



**EU4BCC: CONNECTING
COMPANIES**

BSO's GUIDELINES



Project Title	EU4Business: Connecting Companies
Beneficiary Country	6 EaP countries: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova, and Ukraine
Identification Number	ENI/2019/411-865
Contract commencement-closing date	13.12.2019 – 12.12.2022
Report Type	BSOs GUIDELINES Brussels, June 2021
Period covered by the report	2019 - 2022
Submitted by	EUROCHAMBRES AISBL
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Recipients list	Beneficiaries of the Programme





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List of Acronyms

BSE	Board of Sectorial Experts
BSO	Business Support Organization
DoA	Description of Actions
DSA	Daily Subsistence Allowance
EaP	Easter Partnership Countries
EU4BCC	EU4BUSINESS : Connecting Companies
EC	European Commission
EU	European Union
MSME	Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises
MIS	Monitoring Information System
MT	Management Team
PAB	Project Advisory Board
PC	Project Coordinator
PRAG	Practical Guide to Contract Procedures for the EU External Actions
ToR	Terms of Reference
VAT	Value Added Tax





The aim of these guidelines is to provide the BSOs partnerships with recommendations that will secure the timely and successful implementation of the grant agreement signed between EUROCHAMBRES and the BSOs Partnership.

The guidelines are composed of the following sections:

1. Bodies involved in the management of the action
2. Implementation of the action
3. Reporting requirements
4. Documentation and financial justification
5. Subcontracting and Procurement procedure
6. Modalities of payments - Possibility to request additional payments.

A dedicated training course for the BSOs partnerships on the implementation of the guidelines will be organised.

1. BODIES INVOLVED IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE EU4BCC PROJECT

EUROCHAMBRES is in charge of the overall implementation of the EU4BCC project - an object of the grant agreement ENI/2019/411-865 signed with the EC.

Board of Sectorial Experts (BSE) is composed of senior experts from European sectorial federations. During the implementation of the action, the members of the BSE will contact the leader of the BSOs partnerships to inquire on the needs, expectations or recommendations of the SMEs or BSOs taking part in the action. The experts will use this first-hand input when drafting the sectorial strategy and guidelines.

Sectorial Consortium (SC) is a set-up for each identified sector. It is composed of the EU Chambers of Commerce and the EaP Chambers of Commerce. The SC will monitor the actions performed by the Business Support organisations.

The SC will be responsible:

- **Training of the Beneficiaries:** The training will provide the beneficiaries with information on basic project management, grant implementation, record keeping, and procurement procedures. It will also include aspects pertaining to applicable EU visibility rules, the improvement of networking skills and the use of social media, at least.
- **Assistance to the beneficiaries of the financial support (BSOs implementing the activities):** The relevant Sectorial Consortium will provide ongoing assistance to the BSO Partnership on all aspects of the project management, especially on project implementation (including procurement and visibility rules). This assistance will mainly be offered via the project's Management and Information System (MIS), monitoring visits and, if required, spot checks.
The Consortium will perform a full check of interim/final reports (narrative and financial, including supporting documents) submitted by the beneficiaries and will approve or reject costs, explaining in the MIS the reasons of their decision, providing EUROCHAMBRES with an indication of the issues and aspects to be further checked.
- **Monitoring of the activities implemented by the Beneficiaries:** The Consortium will regularly collect data from the projects towards the realisation of these indicators and will present achievements through the MIS to the EUROCHAMBRES' team.
- **Prepare the request for amendment of the grant contract in case of budget modifications.**

Business Support organisations (BSOs): Selected BSOs will be in charge of implementing the actions: twinning, B2B matchings, study visits.

The leader of the BSOs partnership will have a key role to play in the implementation of the action as she/he will:





1. Act as the intermediary for all communications between the beneficiaries and EUROCHAMBRES and the Sectoral Consortium
2. Monitor and control the project's work plan and that the action is implemented properly
3. Arrange BSOs Partnership meetings and subsequent reporting
4. Implement quality procedures for the project
5. Gather, monitor and consolidate the narrative and financial reports of periodical reports
6. Prepare, manage and coordinate project's financial checks
7. Manage the project resources, including budget-related issues
8. Dispatch within the indicated time payments to the beneficiaries
9. Facilitate communication within the BSOs Partnership on administrative matters
10. Handle outstanding administrative issues like contract amendments
11. Consolidate project's deliverables and reports and maintain Quality Assurance
12. Upload all the related project documentation in the EU4BCC Management Information System (MIS).

EUROCHAMBRES and Consortia undertake to provide support for the good implementation of the project by monitoring the BSOs activities and by providing adequate tools to facilitate the implementation of their activities, i.e. guidelines, templates, training sessions on the use of the MIS, training sessions on drafting subgrants' Terms of References, amongst others.

