

UNITED NATIONS EDUCATIONAL, SCIENTIFIC AND CULTURAL ORGANIZATION

Intergovernmental Council for the Information For All Programme

Second Meeting of the Bureau

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Item 3 of the provisional agenda

MANAGING, PROMOTING AND STRENGTHENING THE SPECIAL FUND FOR THE INFORMATION FOR ALL PROGRAMME, AND CRITERIA FOR THE DESIGN AND IMPLEMENTATION OF EXTRABUDGETARY PROJECTS

Summary

The Intergovernmental Council for the Information for All Programme, at its first session, requested the Bureau to establish criteria for the design and implementation of extrabudgetary projects in co-operation with the Secretariat, taking into account the views expressed by the Council.

It also requested the Bureau to advise how to manage, promote and strengthen the special fund for the Information for All Programme.

The present document presents proposals for both areas for endorsement by the Bureau prior to their submission to the Council at its second session.

Decision required: paragraph 18

A. Project framework and lines of action

1. The role of UNESCO's Information for All Programme (IFAP) is to serve as a forum for international policy discussions and for establishing main lines of action in the fields of:

- safeguarding information and securing universal access to data;
- participation of all in the emerging global information society;
- ethical, legal and social issues arising from new uses of information and communication technologies.

2. The Information for All Programme acts as a framework for international cooperation and for establishing international and regional partnerships. Its goal is to support the development of common strategies, methods and tools for building a just and free information society and for narrowing the gap between the information rich and the information poor.

3. The Information for All Programme is a key component in the fulfilment of UNESCO's mandate to contribute to "education for all" and to the "free exchange of ideas and knowledge", and to "increase the means of communication between [people and] peoples".

4. Projects carried out within the framework of IFAP must have a catalytic role and a pilot character. Their duration is determined in advance. They are subject to evaluation and must abide by the subsidiarity principle (appropriate sharing of responsibilities at the international and national levels). They must tie in with the following areas of activity:

- development of international, regional and national information policies;
- development of human resources and capabilities for the information age;
- strengthening of institutions as gateways for information access;
- development of information processing and management tools and systems;
- information technology for education, science, culture and communication.

a) Criteria

5. A set of criteria needs to be adopted for formulating and evaluating project proposals submitted to UNESCO within the framework of IFAP. Projects should, in particular:

- have a generic character and lend themselves to implementation in different countries, regions or situations;
- have the potential to be extended after their implementation;
- be suitable for proposal to outside funding sources in their extension phase;
- involve beneficiaries in their design, formulation and implementation, as well as in their funding and sustainability;
- fit smoothly into an institutional environment;
- ensure input from each and every partner;
- give precedence, as far as possible, to open-ended solutions as regards their technological aspects.

6. Other criteria should be added regarding the projects' feasibility and management:

- operational and technical feasibility;
- financial feasibility;
- consistency of the financial description with the state of the market and standard costs;

- nature of the project, evaluation criteria and indicators;
- quality of administration.

b) Project formulation

7. Project descriptions must follow a standard form drafted by the Secretariat in close collaboration with the Bureau. That form should cover the following points:

- identification of the project
- identification of partners (beneficiaries and contributors)
- project description:
 - problems that the project aims to solve
 - expected results and impacts, evaluation criteria and indicators
 - project stages or sub-projects, with an implementation schedule
 - various types of resources required
 - roles and inputs of the various partners for each stage or sub-project
- project environment:
 - other completed and ongoing projects linked to the project proposed
 - generic nature of the project and how it can be extended
 - guarantees of sustainability
 - management and administration
- financial description:
 - financial evaluation of project stages or sub-projects
 - financial evaluation per resource type
 - project funding:
 - national inputs of each project partner
 - funding requested through IFAP
 - other funding obtained
 - other funding requested

c) Project proposal process

Originating projects

8. Institutions in Member States and UNESCO can originate and propose projects with a view to securing a contribution from the Organization within the framework of IFAP, funded by voluntary contributions.

