

TRADE UNIONS FOR A FAIR RECOVERY

*Strengthening the role of trade unions in mitigating the impact
of the COVID-19 crisis*

ETUC Cascading grants scheme – Q&A

(Updated on 14 July 2022)

Contents

Application	2
Coordination	6
Financial	9
Themes and priorities	17
Monitoring and implementation	18
Reporting.....	21

Application

Who is eligible to apply?

Cascading grant applicants must be trade union confederations based in an EU Member State, UK, Iceland, Norway or in EU candidate countries (Albania, North Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Turkey). Applicants must also be affiliated to an EU-level social partner organisation.

Do confederations need to be ETUC affiliates in order to apply for funding?

Beneficiaries must just be a cross-industry trade union confederation representing workers in their national Social Dialogue institutions, and must be affiliated to an EU-level social partner organisation. The cascading scheme is **not** restricted to ETUC affiliates.

Can my application be written in my national language?

Applications must be submitted in English. ETUC is currently unable to offer in-house translation. Please feel free, however, to make use of online translation tools (e.g. DeepL). We understand that some technical points may cause some difficulties in translation, but if we have any points that need further clarification, we will reach out bilaterally.

Can you translate an application document into my national language?

Unfortunately, unless a pre-existing translation is available, then it is not possible to offer translations at this moment. As above, please feel free to make use of online translation tools.

What does 'Work Package' mean?

A work package is a thematic/sectoral element of your overall workplan. This means that, under a given workplan, a beneficiary is not limited to one thematic/sectoral dimension, such as digital trade unionism. If you wish to cover two or more different areas (which are not necessarily overlapping) in your capacity-building effort, you can envisage a number of work packages (WP) under one workplan. E.g. WP1: preparation meetings ahead of consultations on the national recovery plan, WP2: building digital trade unionism, WP3: researching impact of COVID-19 on non-standard workers, etc.

Is there a minimum/maximum number of work packages or objectives to be met ?

There is no minimum/maximum number of work packages or objectives which your workplan should meet. A work package is a thematic/sectoral element of your overall workplan.

If your workplan has only one work package, only fill out the **Work Package 1 (WP1)** field, and leave the rest blank. If you have more work packages than fields listed, simply use the additional space provided.

You are not expected to produce an entirely new, large-scale, complicated project, but rather design your workplan around your existing COVID-19 recovery plans at national level, and focus on the essential needs and priorities.

We intend to cooperate closely with one or more member organisations, should we also list them as contact points in the application form?

As the application form should be filled out by the project leader – i.e., the national trade union confederation – then the fields requiring details of organisation and contact points must be from your own confederation. If you intend to work with sectoral/regional/local level organisations within your membership, you only need to mention this in the description of your workplan.

How long should workplans be?

Under the current timeline, capacity-building workplans should be between 12-15 months.

Can a workplan be shorter/longer than 12-15 months?

The 12–15-month period is recommended, with 15 being the maximum. If a workplan is slightly shorter, that is not a problem – however, please ensure sufficient time is allocated to completing the workplan and evaluation of outcomes. Workplans **should not** exceed 15 months due to ETUC internal deadlines and reporting requirements with the European Commission. Please note that the 12-15 month period is not the full project cycle. This time is designated for the implementation of workplans. As a beneficiary, you will still have approximately one month after the end of your workplan to compile results, reports and evaluations.

How will my application be evaluated?

An evaluation committee will be set-up and will process all applications received. The first step will be to check the eligibility of applicants (type of organisation) and the operational and financial capacity of applicants. The workplans of those applicants eligible for funding will be evaluated against the following criteria:

- Overall relevance of the capacity-building workplan in relation to the objectives outlined in the ETUC call for proposals. Activities planned must match the priority objectives and expected results of the call;
- Measures should be in place for disseminating the outcomes of the capacity building workplan, and for ensuring a lasting impact (sustainability of results after EU funding ends);
- Measures should be in place for monitoring and evaluating workplan outcomes.

Unlike the evaluation process within the European Commission, applications in this instance will not be ranked against one another. ETUC will seek to ensure that all applications that meet the eligibility and evaluation criteria receive funding.

Is there a template for applicant descriptions and the declaration of honour?

There is no template for the applicant description, neither for the declaration on honour. These are “free-format” documents.

In the budget template, do we need to list the budget for every event anticipated?