2.IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ACTION

2.1 Implementation period of the action

July 2021 – May 2022

2.2 How to secure the timely and successful implementation of the action

The timely and successful implementation of the action will rely on the following principles:

- › All rules pertaining to project implementation are respected
- › Projects progress as planned and deliver the foreseen objectives
- › Problems are detected in an early manner
- › Any delay in the implementation of the action should be notified to the SC indicating the reasons and the proposed solution to overcome the issue
- › Beneficiaries receive the required support in time.

2.3 Commitment of the BSOs Partnership

- (i) timely complete – to the highest standards – the activities foreseen in XBSO partnership proposal, including all the KPIs indicated in Part A of the proposal (part of the contract signed with EUROCHAMBRES)
- (ii) prepare by set deadlines the interim and final narrative and financial reports as well as all supporting documents duly signed by the BSO partnership coordinator and send them within the agreed deadlines to the SC's coordinator
- (iii) provide EUROCHAMBRES in due time, and in any case, no later than 15 days after receiving EUROCHAMBRES' request, all the documents and information to be submitted in the MIS.

2.4 Delays in the implementation of the action

In case of any delay in the execution of the action, the leader of the BSOs partnership shall immediately inform X Sectorial Consortium's coordinator, providing her/him with detailed information about the causes hereof and the corrective measures proposed, without impact on the agreed budget.

- (i) In case of unjustified delay caused by one of the beneficiaries, the leader of the BSOs partnership shall send a formal demand of justification to the member under question, with a copy to XSC's coordinator;





- (ii) If the concerned beneficiary doesn't reply for a period of 7 working days, the leader of the BSOs partnership should inform XSC, which will submit the case to EUROCHAMBRES;
- (iii) Shall EUROCHAMBRES decide that the concerned beneficiary will be excluded from XBSO Partnership, EUROCHAMBRES may request the reimbursement of any advance payment unduly received without providing the failing member with a notice period or compensation;
- (iv) If the XBSO Partnership is composed of only 2 members, EUROCHAMBRES will consider the replacement of the beneficiary or end the action after consultation with DG Near;
 - (iv.i) If the XBSO partnership is composed of more than 2 members, EUROCHAMBRES will consult DG Near to check whether the tasks will be redistributed among the remaining BSOs partnership members or if a new BSO will be selected.

2.5 Visibility rules

The BSOs partnership shall take all necessary steps to publicise that the European Union has financed or co-financed the action. Such measures shall comply with the Communication and Visibility Requirements for European Union External Actions laid down and published by the European Commission, that can be found at:

https://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/funding/communication-and-visibility-manual-eu-externalactions_en

In terms of communication, the twinnings, study visits and B2B matches are events that will be promoted and recorded (pictures, short video declarations, etc.), to offer input for both the EU4BCC website's news section and for the social media channels. Social media channels need to be created by all beneficiaries for each action.

Posting and re-posting are strongly encouraged between the network of social media channels (formed by beneficiaries, consortia members and EUROCHAMBRES). For visibility costs to be eligible, the BSOs should demonstrate that all visibility conditions and rules are fulfilled. Please check Annex 5 to the contract for details on the visual identity and visibility rules.'

2.6 Management Information System

Management Information System (MIS) is a platform designed for the EU4BCC project. It will be used a) for communication purposes between the BSOs, Sectorial Consortium and EUROCHAMBRES, and b) for reporting purposes. **The reporting in the MIS is compulsory.** The BSOs will receive training on the use of the MIS.

2.7 Grant monitoring

In order to ensure efficient implementation of the grant contracts and sustain a sound monitoring framework, two monitoring tools are in place: 1) reports, 2) visits.

These tools provide opportunities for monitoring the grant contracts and intervening on time to correct or improve the conditions of the projects.

Reports and visits are the main tools for collecting data and controlling compliance with contractual obligations.

Monitoring visits will be announced through the MIS to make sure that the project staff of the BSOs partnership (project coordinator, accountant, the person responsible for reporting, etc.) is present during the monitoring visit.

Visits will be done either by the SC or by EUROCHAMBRES.

3. REPORTING REQUIREMENTS – REQUESTS OF PAYMENT

The reports are tools to secure the timely and successful implementation of the action, but also a tool to request additional payments during the action, if necessary.

According to the schedule mentioned below for each type of action, the leader of the BSOs partnership has to provide the SC with narrative and financial reports.



3.1 Narrative Report

The Narrative Report will provide detailed information on the implementation of the actions that have taken place during the reporting period, as well as **the degree of achievement of its results** (KPIs, impacts, outcomes, outputs) as measured by corresponding indicators, in line with the reporting template (see **Annex G VI(1)** and **Annex G VI(2)** for interim and final reporting templates).

