charged to the grant. For this reason, you need to keep records (e.g. timesheets) of the time spent on the project for all persons employed. There is no need to submit the timesheets to the HERA JRP Handling Agency. However, these records should be available upon request in the event of an audit.

The timesheets should include the following information:
- Full name of beneficiary.
- Full name of the employee directly contributing to the project.
- Title of the project.
- Project account number should be indicated.
- Time period concerned (for instance on daily, weekly, monthly basis) according to the beneficiary's normal practice.
- Amount of hours claimed on the project. All hours claimed must be able to be verified in a reliable manner.
- Full name and a signature of a supervisor (person in charge of the project).

In the absence of timesheets, the grantee must substantiate the cost claimed by providing alternative evidence with an equivalent level of assurance.

If any of your questions have not been answered here, please contact the HERA JRP Handling Agency at hera@research.ie. This document will be regularly updated in the course of the Programme.