Yes, but this can be done by listing the type of activity in question as per the categories outlined in Annex 5 (lump-sum approach).

How detailed does the ‘Work Packages’ and ‘Description of Activities (Annex 1, Section 3) need to be?

In general, this does not need to be overly detailed. With the Work Packages section, we ask that you simply state the title, or just the sectoral and/or thematic dimension that each particular work package will focus on (for example, digital trade unionism).

For the description of activities, we ask that you list what activities and events you intend to hold under each work package. Again, this does not need to be incredibly detailed, however we would like to know what kind of event your running (i.e. type 1-4), who is responsible for the management of the event (your organisation, a branch organisation, a local member? etc.) and any other information you deem relevant.

Why does Work Package 1 specify “coordination, monitoring and evaluation of workplan” (Annex 1, Section 3)?

Work Package 1 should refer to the management of your workplan. I.e., who of your members you intend to work with, and what tasks you intend to carry out. For example, steering/coordination meetings, monitoring of the dissemination plan, production of reports, evaluation of outcomes and evaluation meetings, etc. It is a fairly broad category that can be adapted to your workplan.

How do I list costs if my organisation is producing a video?

If you intend to produce and disseminate a video as part of your workplan, you will most probably have to split the costs as follows. We would first of all recommend that you establish an individual work package dedicated to the video, and list a series of Type 1 activities (small-scale meetings – see Annex 5 of the call) dedicated to the internal coordination of the video production process: preparatory meetings, meetings with the videomakers to oversee the production, meetings to discuss the dissemination and “marketing” of the video, etc. These costs will have to be included in Heading 1 of your budget “lump sums”. Equally, however, other costs related to your video will have to be factored in other Headings of your budget, such as the fees of a sub-contracted visual agency (the videomakers) should be listed under Heading 3 “cost of services” of your budget. Your video might also imply other types of costs, in other Headings of your budget: Heading 2 (travels) in case filming/shooting takes place in different locations, or Heading 4 “administrative costs”, in case you must purchase a software for editing the video, for instance.

Does my completed application need to be signed off by our head of office/chairperson?

No, we do not need any signature of that sort. The only case where you might need a signature is the declaration on honour by the legal representative if your organisation does not have a legal personality.

Coordination

Can my national trade union confederation work together with our member organisations (for instance, branch-level and local level unions)?

Yes. The fund is to be cascaded to national level confederations, who will design their national capacity-building workplans according to their priority needs. These capacity-building workplans could foresee a thematic and/or a sectoral focus, whenever appropriate, and it is up to you to determine how to involve your sectoral and local unions in your capacity-building workplan. As long as activities fall within the eligible categories and the costs are documented by the national confederation, then there is no issue with this.

Can a trade union confederation create a ‘joint workplan’ with a member organisation, focusing on just one thematic/sectoral area?

As lead applicant, the national cross-sectoral confederation would submit the application for a cascading grant, and how they choose to channel the money further is up to them. A joint workplan is therefore entirely feasible if only one sector is involved, but in terms of the application process, they are the confederation is the organisation that must submit an application for funding.

Can national confederations bring in external experts?

You may use external experts in your capacity-building workplans, and this should be clearly stated within the workplan and budget. As above, organisations are granted a degree of flexibility regarding how the funding is used, however reimbursement is conditional upon activities and costs falling under the eligibility requirements.

Can an external expert be someone within our own organisation?

By external experts, we do not mean staff of the confederation (who are on the payroll of the organisation, under an employment contract), we mean experts who deliver an ad-hoc (sub-contracted) service/job to the confederation, for a specific part of the project/workplan. The external experts then invoice the confederation to claim their fees and be paid for the job delivered. In such capacity-building projects, the external experts would usually be academics (or a trade union institute) drafting a study report, trainers (or a trade union school) running a training seminar, visual agencies/designers producing a website, a newsletter, or any dissemination material (audiovisual/video etc).

When contracting an external expert as a beneficiary, you should seek good value for money with respect for market prices. In other words, the option offering the best quality-price ratio. For this, you should use your “normal procedure for sub-contracting”.

Branch unions, or member organisations of your confederation, should not be considered external experts. A branch union will most likely be a beneficiary of your cascading grant/workplan – if you wish to cascade money to a branch union or member, that is different sub-contracting an expert.