Furthermore, the report intends to give an insight into the **activities** that took place, into **potential difficulties** encountered and **mitigation measures**, where applicable, and any deviation from the initial work plan (clearly indicating the reasons and the impact of such deviations on the results of the actions). It shall also include any update on **the communication plan**, any relevant reports (all dissemination activities that took place), publications, press releases and updates to the action.

The narrative report shall be laid out in such a way to allow monitoring of the objectives, the means envisaged or employed. It shall be **backed up by all relevant documents** grouped by activity. Examples of documents: mailings, articles, participation lists, events' agenda, events' information, press clippings, list of signatures, screenshots, etc.

3.2. Financial Report

The financial report will provide information on the **costs incurred during the reporting period**. It should include the supporting documents (originals or copies) correctly numbered and labelled according to the budget lines in the provisional budget (Annex 4).

The financial report is to include all eligible expenses incurred by the partners during the reporting period. Besides the financial report, the BSOs partnership should provide **the budget for all upcoming activities in the coming months**; the potential discrepancies (with respect to the initial budget) should be clearly indicated.

As a general rule into the MIS, one unique PDF will be required per item line of cost: HR (one line and therefore one pdf per person per reporting period with all supporting documents: timesheets, payslip, daily cost calculation, etc.) and subsistence/travel cost per reporting period (one line and therefore one pdf per person per travel with all support documentation: xls indicating the costs incurred, a certified copy of the invoices, boarding passes etc.). In other words, all the necessary supporting documentation shall be unified and saved before uploading them into the corresponding MIS line.

Original documents have to be kept for up to 5 years after the date of the EC balance payment to EUROCHAMBRES for the EC checks and audits of the actions

N.B. Interim and final narrative and financial reports must be **i)** submitted in English; **ii)** be filled in according to the guidelines and templates provided by EUROCHAMBRES (Annex G VI); and **iii)** submitted to the **Sectorial Consortium** through the EU4BCC Management and Information System (MIS).

The Sectorial Consortium will check the accuracy of the narrative and financial reports and then forward these documents to EUROCHAMBRES with the request of payments from the leader of the BSOs partnership.

3.3 Request of interim payment

The leader of the BSOs partnership can request an interim payment of 30% (of the 95% funding) of the provisional budget if the BSOs partnership has spent at least 90% of the pre-financing instalment.

EUROCHAMBRES management team will examine the requests for payments and assess the request of payment.

3.6 Reporting timeline

- a) For the actions lasting less than 10 months (B2B matching, Study visits), the interim report is not compulsory. However, if the BSO partnership wishes to receive an interim payment, they should provide the narrative and financial reports proving that they spent at least 90% of the pre-financing.
- b) For all types of actions, the BSOs should submit through the MIS the final narrative and financial reports for the check of the SC by **15 June 2022** at the latest. The SC shall check all documentation, ask for additional information, accept or reject the report within 30 working days since its submission in the MIS. Once the reports are accepted by the SC, EUROCHAMBRES will automatically receive the documents through the MIS. EUROCHAMBRES will have additional 60 working days (starting with the dates the reports arrived at their level) to check the final technical and financial reports and supporting documentation.
- c) The reporting time schedule will vary according to the type of activities implemented by the BSOs partnerships.
- 1) **For Twinnings** – max. duration: 10 months
- A mid-term interim narrative and financial report and request of payment, if applicable
 - Final reports to be sent to the SC by 15 June 2022.
- 2) **For B2B Matching** – max. duration: 6 months
- Final reports to be sent to the SC by 15 June 2022.
- 3) **For Study Visit** – max. duration: 4 months
- Final reports to be sent to the SC by 15 June 2022.

4. DOCUMENTATION & FINANCIAL JUSTIFICATION

4.1 Supporting documents

The following table summarises the documentation and justification the BSOs Partnerships should be able to provide for the narrative and financial reports:

Expenditure	Documents
All expenditures	<ul style="list-style-type: none">□ Proof of <u>purchase</u> such as invoices and receipts,□ Proof of <u>payment</u> such as bank statements, debit notices, proof of settlement by the contractor,□ Proof of <u>delivery of services</u> such as approved reports, proof of attendance to seminars, conferences and training courses (including relevant documentation and material obtained, list of attendees, certificates), etc.,□ <u>Accounting records</u> (computerised or manual) such as general ledger, sub-ledgers and payroll accounts, and other relevant accounting information. <p><i>NB.If the documentation is in the local language (not in English), a short translation of the key items must be provided for assessment.</i></p>
■ Additional – specific to particular budget headings	

