

Guidelines on the use of the resources of the International Fund for Cultural Diversity

Approved by the Conference of Parties at its second session –
June 2009

Objectives and general aspects

1. The purpose of the Fund is to finance projects and activities decided by the Committee on the basis of guidelines determined by the Conference of Parties, notably to support cooperation for sustainable development and poverty reduction in order to foster the emergence of a dynamic cultural sector in developing countries, in accordance with Article 14 of the Convention (Article 3 of the Financial Regulations of the Fund).
2. The Fund will be managed as a Special Account pursuant to Article 1.1 of its Financial Regulations and, given its multi-donor nature, cannot receive tied or earmarked contributions.
3. Use of the Fund's resources must be consistent with the spirit and provisions of the Convention. Pursuant to Articles 18.3(a) and 18.7, Parties shall endeavour to provide voluntary contributions on an annual basis. The Committee encourages Parties to provide contributions on an annual basis, the amount being at least equal to 1% of their contribution to UNESCO budget. The resources of the Fund will be used in favour of developing and least-developed countries. Public development aid which is not tied may be used to finance the activities of the Fund for projects and programmes decided by the Committee in accordance with the provisions governing UNESCO Special Accounts.
4. In managing the Fund, the Committee shall ensure that the use of the resources:
 - 4.1 meets the programmatic priorities established by the Committee;
 - 4.2 meets the needs and priorities of beneficiary developing countries, especially least-developed countries, including, *inter alia*, promotion of South-South and North-South-South cooperation;
 - 4.3 contributes to achieving concrete and sustainable results as well as structural impacts, where appropriate, in the cultural field;
 - 4.4 respects the principle of ownership by the beneficiaries;
 - 4.5 respects, to the extent possible, an equitable geographic distribution of the resources of the Fund and gives priority to States Parties who have not yet benefited or who have benefited the least from these resources;
 - 4.6 satisfies the principle of financial accountability, as understood within the United Nations system;
 - 4.7 satisfies the need for funds to be spent principally on programmes and ensuring minimum overhead costs;
 - 4.8 avoids spreading resources too thinly or supporting sporadic activities;

- 4.9 complements other international funds covering similar fields without, however, compromising the Fund's possibility to provide funding to projects that have already received or could receive financial assistance from a third party.
5. These guidelines will apply during a pilot phase lasting 36 months from the date of their approval by the Conference of Parties. During this phase, effective management mechanisms will be put in place and tested in accordance with the administrative and financial regulations of UNESCO. An evaluation of these mechanisms, their results and the effectiveness of the management of the Fund will be carried out six months before the end of the pilot phase. The findings of this evaluation will be submitted to the Committee with a view to a possible revision of the guidelines.

Fields of activity

6. The use of the Fund may take the form of legal, technical, financial or material support, or the form of expertise, and will be allocated:
- 6.1 For programmes/projects:
- 6.1.1 introducing cultural policies, where appropriate, and strengthening the corresponding institutional infrastructure;
 - 6.1.2 capacity-building;
 - 6.1.3 strengthening of the existing cultural industries;
 - 6.1.4 creating new cultural industries.
- 6.2 for special situations as laid down in Articles 8 and 17 of the Convention and the operational guidelines relating to them.
- 6.3 for preparatory assistance. Such assistance may be requested to identify the specific needs of developing countries that are Parties to the Convention and to prepare their requests for assistance.
- 6.4 for assistance for participation, within the limits of funding decided by the Committee. This assistance may cover:
- 6.4.1 the cost of participation of public or private organizations or individuals from developing countries invited by the Committee to its meetings for consultation on specific issues in conformity with Article 23.7 of the Convention;
 - 6.4.2 the cost of participation at the meetings of the organs of the Convention by government experts from least-developed countries that are members of the Committee, upon their request.
- 6.5 for the evaluation of programmes/projects by an expert panel, to be constituted by the Committee, before their submission for examination to the Committee.
7. Programmes/projects and requests aimed at offsetting a deficit, repaying a debt or paying interest or relating solely to the production of cultural expressions will not be eligible for assistance from the Fund.

8. At each of its sessions, on the basis of the funds available in the Special Account, the Committee will draw up a budget for each of the above-mentioned types of assistance.

Beneficiaries

9. Entitled to benefit from the Fund:

- 9.1 For programmes and projects:

- 9.1.1 all developing countries which are Parties to the Convention;

- 9.1.2 all State Parties to the Convention which have determined the existence of special situations on their territory in conformity with Articles 8 and 17 of the Convention and related operational guidelines;

- 9.1.3 non-governmental organizations coming from developing countries that are Parties to the Convention, which meet the definition of civil society and criteria regulating admission of its representatives at meetings of organs of the Convention as mentioned in the operational guidelines relating to the role and participation of civil society;

- 9.1.4 international non-governmental organizations, which meet the definition of civil society and criteria regulating admission of its representatives at meetings of organs of the Convention as mentioned in the operational guidelines relating to the role and participation of civil society, and which present projects with impact at the sub-regional, regional or inter-regional level;

- 9.1.5 micro, small and medium enterprises of the private sector active in the cultural field of developing countries that are Parties to the Convention, to the limit of available funds from contributions provided by the private sector, in full conformity with the domestic laws of the Parties concerned;

- 9.1.6 representatives of vulnerable groups and other social groups identified in the Convention.