Can we subcontract tasks to our organisations research and/or training institute?

Yes, training and research institutes already linked to your confederation can be subcontracted as external experts. As above, this must also respect market value prices.

Is there a cap on the number of staff/the budget that can be used to recruit staff for each work package?

We do not have a cap, nor minimum number, of staff that should be involved in a Work Package – it is as you see fit. You should explain in the application template which methods and systems you will put in place for implementing, monitoring and evaluating your capacity-building project, but we do not need to know the exact number of officers per WP for budgetary purposes for instance (as this fund will not reimburse staff costs as such – staff are reimbursed under the lump-sum categories).

Do employees receive a salary on a monthly basis?

The payment of staff salaries is up to your organisation. As above, there are no staff costs outlined in the cascading grants as such, but they will be reimbursed based on the lump-sum categories instead.

If there is more than one union confederation in a country, is it possible for more than one to apply?

Yes, in the likely scenario that there is more than one confederation within a country then more than one may apply for funding. It is **not** one country, one grant. So long as an organisation meets the eligibility requirements and produces a tenable workplan, then it is eligible to apply for funding.

It ought to be noted, however, that a higher volume of applications may alter the co-financing rate. ETUC's current objective is to finance between 90-95% of national workplans, but the exact figure cannot be determined until all funding requests have been made.

Is it one project per organisation?

Essentially, yes. Nevertheless, the scope of a project remains broad. It is up to each national confederation to determine how the funding will be best used to support national recovery. As such, there may be more than one thematic dimension (or Work Package) to a workplan (e.g., Work Package 1 could focus on enhancing digital capacities and work package 2 addressing impact on a specific group, etc).

How long will it be between applying and implementing workplans?

Applicants are invited to apply by the 29 October 2021. Throughout November and December, applications will be reviewed by the Steering and Evaluation committee, and later

finalised by the Validation Committee. This is to ensure the utmost transparency within the process. We aim to launch workplans from 1 January 2022.

What should be included under the Work Package description?

The Work Package section can be left fairly simple. All you need to indicate is the theme and/or sectoral focus. Work Package 1 more refers to the coordination of the workplan as a whole, but more generally, it is just for you to fill out the different thematic and/or sectoral pillars of your workplan. For example, WP2 could be 'enhance digitalisation of sector X', and so on so forth.

What should be included under the description of activities? Does this require exact titles of intended events/activities?

The description of activities is where we ask for a little more detail. Using the example above, under WP2 digitalisation of sector X, we are asking for a list of activities or events you expect to hold to achieve this. We do not need exact names and course titles (of course, if you have an idea already then feel free to add it), but just a general idea of the topics and themes you would like to cover.

What does 'sectors to be involved' refer to?

Sectors to be involved is just sectors, such as aviation, hospitality, etc. that you will involve in your workplan.

What do 'impact indicators' in the evaluation process mean?

These are the factors against which your confederation intends to evaluate results. It could be done via surveys, questionnaires. This is why we ask for impact indicators, to understand against which criteria you are measuring the success of your workplan.

Financial

How is the project funded?

The project is funded via the EaSI (Employment and Social Innovation) Funding Programme, whereby the European Commission has released EUR 3,6 million to ETUC, which will be cascaded to national confederations. ETUC will sign a cascading grant agreement with each beneficiary national confederation, and this agreement will set-out the means of providing financial support, which will include a blend of two approaches: the (I) “reimbursement of actual costs” and the (II) “lump-sum approach”, as defined by the European Commission.

What is the maximum we can apply for?

National confederations may apply for a maximum EUR 120,000. **This amount is a maximum, not a target.** Once again, applicants are not expected to produce an entirely new, large-scale, complicated project, but rather design a workplan around existing COVID-19 recovery plans at national level, and focus on the essential needs and priorities.

How will the money be cascaded/when will our organisation receive the funds?

Beneficiaries will receive a first financial instalment at the beginning of their workplans (40%) upon signature of a cascading grant agreement, a second pre-financing (30%) upon validation of a mid-term progress report, and the payment of the balance will be done upon validation of the final activity report and financial statement. This is to ensure that all costs, activities, and projects reimbursed meet the eligibility criteria.

Should a new assigned bank account be opened for the purpose of the project?

It is not necessary. If you prefer to open one, that is fine but it is not a requirement.

Is it possible to have smaller, more frequent phases of payment?