Expenditure	Documents
Human Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Contracts (i.e. copy of all employment contracts of employees who are financed by the EU-project), ❑ CVs of all key staff and experts, ❑ Staff and payroll records (i.e. copy of all relevant information about calculation of personnel costs including all employer's contribution – it's compulsory as the Auditors of EC will check this while auditing Staff cost), ❑ Salary statements, ❑ Monthly time-sheets (prepared in detail: name of the employee, hours/calendar days worked, specify the nature or work/task description). Timesheets must be signed by the employee and by the representative of the organisation for each month, ❑ Bank statements/receipts for payments for the months worked by the person in the project, ❑ Daily cost calculation (for the last financially closed year filled and sign by your Accountant or HR Manager), ❑ Board Decision proving the staff of the organisation has been assigned to the Action. <p><i>NB If the documentation is in the local language (not in English), a short translation of the key items must be provided for assessment.</i></p>
Travel & Subsistence cost	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Original invoices (including Boarding cards, used train tickets etc. and proof of payment and documentation) have to be stored at the beneficiary and sent in certified copies as evidence ❑ Please use the excel file Travel cost summary providing the following documentation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ flight expenses (invoices, boarding passes, proof of payment), ○ transfer to and from residence to airport (used tickets / invoices of bus, train, taxi), ○ Visa expenditure. ❑ Per diems are indicated only as max. amount allowed, but per diems are not accepted in the project, only real costs incurred will be considered as eligible if the following documentation is provided: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ hotel invoice and proof of payment, ○ costs of accommodation and meals, ○ local travel expenditures (airport transfer country / intercity transfer), ○ copy of the attendance list dated and signed by the person travelling. ❑ Public transport: Transport tickets (including boarding passes in case of air travel), ❑ Car: For fuel and oil expenses, a summary list of the distance covered, the average fuel consumption of the vehicles used, fuel costs. (max amount 0.22 euro/km) <p><i>If the documentation is in the local language (not in English), a short translation of the key items must be provided for assessment.</i></p>

Expenditure	Documents
Other direct costs (incl. subcontracted services).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ For subcontracted services above 5.000 euro, a procurement procedure must be followed: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Proof of procurement procedures such as tendering documents (ToR and request for offers), bids from tender applicants, assessment grid and decision of chosen applicant, ○ Proof of commitments such as contracts and order forms, ○ Proof of receipt of goods such as delivery slips from suppliers, ○ Proof of payment (bank statement), ○ Picture of the materials, for catering – attendee list; for brochures/flyers- picture with all the units and signed received order by both parties; roll-up and banners – picture of the materials, etc. □ For contract services up to 5.000 euro, the subcontracting can follow a direct assignment, but the documentation should be provided, as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Proof of commitments such as contracts and order forms, ○ Proof of receipt of goods such as delivery slips from suppliers, ○ Proof of payment (bank statement), ○ Picture of the materials, for catering – attendee list; for brochures/flyers- picture with all the units and signed received order by both parties; roll-up and banners – picture of the materials, etc. <p>All the invoices have to have the name of the project EU4BCC specified in the text of the invoice. <u>ENI/2019/411-865 – EU4BCC: ID xxx</u></p> <p><i>If the documentation is in the local language (not in English), a short translation of the key items must be provided for assessment.</i></p>
Technical reports: events or online meetings, trainings, participation in conferences	<p>Needed documentation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Signed attendance list of the event (if the event is online, the attendance list will be enough), □ Copy of the agenda □ Pictures/Snapshots for the event □ Video recording, if available

4.2 Eligible Costs

To be eligible, costs must satisfy the following criteria:

- They must be actually incurred by the beneficiaries,
- They must be incurred during the implementation of the action in the period set out in the grant contract signed between EUROCHAMBRES and the beneficiary(ies),
- They must be indicated in the estimated overall budget for the action (Part B of the application form),
- They must be incurred in connection with the action and necessary for its implementation,
- They must be identifiable and verifiable, in particular, (a) recorded in the accounting records of the beneficiary(ies) and (b) determined in accordance with the accounting standards and the usual cost accounting practices applicable to the beneficiary(ies),
- They must comply with the requirements of applicable tax and social legislation, and
- They must be reasonable, justified and must comply with the principle of sound financial management, in particular regarding economy and efficiency.

Unit Costs must be calculated as follows:

- Amounts per unit calculated by the beneficiary in accordance with its usual cost accounting practices multiplied by the number of actual units,
- The number of actual units must comply with the following conditions:



- the units must be actually used or produced in the eligibility period,
- the units must be necessary for implementing the specific action or produced by it, and
- the number of units must be identifiable and verifiable, in particular supported by records and documentation.

Note: Actual costs as opposed to budgeted costs: The estimated eligible costs foreseen in the proposal have been used to establish a budget proposal and to fix the maximum grant amount; however, they are or may be different from actual/real costs. Only actual incurred costs after the project have started can be declared as eligible costs and claimed for reimbursement.

4 2.1 Non-EURO expenses / exchange rate

Expenditures are recommended to be made in euro to the possible extent to minimise the risks incurred by currency fluctuations and ease financial reporting.

