**Guide to reporting on in kind, free of**

**charge infrastructure contributions as BONUS**

**1. Introduction**

The [Name of initiative] Decision1, foresees that up to [number] % of the EUR [amount] national contributions towards [Name of initiative] may be provided as an in kind provision of free of charge use of infrastructure within the [Name of initiative] projects.

Within the terms of the [Name of initiative] decision, this national provision is then matched equally with funding from the EU. However, under the terms of the decision certain reporting obligations must be met to demonstrate the correct value of the infrastructure provided, confirm its actual use within a [Name of initiative] project and provide the EU with audit rights to check that provision is administered correctly and as reported. The use of infrastructures as an in kind, free of charge contribution, reduces the national cash contributions and per se creates added value and increases the efficiency of the limited resources towards research within the participating countries.

This document provides the necessary guidance on the procedures and actions required to administer the infrastructure contributions according to the [Name of initiative] decision and the implementation agreement made

between the [Name of initiative] and the European Commission.

In order to help applicants who foresee their projects needing major infrastructures, [Name of initiative] has prepared inventories on [number] types of research infrastructures: [type or research infrastructures] (available at [link website]).

**2.** **Administration of the in kind, free of charge infrastructure contributions to** [Name of initiative]

Categories of national infrastructure within the [Name of initiative] participating states that are addressed by this guide include [type or research infrastructures] .

The value of infrastructure provided by national authorities as in kind, free of charge contributions to [Name of initiative] projects shall be calculated on the basis of the actual costs incurred during the project. This may include capital costs and indirect costs related to the use of the infrastructure. The usual accounting practices shall be applied, with the exclusion of provisions and profit on the basis of detailed accounts that are open for inspection and audit. The value and nature of the in kind, free of charge infrastructure provided to the [Name of initiative] projects shall be reported annually by the national infrastructure provider to the [Name of initiative].

Due to national differences concerning organisation of access to large infrastructures, the ‘infrastructure provider’ may in this context be the owner of the infrastructure, or the body administrating or granting the right to use a large infrastructure free of charge for the benefit of the [Name of initiative] projects.

The coordinator of a project that uses in kind, free of charge infrastructure contributions will within its reporting provide evidence to the [Name of initiative] of the infrastructures' use as described in the ”Guide for [Name of initiative] project participants”.

In line with these principles the obligations of a national infrastructure provider will be confirmed within bilateral agreements between the [Name of initiative] and the national infrastructure provider.

The process related to in kind, free of charge infrastructure contributions to [Name of initiative] include the following steps:

• During the application phase, [Name of initiative] project applicants notify through their application forms about the planned use of in kind, free of charge infrastructure contributions. They may make tentative enquiries with infrastructure providers at this stage

• The [Name of initiative] will conclude bilateral agreements with national infrastructure providers that are willing to provide in kind, free of charge use of an infrastructure for those [Name of initiative] projects evaluated and selected for funding

• The project consortia and the national infrastructure providers sign operational agreements concerning infrastructures use (as/when necessary)

• [Name of initiative] project coordinators provide the required evidence of use of the in kind, free of charge infrastructure as a part of their project’s annual reporting

• National infrastructure providers report annually on the value of providing in kind, free of charge use of the research infrastructures to [Name of initiative] projects in line with the abovementioned bilateral agreements

**2.1. Notification of planned use of infrastructures**

A consortium applying for [Name of initiative] funding shall include a notification and estimated value of the planned in kind, free of charge use of research infrastructure facilities in their project. The notification should include an estimation of the monetary value of the use of the in kind, free of charge infrastructure. Applicants are advised to contact suitable infrastructure providers during the proposal writing stage to check the availability of infrastructure and possible restrictions. Some infrastructure providers may require specific forms and procedures related to an infrastructure application. Notification by the applicant through the [Name of initiative] Electronic Proposal Submission System does not replace those and does not confirm the availability of the infrastructure.