All beneficiaries will receive an initial pre-payment (January 2022) and then a secondary instalment upon submission and validation of a mid-term progress report (around September-October 2022), and the payment of the balance will be done upon validation of the final activity report and financial statement. It is not possible to offer more phases of payment as all grant beneficiaries must receive the same treatment, and the current set up ensures that all costs, activities and projects are eligible to be reimbursed.

Why are there two methods of reimbursement?

ETUC has opted for this blended approach to mitigate excessive administrative burden within national confederations when it comes to reimbursing the staff costs (the time spent by officers in managing all the events and activities of their workplans).

As such, while services, travel and administrative costs will be a reimbursement of actual costs, while events and activities will be granted a lump sum, dependent upon their size, nature, and scope.

How does the lump-sum approach work?

A realistic and reasonable lump sum has been established for four different categories of activities, each with varying sub-categories depending on whether the event is online, physical and/or (trans)national. This has been carefully devised based on ETUC's experience in running events and activities.

A lump-sum must only be used to reimburse the work and time invested by their own staff into the organisation and coordination of a capacity-building event/activity. The amount reimbursed will be defined by the type of event in question, attendance, and reporting after the event.

Is the lump-sum approach calculated on a country-by-country basis?

While we recognise that staff costs will vary from one country to another, the lump-sum categories will remain the same for all applicants – the size of reimbursement will depend upon the scope and size of an activity or event held.

Should beneficiaries use their own rules for the DSA or those in the guidelines provided?

Yes, the usual rules on DSA can apply, so long as it respects the financial guidelines table provided – it must not exceed the maximum. Please see the table on maximum DSA per country in Annex 4, page 11.

Can we incorporate different kinds of activities (listed in Annex 5) into our workplan at different stages?

Yes, you can opt for different activities at different stages of the workplan. The descriptions in Annex 5 are just to illustrate the lump sum amount you would receive in reimbursement for an event.

Is there a cap on cost categories?

There is no cap on cost categories. Applicants may channel the necessary funding into areas where they deem the most necessary.

Can the funding be used to invest in IT equipment?

As this is an action grant, as opposed to an operating grant, the full cost of purchasing IT equipment and other goods is not eligible for reimbursement. Depreciation costs, however, are eligible under this fund. This means that a share of the total cost of equipment purchased to carry-out the workplan (33% of the total cost per year, for the first 3 years after purchase) can be eligible for reimbursement.

Can the funds be used to buy a subscription for a specific online platform to host webinars?

Yes, purchasing a subscription is eligible. You could put the costs of this subscription under the "administration costs" of your capacity-building project (like the rental of meeting rooms, except this would be for online meetings/webinars).

If we have a meeting room rental included in the monthly cost of our office rental fee, can we get reimbursed for that?

You cannot ask for reimbursement for the rental fee of internal meeting rooms. These costs are included in the 7% overhead cost.

As we anticipate participants for our events/training sessions to come from member organisations, is it possible to 'buy days' to ensure they are able to participate?

Paying companies to 'buy days off' is not an eligible cost under this EU Funding programme.

Is participation in the ETUC Executive Committee eligible for reimbursement if it constitutes our European-level social dialogue efforts?

Yes. Costs invested in preparation meetings and participation in the Executive Committee or other ETUC networks can be eligible for reimbursement if aligned with the objectives of your workplan.

If one or more member organisation is an active 'supporting partner' of our workplan, how would they be reimbursed?

You can definitely foresee an active involvement from some of your members (as "partners") in the capacity-building workplan, and if these partners are in charge of managing a number of activities, you (the confederation) would be responsible for ensuring that they (the partners), are fully aware of the reporting requirements and commit to keep/compile the adequate documentation, as follows.

Each meeting for which a lump-sum will be requested, must be documented with:

- (I) An invitation and an agenda for the event/activity
- (II) A signed list of participants or a screen capture showing participants' names if the event/activity has taken place virtually
- (III) A brief report, relaying key points and outcomes of the event/activity

In addition, each cost incurred by the partner organisation (meeting rooms, catering, translation etc) must be clearly indicated in an invoice with the exact cost specified.