Proposing projects

9. Projects proposed by Member State institutions should reach the IFAP Secretariat through the official channels, i.e. through the National Commission for UNESCO or Permanent Delegation to UNESCO of one of the Member States concerned acting on behalf of the

others. Given these conditions, the project proposal should be accompanied by an agreement to cooperate in the project, should it obtain funding, signed by the institutions of the other Member States concerned and supported by their respective National Commissions or Permanent Delegations.

Evaluating project proposals

10. Project proposals submitted to UNESCO for funding may, depending on the availability of funds from voluntary contributions to IFAP, be evaluated in two stages:

- first by the IFAP Secretariat;
- second by the Bureau, which presents proposals to UNESCO at its ordinary meetings.

B. Project funding

11. Implementation of the process described above hinges entirely on the availability of funds from voluntary contributions to IFAP.

12. Another alternative could be to emulate other project funding agencies such as the World Bank, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), development banks, etc., by issuing calls for proposals.

13. This approach relies on a number of conditions that, with IFAP still in its infancy, have yet to be met: in particular, the availability of a large amount of voluntary contributions to fund projects and specific working structures for monitoring and evaluating project implementation.

14. Given that IFAP lacks the necessary financial resources, the call for proposals approach is unrealistic.

15. It is advisable to take the realistic and pragmatic step of raising voluntary contributions from IFAP donors and, to begin with, successfully implementing projects funded by other means such as funds-in-trust discussed in tripartite talks with the proposers, UNESCO and the donors.

16. Nevertheless, it would be inadvisable to rule out the amassing of voluntary contributions by calling on donors to support IFAP, not just with financial contributions but also with contributions in kind (expertise, documentation, publications, equipment, etc.).

17. Under such circumstances, the IFAP Council would be expected to participate fully in advising UNESCO on programme preparation, as would the Bureau, which, given that it meets with greater regularity, could also act as an operational advisor.

18. The Bureau of the Intergovernmental Council for the Information for All Programme might adopt the following resolution:

The Bureau of the Intergovernmental Council for the Information for All Programme,

1. Having examined document IFAP-2002/Bureau.II/3, “*Managing, promoting and strengthening the special fund for the Information for All Programme, and criteria for the design and implementation of extrabudgetary projects*”,

2. Approves the proposals for strengthening the special fund for IFAP, and managing it for the funding of extrabudgetary projects;
3. Requests the Secretariat to continue consulting Member States with a view to increasing their voluntary contributions to project funding;
4. Requests the Secretariat to submit a “*Guide to proposing projects seeking voluntary contributions within the framework of IFAP*” to the Council for approval at its second session.

Elements for a Form for project submission

IFAP Project proposal form			
General information			
0. Reference number			
1. Project title			
2. Project summary Goal, objectives, activities, results			
4. Total project budget:			
Proponent information			
5. Proposing Institutions			
Name and address			
6. Project partners			
Classification			
7. Relation to IFAP areas of activities please check one or several			
Development of international, regional and national information policies			
Development of human resources and capabilities for the information age			
Strengthening institutions as gateways for information access			
Development of information processing and management tools and systems			
Information technology for education, science, culture and communication			
8. Link to priorities			
Link to international development targets:			
Link to action plans adopted by international conferences:			
Link to UNESCO Priorities (Please check one or several)			
Basic education		Women	
Water resources management		Youth	
Ethics of science and technology		Africa	
Diversity, pluralism, intercultural dialogue		LDCs	
Broader Access to Information		Culture of Peace	
Other (please explain)			
9. Geographic location of project:			
International:		Regional :	
		Subregional:	
Body of the proposal			
10. Project Information			
Overall goal			
Specific objectives			
Activities			
Expected results			
Success/performance indicators			
Budget breakdown			
Monitoring and evaluation			