All actual non-EURO expenses shall be converted into euro in the financial report and a printed sheet with applied exchange rate shall be provided as supporting documentation.

Where actual expenditure is incurred and paid in any other currency other than Euro, the conversion into euro should be done at the average daily exchange rate published in the C series of the official journal of the EU for the date of the invoice (https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/how-eu-funding-works/information-contractors-and-beneficiaries/exchange-rate-infoeuro_en).

4.2.2 Eligible direct costs

Subject to aforementioned general criteria and, where relevant to the provisions of Annex G II: General Conditions being respected, the following direct costs of the beneficiary(ies) shall be eligible under the grant agreement:

HR costs

HR costs are the costs of staff members assigned to the action, corresponding to actual gross salaries including social security charges and other remuneration-related costs (excluding performance-based bonuses). Salaries and costs shall not exceed those normally borne by the beneficiary(ies), unless it is justified by showing that it is essential to carry out the action.

Staff costs should not represent more than 40% of the total budget.

Justification documents for HR costs:

- Copy of the pre-existing (permanent or temporary) **employment contract** with the applicant for all staff members involved in action;
- **Monthly timesheets** signed by the staff member and his/her superior (refer to a template in **Annex 2** (to the BSOs guidelines);
- **Used person days** (out of total) in absolute numbers and percentages;
- **Daily rate calculation.** DRC calculation template in **Annex 1** (to the BSOs guidelines) needs to be duly filled in and accompanied with all necessary proof about the number of hours worked per day and the number of days worked per week. In the financial report indicate the hours worked by each person on the project and multiply them by a cost per hour. The daily rate is calculated, taking the last financially closed year as a reference year.
- **Payroll/ payslips and proof of payment** (bank account statement).

Monthly timesheets





Each applicant shall prepare its own template with the following details: project reference number, name of the employee, month and year, hours worked per day on the project, cost per hour, a number of working days per month on the project and nature and description of performed work/task (e.g. preparation of the meeting, visit to '...', etc.). Please note that hours/days worked on the project must be consistent in all documents: DRC, Timesheets and Narrative Report.

Monthly timesheets shall be filled in on a regular basis for each day when the staff member is involved in the activities. Individual timesheets shall be signed by the staff member concerned and his/her superior.

Note: HR cost incurred during weekends, extra-hours, public holidays, personal holidays, and sick leave is not reimbursed.

Travel and subsistence costs

Travel and subsistence costs of *final beneficiaries* that are taking part in the activities (BSOs and SMEs) are reimbursed upon the basis of a lump sum. The lump sum reimbursement is subject to the presentation of:

- (a) boarding passes to prove the round trip for the participants and
- (b) a signed list of attendance to prove their participation in events
- (c) accommodation invoice (with the name of the attendee receiving the lump sum)
- (d) a signed note, where the participant provides own bank details
- (e) proof of payment/bank statement.

Travel and subsistence costs for ***staff of the partnership will be reimbursed on the basis of incurred costs***, provided they do not exceed those normally borne by the beneficiary(ies) according to its rules and regulations. In addition, the rates published by the European Commission at the time of contract signature may never be exceeded.

Travel / visa:

Eligible for reimbursement, travel costs should (a) have been incurred for the completion of the action/activity, (b) be directly linked to it and (c) correspond to the costs planned in the approved budget.

- Each person travelling for the EU4BCC Project is expected to use the lowest fare routing. For flights, travel in economy class at the best available rate is to be applied. **Business and First-class travel are not allowed.** In case a business or first-class travel has been booked and its cost/booking has not been approved by EUROCHAMBRES, the exceeding cost (difference between a simple economy fare and the business or first-class travel ticket) will be charged to the relevant organisation.
- For rail transportation: for under 3 hours duration of travel, 2nd class is recommended; for over 3 hours travel duration 1st class is allowed, as long as the single ticket fare does not exceed 100 euro.
- Taxis should be used when other reasonable and less expensive forms of transportation are not readily available. In case taxis are used, a grounded justification for not using an alternative and less expensive means of transportation shall be given (i.e. urgent meetings, unforeseen meetings, ...).
- Short stay Schengen Visa may be reimbursed within maximum eligible cost for international travel up to the maximum amount of the visa fee fixed for applicants by the applicable EU regulation (article 16, 1 EC Regulation N. 810/2009).
- Car travel:
 - By taxi: the actual cost where this is not excessive compared with other means of travel (also taking account of any influencing factors, i.e. time, excessive luggage). Where several persons travel in the same taxi, only one reimbursement or fare can be charged.
 - Residual: a 'rate per mile/km' can be reimbursed according to the specific travel supporting documentation and further conditions mentioned below. Where several persons travel in the same car, only one reimbursement can be claimed.
 - In any of the above-mentioned cases, the cost of car travel cannot exceed the maximum eligible cost for international travel or the above-mentioned local travel with a further limitation to a global average cost of 0.22 Euro per km travelled.