There are two ways of handling the financial management of the workplan:

(I) Decentralised: each "partner" deals with the suppliers in their WP (requesting the invoices and paying them), and then submits a reimbursement claim to the confederation (the lead

beneficiary). This reimbursement claim should cover the total costs incurred and include a financial statement (a breakdown of all the costs incurred with the documentation) covering both the real costs (documented by invoices etc) as well as the lump sums (including the justification docs for each activity carried-out). The confederation (lead beneficiary), having reimbursed their partners, would then claim reimbursement to ETUC (by providing a full, compiled, financial statement, covering the costs incurred directly by them but also by their partners).

(II) Centralised: each “partner” manages the activities on the field, but asks all the suppliers to address the invoices directly to the confederation (lead beneficiary), so that all the payments are made by the confederation from the start. The only cost which the partner could claim from the lead beneficiary is the lump sums for the activities/events carried out by them. The lead beneficiary would then submit a compiled, full, financial statement to ETUC, to claim reimbursement for all the costs.

If we externally sub-contract an accountant for a work package, how would they be reimbursed?

When sub-contracting an external expert, it is the external experts who will invoice your confederation to claim their fees and be paid for the job delivered. Experts are to be reimbursed on an ad-hoc basis, based on when they are needed. Costs should be listed under the "costs of services"/sub-contracted external expert

Do we need to ask for three bids/offers when contracting external services?

When sub-contracting external experts, you must opt for the experts offering the best value for money/market prices. Therefore, if using the formal procedure and launching a call for tenders, three bids are not required. If you launch a call and only receive one bid, so long as this meets our eligibility request (i.e., the sub-contractor offers good value for money vis-à-vis market prices), then you may opt for them. If you wish to carry out a more informal route, i.e., emailing and receiving quotes, then this is also suitable.

Can the costs of a sub-contracted expert be included in the lump-sum for an event/activity?

The lump sums you can claim will only depend on the number and type of activities/event that you carry-out. They will indirectly allow you to cover the salary costs of administrative and policy staff working in the organisation, coordination and follow-up of an activity/event. Therefore, it is not accurate to state that invoices of external expert can be “included in the lump sum”. Experts can be hired on an ad-hoc basis and their costs should be listed under the costs of services category (Heading 3 of the budget), and these costs will be reimbursed as such (in addition to the lump sums received per activity).

Can the costs of catering be included in the lump-sum for an event/activity?

As above, catering costs also must be listed separately, in the Heading 3 (costs of services) – the lump sum should only be used to reimburse staff for the organisation, coordination and follow-up of an activity/event.

My country does not use the EUR, what exchange rate should be used?

If you have to use an exchange rate from your national currency to EUR, please use the InforEuro service provided by the European Commission (available [here](#)).

Can we pay in cash?

Payments in cash are to be avoided, to ensure traceability of payments. The Commission asks us to send the invoices together with all the bank statements/ proof of transfer. If a payment in cash is inevitable, the receipt needs to be signed by each person who receives the money.

Is it better to exchange EUR to our local currency for each individual invoice or exchange the funds at a larger, flat rate at once?

Requests for payment and financial statements sent to ETUC must be drafted in euros, even if you pay invoices in another currency during the course of your project. If your general accounts are in a currency other than the euro, you must convert the costs incurred in your workplan into euros, using (the average of) the monthly exchange rates established by the

Commission and published on its [website](#). You may convert all your costs incurred on a monthly basis (indicating the corresponding monthly rate for each cost) or convert all the costs at once using the average monthly rate over the corresponding reporting period.

How will staff costs be reimbursed?

As there are no staff costs for these cascading grants, you can have as many staff members involved in the project as you want. Therefore, you should not calculate staff costs. The workplan should define the number of activities/events you intend to hold, and it is under this which you will receive a lump sum – how you use this lump sum is up to your organisation. We do not need any salary sheets or timesheets from any staff members – we will just reimburse the lump sum corresponding to the number and type of activities/events which you can prove you have carried-out.

Can we employ staff for the purpose of the project and pay their taxes and contributions from the lump sum? How many people can be potentially employed?

Yes, even though the grant will not reimburse staff costs as such, it is possible to hire someone to achieve your work programme and recover some or all the salary of this person (including taxes and contributions) from the lump sum you would receive. Moreover, you can have as many staff members involved in the project as you deem necessary.

Your organisation will receive a lump-sum for each activity of your workplan, meaning that we do not need any salary sheets or timesheets from any staff members – we will just reimburse the lump sum corresponding to the number and type of activities/events which they can prove they have carried-out. It should be mentioned that it is only one lump sum per activity (as described in Annex 5). It is not one lump sum/per staff member involved in the meeting/per activity.