The notification form embedded in the [Name of initiative] EPSS includes following categories of information:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Type of infrastructure** | **[infrastructure 1 name]** | **[infrastructure 2 name]** | **[infrastructure 3 name]** |
| Name of infrastructure |  |  |  |
| Country |  |  |  |
| Name and contact  details of the potential  infrastructure provider |  |  |  |
| Purpose of use |  |  |  |
| Area of cruise |  |  |  |
| Tentative number of  Participants |  |  |  |
| Tentative start time |  |  |  |
| Tentative end time |  |  |  |
| Duration of event (d) |  |  |  |
| Amount of CPU hours |  |  |  |
| Specific requirements |  |  |  |
| Your estimate of the  value of in kind, free of  charge contribution  (EUR) related to the  described service |  |  |  |
| Have you already  negotiated the service  with the provider? |  |  |  |

**2.2. Evaluation of project proposals**

During the evaluation and selection of proposals, the appropriateness of the resources deployed, including the planned uses of research infrastructures, represents one sub-criteria which is evaluated under the criterion ‘Quality of the implementation’.

**2.3. Bilateral agreements with the infrastructure providers and grant agreements with project consortia**

Based on the summary of the notifications of the planned use of the infrastructures by the proposals that are selected for funding, the [Name of initiative] and the respective infrastructure providers reconcile jointly the needs and availability of facilities for the [Name of initiative] programme, negotiate the conditions of providing in kind, free of charge use of research infrastructures to the project(s) and subsequently conclude respective bilateral agreements with these infrastructure providers.

The key issues to be agreed at this stage are:

• The reporting requirements

• That the value is calculated on the basis of the actual costs incurred during the [Name of initiative] project and may include capital costs and indirect costs related to the use of the infrastructure, recorded applying usual accounting practices, with the exclusion of provisions and profit on the basis of detailed accounts

• Granting the [Name of initiative], the European Commission, the European Court of Auditors and European Anti-Fraud Office rights to audit the infrastructure provider’s reports on the value of the infrastructure provided free of charge to the [Name of initiative] project(s) up to five years from the end of the project.

The form of reporting of the eligible value of the infrastructure provided free of charge constitutes an integral part of the model bilateral agreement.

In addition, the grant agreements concluded between the [Name of initiative] and the [Name of initiative] project oblige the consortia to provide within their annual reporting evidence of the use of the in kind, free of charge infrastructure for the providers that have established bilateral agreements with the [Name of initiative].

**2.4. Use of infrastructures**

[Name of initiative] projects use the free of charge infrastructure in accordance with the provisions of the respective bilateral agreement between the [Name of initiative] and the infrastructure provider. In order to warrant the exact infrastructure services, consortia of the proposals selected for funding are advised to conclude firm operational agreements with the infrastructure providers before commencement of the project. The arrangements and form of these agreements may vary according to the practices in the respective [Name of initiative] participating state. Operational agreements shall determine the details of the service provided such as the timing, location, quantity and restrictions of the use of the infrastructure, as well as procedures of reporting.

The coordinator of a [Name of initiative] project who has received access to and use of in kind, free of charge research infrastructures from infrastructure providers must provide the evidence of the use to the [Name of initiative]. Such evidence may be represented by e.g. an extract from the chief scientist’s log of a research cruise, usage agreement signed by both the user and provider of the infrastructure, a printout with details of amount of the supercomputer CPU-hours used by the specific project etc. An example of the chief scientist’s log of a cruise by a research vessel is provided in Annex 2. In order to provide proper evidence of the use of in kind, free of charge research infrastructures, copies of the above mentioned evidence documents must be attached as PDF files to the annual progress reports submitted by the project through the [Name of initiative] Electronic Proposal Submission System.

**2.5. Reporting on in kind, free of charge infrastructure contributions**

The infrastructure provider must record in its accounts and report annually to the [Name of initiative] the value of the in kind, free of charge contributions provided. The value of providing [Name of initiative] access to and use of such infrastructures has to be calculated on the basis of the actual costs incurred during the duration of the project. The costs may include capital costs and actual indirect costs related to the use, with the exclusion of provisions and profit. The usual accounting practices in accordance with national laws must be applied, and detailed accounts must be open for inspection and audit.

The costs are reported in Euros (EUR) using either the conversion rate published by the European Central Bank that would have applied on the date that the actual costs were incurred, or its rate applicable on the first day of the month following the end of the reporting period.