Note: Any intercity car travel or taxi travel is accepted in case of the absence of public transport or when it is not reasonable to take public transportation. Where several persons travel in the same car or taxi, only one fare can be charged. Proof of the absence of public transport or that it was not reasonable to take public transportation is required.

Subsistence costs:

In order to be entitled to subsistence costs, the place of destination has to be at least 100 KM away from the place of work.

Subsistence costs are based on actual costs and the maximum amount (per night spent in the destination country/city) shall not exceed the amount of the per diem rates as published on the European Union website: https://ec.europa.eu/international-partnerships/system/files/per-diem-rates-20200201_en.pdf.

Special cases:

Actual costs linked to intercity travel: If inter-city travel is more than 100 km (one way) from the home base and the activity agenda justifies an overnight stay, the participant is entitled to receive reimbursement of the accommodation cost, in line with the rules of the organisation and provided these rules do not contradict those the EU4BCC project is operating under.

Overnight stay at the airport for the unforeseen situation: No additional reimbursement can be provided in case of an overnight stay at the airport / cancellation of the flight (due to the extreme weather conditions /airline technical problems). It is recommended to contact the respective airline company for compensation.

“No show” and unused services: No reimbursement for “no show” penalties or cost for unused services will be recognised. EUROCHAMBRES will recover against the participants “no show” penalties and any charge for unused services that might have been paid upfront.

Overnight travel: In case of overnight travel by plane or train, no additional costs will be reimbursed.

Justification documents for subsistence costs:

- Proof of payment of the expenses:
 - Proof of accommodation (a detailed hotel invoice where the name of the traveller and the organisation that s/he is working for, as well as the number of nights spent at the hotel, are clearly indicated);
 - Copies of all receipts related to food and beverages, local transport and other subsistence-related expenses.
 - If the claim is made by the employer of the participant, proof of reimbursement of the claimed costs to the participant has to be provided;
 - Attendance list signed by the participant in loco.

Travel expenses report

A Travel Expenses Report shall be prepared with a list of all costs incurred per person and per travel and shall be presented with all the justification elements such as accommodation, local travel, meals and snacks (see **Annex 3** (to the BSOs guidelines) for Travel Expenses Report template).

Notes for subsistence costs

With the exception of some expenses (train tickets, bus tickets, taxi) supporting documents should always bear the name of the traveler and of the applicant organisation (including the contact details) that the traveler works for. In case the name of the person is not mentioned, the supporting documents should bear the name and contact details of the partner organisation he/she is working for.

Where applicable, the list of participants with their signatures should be provided. If costs are to be reimbursed for participation in a common activity, reimbursement will be granted only to the participants who signed in the attendance list of the activity.





EUROCHAMBRES reserves the right to **reduce the amount of subsistence cost** for the participation in events where meal, inner-city travel hotels expenses are already provided to the participant. Subsistence costs that overlap with other expenses of the same kind that have already been provided to the participant during an event will not be considered eligible.

Other direct costs

The following direct costs shall be considered eligible for the purposes of the grant agreement:

- › Costs entailed by contracts awarded by the beneficiaries for the purposes of the action;
- › Costs deriving directly from the requirements of the contract (dissemination of information, evaluation specific to the action, certified translations reproducing, insurance, etc.);
- › Duties, taxes and charges, including VAT, paid and not recoverable by the beneficiaries. All eligible costs (apart from staff costs which are based on actual costs) shall be reimbursed without taking into account VAT rates, unless the beneficiary is able to prove that it cannot recover VAT paid from its tax administration (e.g. a letter from the VAT authority or a legal proof that the beneficiary is not subject to VAT in its country). In this case, VAT will become an eligible cost and shall be reimbursed.
- › In addition, visibility costs are also eligible as long as the conditions previously mentioned are fulfilled.

4.2.3. Eligible indirect costs

Under this project, there are no eligible indirect costs.

4.2.4 Non - eligible costs

The following costs shall not be considered eligible:

- › Financial allowances for trainees and participants in events (training sessions, workshops, seminars,
- › Actions concerned only or mainly with individual sponsorships for participation in workshops, seminars, conferences and congresses;
- › Indirect costs;
- › Debts and debt service charges (interest);
- › Provisions for losses or potential future liabilities;
- › Costs declared by the beneficiary(ies) and financed by another action/initiative or work programme receiving a European Union grant;
- › Purchases of land or buildings;
- › Currency exchange losses;
- › Costs for actions started before the signing of the contract.

In-kind contributions are not foreseen for this call.

