

COST BESTPRAC Targeted Network

Working Group 2 Finance

Recommendations for financial rules in FP9

October 2017

This document, based on the professional experiences of research managers and administrators participating in the BESTPRAC WG2 – Finance of BESTPRAC – The Voice of Research Administrators (COST Targeted Network 1302), aims to contribute to the development of the financial rules for the next European Framework Programme for Research and Innovation, hereafter referred to as FP9 with following recommendations:

1. Rules related to forms of costs and eligibility of costs

- Lump sums, unit costs and flat rates should **not** be used in all cases, only where it is reasonable and logical to do so.
- The rules on costs of internal services such as labs, small infrastructure and large research infrastructure costs should be clearer and simplified. Normal accounting standards should be accepted.
- The work of students no matter whether they are employed directly by the beneficiary or through the agency should be eligible as personnel costs.
- There could be an explicit cost category to add "machine costs / hour" for industry partners.

2. Rules concerning the reimbursement rates and modes

- Overhead flat rate should be higher.
- Full costs of equipment and instruments bought for the project should be eligible and completely financed by direct costs in some cases and up to certain amount.

3. Rules concerning personnel costs

- Reimbursement of actual personnel costs as one of the options should be reintroduced.
- The rules on eligibility of additional remuneration system should be simplified and present H2020 eligibility conditions removed.
- Demands for time-sheets should be further simplified in favour of using the Declaration on exclusive (part-time) work for researchers working on the project at a fixed percentage. Time-sheets or declarations for persons who are working on hourly bases should also be very simplified.
- Lump sum project funding and/or results based remuneration should only be used in special types of projects (like tenders, SME instrument, some IA projects...)



4. MSCA rules

- MSCA country coefficients should be calculated allowing the organisations in all countries to cover the usual salaries of their researchers.
- MSCA Management and overhead cost category should be separated into two different management and overhead categories with the overhead rate the same as in RIA projects.
- MSCA rules should be more flexible regarding the request for type of the working contract (e.g. employment contract).
- MSCA rules should allow part time work contracts in order to allow career development of researchers.
- Flexibility regarding the duration of MSCA ITN projects to choose between 3-year and 4-year project would be an added value.

5. Rules concerning financial reporting

- Budget forms of proposal and financial statement should stay the same.
- Request for financial reporting on WP level should be removed.
- CFS threshold of €325K delivered at the end of the project should be continued.