

UIA Initiative Permanent Secretariat

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03 April 2020

Dear UIA beneficiaries

Ref: Communication coronavirus Covid 19 and UIA project implementation

As you may already know, as of 17 March 2020 the French national government has put in place precautionary measures against the spread of the coronavirus Covid-19. The UIA Entrusted Entity and Permanent Secretariat are following these measures including that all staff are currently teleworking. We are aware that similar measures have also been put in place in many other countries, cities, organisations across Europe.

Over the past days, the UIA Permanent Secretariat has received more specific questions from ongoing projects as a consequence of the coronavirus lockdown. Project partners could not meet in person, not attend events that were cancelled, or had to stop activities, if not the whole project implementation. We are appreciating all efforts and alternative methods of implementing activities.

Despite this extraordinary situation, we are making every effort to ensure business continuity. The UIA Authorities are determined to support projects in delivering their project results as originally planned. We would like to provide you with more information on certain aspects that are relevant for your work with us.

Communication with UIA Permanent Secretariat

Communication via the regular channels continues without any change. Even though not physically in the office, UIA staff continue their work remotely, therefore you should be able to contact us as before via email and phone. We count on your understanding for the cases, where you receive a response with a slightly longer delay than usual.

Ongoing assessment of Call 5 proposals

No impact is foreseen in terms of selection of Call 5 project proposals; no modification of the start date of the future selected projects (1 July 2020) is currently envisaged.

Approved projects - Eligibility of costs

Regarding the eligibility of paid costs for cancelled travels and events, force majeure (understood as “an unforeseeable exceptional situation or event beyond the project’s control, which prevents it from fulfilling

their obligations and which is not attributable to error or negligence on their part or on the part of any third party and which proves to be inevitable in spite of exercising all due diligence”), can be claimed. In cases where participation in meetings or events had to be cancelled due to circumstances related to the COVID-19 outbreak, expenses of travel that could not be cancelled and which are not reimbursed from other sources will be regarded as eligible costs. If such a situation occurs, projects must immediately take all the necessary steps to minimise the financial prejudice (e.g. cancel tickets and reservations, claim possible cost reimbursements and/or travel insurance compensations). Any amount reimbursed or received as compensation from travel insurance or any other sources will have to be deducted from claimed expenditure. We remind you to always have a clear audit trail for those expenditures (with official announcements, cancellation notes, internal notes etc.).

Approved projects - impact on implementation and project duration

If the exceptional circumstances mean that implementing your project - or any part of it - becomes impossible or excessively difficult due to force majeure, the duration and modalities of a potential project extension as well as other adjustments will be analysed case-by-case by the UIA Permanent Secretariat once the extent of the COVID-19 situation and its impact on project implementation is fully known.

If you have any specific questions, please do not hesitate to contact the responsible project officer at the UIA Permanent Secretariat.

On behalf of all UIA staff, the Entrusted Entity and the European Commission we would like to wish you all the best under these difficult circumstances.

Yours faithfully,

Tim Caulfield,
Director UIA Permanent Secretariat