N.B. ! BSOs should consider that the max. amount to be paid cash cannot exceed 100 euro in any case (per payment). Several payments done to the same supplier will be considered as fractioned payments for the same transaction and the rule of max. 100 euro will be applied to all the payments to the same supplier (even if paid in several steps under 100 euro and having different receipts).

The amount exceeding 100 euro per payment and supplier will not be considered as an eligible cost.

5. SUBCONTRACTING -PROCUREMENT PROCEDURE

The BSOs Partnerships are allowed to subcontract part of the action. Activities subject to subcontracting are subject to the procurement procedure as set out in Annex G IV: Contract Award Rules.





BSOs partners cannot also be subcontractors in the action.

5.1 Subcontracting rules

Subcontracting is subject to the following rules:

- subcontracting does not cover core tasks of the action,
- recourse to subcontracting is justified because of the nature of the action and is necessary for its implementation,
- **the estimated costs of the subcontracting are clearly identifiable in the estimated budget,**
- any recourse to subcontracting, if not foreseen in Annex 3 (Provisional Budget), shall be communicated without delay to the project coordinator for approval.

When subcontracting, the BSOs partnership shall

- take all necessary measures to prevent or end any situation that could compromise the partial and objective performance of the action,
- make sure that the subcontractor shall take all the necessary steps to publicise that the EU has co-financed the action.

There are strict rules governing the way in which subcontracting contracts are awarded. These rules help to ensure that contractors are chosen without bias and that the best value for money is obtained, with the full transparency appropriate to the use of public funds.

5.2 Subcontracting Procurement Procedures

The BSOs partners commit themselves to strictly follow the procedure attached on Annex G IV: Contract Award Rules.

Not respecting the procurement procedure will lead to the rejection of the subcontracting costs.

Each BSOs partnership shall provide the following documentation to Consortium and EUROCHAMBRES:

- Proof that at least three participants have been invited at the same time, with the same email, to the same call for tender and with the same specifications
- Offers received
- Offer assessment grid filled up and signed by each member of the Evaluation Committee.

If the BSOs partnership, either on its own initiative or in response to a request from an applicant, provides additional information on the tender, the request for additional information received and the reply/additional information must be sent in writing to all the applicants at the same time.

5.3.1 Evaluation Committee:

The BSOs partnership should form an Evaluation Committee to assess all the offers. The Evaluation Committee should be composed of at least three members with equal voting rights. Minutes of the evaluation committee meetings must be provided. Any absence of a member should be recorded

The minutes shall include the following information:

- Indication of the committee composition, opening and closing date and time of the meeting, and indication of the role of each member (when the minutes are not signed by everyone)
- Justification on whether the tender is within the approved budget
- Compliance with procurement principles and nationality rules
- List of the offers received
- Evaluation process and reasons for the award at a specific candidate





- Decision
- Signature and closing of the minutes.

Every offer received should be assessed fairly and objectively using the criteria set beforehand. These criteria should include more than just price to ensure the best value for money and not just the lowest price.

5.3.2 Notification of results:

The chosen offer must be kept in the folder of the procurement.

Regardless of the type of procedure or amount (above 5.000,00 euro), the BSOs partnership must notify in writing to all the applicants:

- 1) the successful applicant should be informed that its tender has been accepted
- 2) the unsuccessful applicants should be informed by standard letter within no more than 15 days from receipt of the countersigned contract that their offer has not been retained.

5.3.3 Contract:

The contract should be prepared in 2 originals, one for the BSOs partnership and one for the Contractor, and signed and dated by the authorised person(s) of both. The contract should be kept and produced upon request.

Contract modifications must be formalised through an addendum to the contract, which must be signed by the contracting parties.

Important Notes

- It is not allowed to award tenders to any relatives/related persons/companies (owner or partner)
- The authorised person(s) of the beneficiary shall only appoint the Evaluation Committee members and sign the contract with the awarded applicants. The authorised person(s) cannot be a member of the Evaluation Committee
- All applicants should be evaluated in line with the ToR
- When evaluating the applications, please note that the “Total Score” should be the sum of scores allocated in the assessment grid
- Tender opening day can only be brought forward to an earlier day if all applicants have provided offers/replied and declarations of the applicants stating that the offers will not be changed within the submission period.
- The ToR should state the maximum budget
- Reasons for the elimination of unsuccessful applications should be clearly stated in the assessment grid
- Every page of the assessment grid should be initialled and the last page signed by all the Evaluation Committee members

6. MODALITIES OF PAYMENTS - POSSIBILITY TO REQUEST ADDITIONAL PAYMENTS

6.1 Twinning

The modalities of payments will be as follows:

- a) At the signature of the grant contract, an initial pre-financing payment representing 40% (of the 95% funding) of the provisional budget, upon receipt of the leader of the BSOs partnership request of payment.
- b) An interim payment of 30% (of the 95% funding) of the provisional budget upon receipt and final approval by EUROCHAMBRES of the narrative and financial reports proving that the BSOs partnership has spent at least 90% of the pre-financing instalment.