What are the supporting documents to be provided as evidence to show that its own contribution has been paid by the applicant?

The same supporting documents should be provided for the total costs of the workplan. A financial statement must be submitted, covering 100% of the actual costs incurred. The documentation for these costs must be annexed to the statement. Following this, ETUC will reimburse 95% (final rate to be confirmed) of these costs. The remaining 5% will be considered the own contribution.

Can my organisation list venues we own and staff costs under the costs of contribution?

Under the cascading grant, there are no staff costs – staff are reimbursed based on their contribution to an event/activity specified in the lump sum categories. Furthermore, in-kind contributions (e.g., a venue owned by the beneficiary) are not considered eligible costs so will not count towards the own contribution of the beneficiary.

Do costs relating to banking and exchange rates fall under the 7% overhead costs category?

Yes, there will be no invoice for such costs, so this will be covered by overhead costs.

Can you please provide clarification on the 0.7 financial capacity ratio mentioned?

If the total assets of an organisation amounts to EUR 70,000, then the maximum grant that can be requested is EUR 100,000 – reflecting the 0.7 ratio.

Is my own contribution part of the maximum EUR 120,000 that can be applied for?

No, this is not part of the maximum amount which you can apply for (up to EUR 120,000). This means you can envisage a workplan which costs up to 126.000 EUR as a total budget (including the total of the direct eligible costs AND the indirect eligible costs/overheads). In this case, you may receive a grant of up to EUR 120,000 (95% of the total budget) and the own contribution of 6.000 EUR (5% of the total budget) should be covered by your own organisation.

You do not need to define *how* you will make the own contribution: it might be made with part of the lump sums your project events or with part of the overhead costs eligible under your project. The principle is that you must produce a financial statement for 100% of the costs incurred in the implementation of your workplan, and the Fund will reimburse 95 of these costs. In-kind contributions (such as venues and facilities owned by the trade union) will not count as an own contribution to the project, because they are not a financial cost to your organisation (and are therefore not an eligible cost in the project).

If my organisation plans an online training session that is longer than 3 days, is this still eligible for reimbursement under the lump sum approach?

You can organise online trainings that are longer than 3 days, indeed. The lump sum for training seminars (type 4 – activity) takes into account the work of trade union staff, which

was calculated as follows. Policy staff: 4 days for planning and preparation (liaising with trainers/educators, to define the learning objectives, the training methodology and material), 3 days overseeing and contributing to the delivery of the course (considering that it is a 3-day seminar), 2 days following-up and reporting. Administrative staff: 2 days for preparation, logistics, sending out invitations, attendance & admin support during the training course, 2 days processing invoices from suppliers and reimbursements from participants. This estimate amounts to 4 days of administrative staff + 9 days of policy staff = 2.300 EUR.

If you plan to hold training seminars with a longer format (full-day sessions taking place over more than 3 days), it is advisable that you “split” your training seminar into blocks equivalent to 3-day training seminars, and you may then claim a lump sum for each block.

If you plan training seminars in an online and flexible format (so, with flexible sessions/shorter assignments which can be carried out by the trainees over a number of weeks), rather than face-to-face with full-day sessions, it is advisable that you consider the approximate training hours expected from the trainees and create blocks equivalent to 3-day training seminars (which would be approximately 3 x 7 hours = 21 hours). You may then claim a lump sum for each block.

The lump sums will be calculated automatically in the template we provided, according to the number and type of events/activities in your project (you just need to fill in the “number” of activities you will have in your work programme). For example, you can have (I) three type-1 activities with national participants in your work programme : 3 x 1000 = 3000€, or (II) seven type-4 activities in your work programme : 7 x 2300 = 16 100 €. The total lump sums would be 19 100€.

According to the cascading grant agreement we signed, any transfer between headings must be approved by ETUC. Is this applying even for small amounts?

We kindly ask you to consult/inform us if you wish to transfer a substantial amount, and/or if you are revising your work program (such as cancelling a planned activity, replacing/changing the format of a deliverable, etc).

Any budget transfer of more than 20% should be approved by the ETUC.

If there is some budget left related to the organisation of an event, can this unspent money be used/transferred to another activity? or the unspent money will be lost?