- 9.2 For participatory assistance:

- 9.2.1 public or private organizations or individuals from developing countries, in conformity with Article 23.7 of the Convention;

- 9.2.2 governmental experts from least-developed countries, which are members of the Committee.

- 9.3 For preparatory assistance:

- 9.3.1 developing countries, in conformity with paragraph 6.3 of the present operational guidelines.

Procedure for the submission of funding requests

10. Funding requests are sent to the Secretariat of the Convention in French or English on the appropriate forms.
11. Funding requests are submitted to the Secretariat of the Convention:
 - 11.1 Through the National Commissions or other official channels designated by the States Parties:
 - 11.1.1 for their own requests;
 - 11.1.2 for special situations;
 - 11.1.3 for national NGOs;
 - 11.1.4 for the private sector active in the cultural field;
 - 11.1.5 for vulnerable and other social groups identified in the Convention.
 - 11.2 directly for INGOs whose programmes/projects are supported in writing by the States Parties beneficiaries concerned.
12. Requests for funding shall include:
 - 12.1 a brief summary of the programme/project;
 - 12.2 a programme/project outline (title, objectives, activities and expected results including the cultural and social impact, beneficiaries, and a commitment to submit a report on the execution of the programme/project);
 - 12.3 the name and address of the entity or representative that will hold financial and administrative responsibility for implementation of the programme/project;
 - 12.4 a work schedule and time frame;
 - 12.5 a detailed budget, including the amount of funding sought from the Fund, as well as other sources of financing. Partial self-financing should be encouraged to the extent possible;
 - 12.6 any information relating to the status of completion of earlier funding requests from the Fund.
13. All funding requests must reach the Secretariat of the Convention by 30 June each year to enable their evaluation by the Committee at its ordinary session before the end of the year.
14. Requests for assistance for participation (6.4.2) must reach the Secretariat of the Convention at least two months before each Committee meeting. These requests will be subjected to a technical evaluation by the Chairperson and the Secretariat subject to the approved budget.

Selection and approval of requests

15. Requests are selected as follows:
 - 15.1 at the national level, the National Commissions or other official channels designated by the Parties shall ensure that projects are relevant, meet the country's needs, and have been subject to consultation among stakeholders;
 - 15.2 upon receiving the requests, the UNESCO Secretariat will perform a technical evaluation to ensure that the applications are complete and therefore admissible;
 - 15.3 an expert panel will be appointed for a two-year period by the Committee, drawn from a database of experts proposed by States Parties. The panel will be selected on the basis of criteria of equitable geographical distribution, representation, as well as complementarity of expertise. It will be responsible, after a technical examination of the programmes/projects, for preparing recommendations for the Committee in view of the examination of the programmes/projects by it. As a rule, the experts will consult electronically.
16. To facilitate the decision-making of the Committee, the recommendations of the expert panel will be accompanied by a detailed presentation, including:
 - 16.1 a brief summary of the programme/project presented in the request;
 - 16.2 the potential impact and expected results;
 - 16.3 an opinion on the amount to be financed from the Fund;
 - 16.4 the relevance/appropriateness of the programme/project to the objectives of the Convention as well as to the fields of activity of the Fund (paragraphs 4 to 7 included);
 - 16.5 an assessment of the feasibility of the programme/project proposed, the relevance and effectiveness of its modalities of execution, as well as the expected structural impacts, where appropriate.

Evaluation

17. Any programme/project may be evaluated *ex-post facto* at the request of the Committee with regard to its efficiency, and the achievement of its objectives relative to the resources spent. Evaluation of funded programmes/projects should present lessons learned, as well as the impact of these programmes/projects on cultural policies. The evaluation should showcase how experience gained could benefit other projects, with a view to compiling a knowledge base of best practices. Evaluation should be undertaken systematically for programmes/projects submitted in the pilot phase of implementation of these guidelines (see paragraph 5 above).

Reporting

18. The applicants shall submit a mandatory descriptive, analytical and financial report on the execution of the programme/project and the realization of expected results. The report must be presented to the Secretariat six months after the conclusion of the project/programme as foreseen within the time frame. No financial contributions for new projects will be allocated to applicants who have not submitted this report.

19. Under the Financial Regulations applicable to the Special Account for the Fund, the UNESCO Comptroller is responsible for maintaining the Fund's accounting records and submitting the annual accounts to the UNESCO External Auditor for audit.