- c) The balance payment of 30% will be made within 60 working days following DG Near approval of the final technical and financial reports. The payment will represent 95% of the real incurred costs of the action, after having deducted the amounts already paid as pre-financing and interim payment, if any. The financial contribution of EUROCHAMBRES cannot exceed the maximum of 57.000,00 euro.

If the final actual eligible costs of the activity are lower than the provisional budget presented by the BSOs partnership, EUROCHAMBRES' co-financing will represent 95% of these costs,

On the contrary, if the final actual eligible costs are higher than the provisional budget, EUROCHAMBRES co-financing will represent 95% of the provisional budget.

6.2 B2B matching and study visits

The modalities of payments will be as follows:

- a) At the signature of the grant contract, an initial pre-financing payment representing 40% (of the 95% funding) of the provisional budget, upon receipt of the leader of the BSOs partnership request of payment.
- b) The balance payment¹ will be made within 60 working days following DG Near approval of the final technical and financial reports. The payment will represent 95% of the real incurred costs of the action, after having deducted the amounts already paid as pre-financing and interim payment, if any. The financial contribution of EUROCHAMBRES cannot exceed the maximum of 57.000,00 euro.

If the final actual eligible costs of the activity are lower than the provisional budget presented by the BSOs partnership, EUROCHAMBRES' co-financing will represent 95% of these costs,

On the contrary, if the final actual eligible costs are higher than the provisional budget, EUROCHAMBRES co-financing will represent 95% of the provisional budget.

Suspension of payments EUROCHAMBRES' clarification request will suspend the payment deadline indicated until reception of full and correct required documentation. Once full and correct documentation is received, the suspension will be lifted.

The payment timeline can be extended by EUROCHAMBRES, and it is subject to:

- Availability of the cash flow in the project, and
- Availability of the full documentation, including any clarification request made by EUROCHAMBRES.

6.3 Possibility to request additional payments

6.3.1 Interim payments for B2B matching and study visits.

BSOs partners have the possibility to request mid-term interim payments supported by the interim narrative and financial reports.

6.3.2 Additional request of payments after the end date of action not foreseen in the grant agreement

¹ The balance payment could be of 30% or 60%, depending on the BSOs will to present the interim report and therefore, request an interim payment of additional 30%.





Whereas the grant agreement foresees that the balance of the grant (30 %) will be paid within 60 days after the European Commission's approval of EUROCHAMBRES' final narrative and financial reports, EUROCHAMBRES acknowledges that it will occur several months after the end date of the action.

To take into account this element, EUROCHAMBRES will pay an additional payment of 15% to the BSOs Partnership once EU4BCC financial accounts have been verified by EUROCHAMBRES' auditors at the end of the project.

BSOs partnerships wishing to benefit from this additional payment should send their request by **December 2022 directly to the EU4BCC team.**

7. AMENDMENT/ADDENDUM TO THE GRANT CONTRACT

Budget transfers between budget categories are limited to 10% of the estimated eligible costs of the action specified in the amount of each budget category for which the transfer is intended. In the case of multi-beneficiary arrangements, this condition may also cover budget transfers between the beneficiaries.

The fact that budgetary transfers do not require per se an amendment procedure, does not prevent the beneficiary from requesting a formal amendment of the budget introducing the transfers. If the action is implemented as initially described in the proposal annexed to the grant agreement, EUROCHAMBRES would normally not object to the amendment request.

In case of multi-beneficiary arrangements, the beneficiaries may have a particular interest to request a formal amendment of the budget involving budget transfers. Such an amendment may be requested in order to modify (e.g. to decrease) the value of the contribution that each of the beneficiaries is entitled to according to the estimated budget attached to the grant agreement.

The amendment request should be presented by the coordinator on behalf of the beneficiaries concerned. The amendment procedures described in Annexes 4 and 5 shall apply.

8. ANNEXES TO THE BSO GUIDELINES

Annex 1: DRC Calculation

Annex 2: Non-Compulsory Example of Timesheets

Annex 3: Travel Expenses Report

Annex 4: Amendment request

Annex 5: Amendment to the contract

Annexes from the EU4BCC grant contract with the DG Near applicable to the BSOs

- Annex G IV Contract Award Rules
- Annex G V Standard request for payment
- Annex G VI (1): Interim Narrative Report Template
- Annex G VI (2): Final Narrative Report Template
- Annex G VI (3): Financial Report Template
- Annex J: Information on the tax regime applicable to grant contracts signed under the call
- Annex K: Guidelines for assessing simplified cost options.
- Annex H: Daily allowance rates (per diem), available at the following address:
http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/funding/about-procurement-contracts/procedures-and-practical-guide-prag/diems_en