Yes, you can use the unspent money related to the organisation of an event/activity for another activity. However, this transfer of money cannot be above 20% of the budget without informing the ETUC (as indicated above).

In case of car travel, is the rate 0.22€/KM still applied despite the inflation?

The European Commission rules remain the same at the moment (*as of 13 July 2022*) as following:

- Travel expenses by car will be refunded on the basis of a 1st class train fare. If the route is not served by a train, the cost of travel by private car shall be reimbursed at the rate of 0,22 EUR/km.

- In case of car travel, please indicate :

✓ the towns of departure and arrival and the price of a 1st class train rate (information obtained via Internet or by your travel agency when you receive the invitation – and before the meeting takes place);

✓ the license plate of the car used

Please note that parking costs, fuel, toll are included in this rate.

Themes and priorities

What is digital trade unionism/digitalisation?

In the context of this project, digital trade unionism/digitalisation covers a wide range of possible activities. This can include, but is certainly not limited to, the following:

- Creating a database of your members so you can email, message or even phone them directly
- Creating or improving the facilities for online meetings instead of relying only on physical meetings
- Creating or improving the opportunity for workers to join a union online (for example via your website)
- Creating or improving the opportunities for union members to put questions to the union or seek help via the website or other means (email, messaging, help line etc)
- Creating or improving access to information for members on your website whether about legal rights, the contents of collective agreements, the decisions of the union, the minutes of meetings etc.

Does a workplan need to have a sectoral focus, or can it be cross-sectoral?

There is no problem having a workplan, with multiple work packages, that pursue on a cross-sectoral approach. If this is deemed to be the most appropriate way to channel the cascading grant, and it is with a view to achieve the aims of the overarching project, this is fine. A project can be more thematic in focus than sectoral, and vice-versa.

Monitoring and implementation

Can my organisation use surveys to monitor the implementation of our workplan?

Yes. Surveys/questionnaires are one way of monitoring the implementation of the workplan. Overall, it is up to your organisation to determine the best way to monitor, whether this is purely via surveys, more routine bilateral conversations, or tracking results at national level. It is dependent upon what you deem to be the most appropriate means to measure success within your national environment. Surveys, questionnaires and data collection during your workplan will also be important for evaluation purposes at the end of your workplan.

Is there a possibility for a reallocation of costs during the implementation period (e.g., if an event is listed as in-person in the workplan, but must be held online due to a change in circumstances)?

Yes. As the nature of the pandemic means many events are subject to last minute changes, it should not be an issue if there is a reallocation of costs (i.e., different from what you submit to us). The nature and objectives of the project should not change, and you should let us know about any changes. It should be noted that if costs end up being higher than estimated, we are unable to inflate the fund provided. A reallocation will have to be made from funds granted.

Can we organise one meeting/workshop (with 50 participants) instead of two meetings/workshops (with 25 participants for each one)?

Yes, you can. However please note that if you reduce the number of meetings, the number of lumps sums you are allowed to get, has also to be reduced.

Who should sign the cascading grant agreement?

An individual who is able to legally represent your organisation should sign the cascading grant agreement.

Will the agreement be signed by my organisation or by ETUC first?

We ask that you read and sign the agreement before sending it back to us, after which ETUC's General Secretary will sign the agreement on our end.

Should the cascading grant agreement be submitted electronically and/or with a hard copy?

No hard copy is required – a scanned, electronic version via email is sufficient.

Is there a template required for requesting the initial pre-instalment (40%)?

There is no set template. An email/letter coming from an individual with the legal capacity to represent your organisation should be sent to ETUC in order to request the first instalment.

When can we request the initial pre-instalment (40%)?

Once the cascading grant agreement has been signed by both parties (your organisation and ETUC), the request for the initial pre-instalment can be made.

Does the 5% own contribution need to be paid directly to ETUC?

No, the own contribution does not “need to be paid to ETUC”. The 5% contribution represents the share of the costs incurred which will be covered by your organisation (the remaining 95% will be covered by the EU grant).

The financial statement which you will submit at the end of the project will sum-up all the costs incurred in your workplan (which must be within the limits of the agreed budget), and which will include direct costs and indirect costs (the 7% overheads). As mentioned above, the cascading grant will reimburse 95% of these costs, leaving the remaining 5% of costs to be borne by your organisation.

You do not need to ‘deduct’ your 5% own contribution from any specific part of your budget. This will already be factored in the instalments you will receive from ETUC. So, the initial 40% instalment will be 40% of the 95% of your estimated budget. When it comes to the submission of your final report and financial statement, we will then reimburse the remainder of the grant (the balance), equating to the overall 95% of the real costs incurred.

Are we able to use the 40% pre-instalment freely or are there required costs the first instalment must be spent on?

As the 40% is reflective of the amount requested, you are free to use it however necessary at current. Costs should be reported upon and documented with the relevant/corresponding invoices and reimbursement sheets. If feasible, it is requested that such documents are submitted as each activity is completed.

When will we receive the next instalment (30%)?

We anticipate to provide the following instalment after submission and validation of a mid-term report. Exact dates are dependent upon when ETUC receives funding from the European Commission, which remains to be confirmed.

Can we launch activities before signing the grant agreement?

Yes, at this point, you may launch activities before the official signing of our cascading grant agreement – there is no need to wait for a signature on our end, nor for the official kick-off event (January 27, 2022).

By which date do we need to sign the agreement?

There is no exact date to sign the agreement. If you wish to launch preparatory activities before signing the agreement/the kick-off event (January 27, 2022), that is completely fine. Equally, if you would prefer to delay starting until early February, that is also fine. All we ask

on our end is that your final reports are submitted by 30 April 2023.

Do we need to include the EU logo on our webpage?

For any webpage you might launch under the funding, the EU logo is not needed. However, if you are producing any dissemination material/activities, you should clearly mention the “financial support of the European Union” (including the EU flag).

Can the timing of activities be changed slightly?

As stated elsewhere, it is no problem if the scheduling of events has to change slightly. We simply ask that we are informed of the change, and no outstanding change is made to the nature of the activities and the approved objectives of your individual workplan. To note, if the change results in higher costs incurred than anticipated, then we cannot provide more funding – a reallocation must be made from within the approved budget in your cascading grant agreement.

Can the location of a meeting/workshop change?

Yes, it can but unforeseen costs (as travel costs) related to this change cannot be borne by the ETUC.

Reporting

What is the difference between the activity report deadlines and period financial reporting?

The deadlines stated in the cascading grant agreement (depending on the duration of each individual workplan) refers to the submission of the mid-term and final reports. The second and third financial instalments are dependent upon the submission and validation of each respective report.

As for the financial reporting, we have asked that, where possible, organisations send us the necessary documents on an event-by-event/ad hoc basis. This will allow us to carry out the financial assessments more efficiently.

Are there any specific templates we should use for the reporting?

On the [project site](#), you may find:

- Outcome report template
- Financial statement template (as well as instructions on how to use this template)
- Individual activity report template (needed for all activities for which a lump sum is requested)

To whom should we send the reports and documentation? Do we need to send them by ordinary post or by email?

The reports and justification documents like copies of invoices, train tickets and boarding passes should be sent via email to the helpdesk email address cascadingfunds-helpdesk@etuc.org and to the contact person assigned to you.

Copies of all such documents relative to eligible costs are accepted in case your organisation needs to keep the originals. Originals will have to be kept and provided to the ETUC in case of a financial audit by the European Commission, for at least 5 years from the end date of the project (31 July 2023).

What information needs to figure on the invoices/ justification documents?

- For the train tickets and boarding passes: If the price is not on the boarding pass or train ticket, you need to print out the booking confirmation.
- For the hotel invoices: A booking confirmation from a website like booking.com is not enough. You need to ask the hotel for an invoice/ receipt.
- You should add the reference number of each budget line to your justification documents (invoices, tickets, boarding passes) so we can quickly find the correct line in the excel sheet the document corresponds to.

Can different spendings like accommodation and meals be on the same invoice (for example for organising a seminar at a hotel)?

Yes, but the invoice must be detailed enough to see the difference between the different costs. For example, if accommodation (heading 2) and meals (heading 3) have been booked at the same venue, the invoice must contain a rooming list (which clearly mentions the name of each participant with the dates of his/her stay, the number of nights, and the price of the room) and a separate line for the meals (stating how many meals have been paid and the amount per meal).

How do we report the 7% overhead costs? What documents are needed?

No invoice or other documentation is needed for the 7% overhead costs. They are calculated automatically on top of all the costs that you need to report to us.