

## **The impact of COVID-19 on EDCTP2 projects**

EDCTP is committed to working with EDCTP funded beneficiaries and other stakeholders to help to minimise the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on EDCTP projects. As you know, the EDCTP2 programme is supported under Horizon 2020, the European Union's Framework Programme for Research and Innovation, and EDCTP operates under the rules and regulations of the Horizon 2020 programme.

We have been receiving questions from our beneficiaries regarding the impact COVID-19 is having on their research projects. In answering these questions, we have been referring beneficiaries to relevant articles in the Article 185 Model Grant Agreement. Extracts from two of these articles are set out below:

### Article 51 of the Model Grant Agreement

1. If force majeure entails extra costs for the implementation of the action, it will normally be the beneficiaries that must bear them (since the maximum grant amount set out in Article 5 of the Grant Agreement cannot be increased).
2. If a task could not be executed due to a situation of force majeure but certain costs were incurred for that task and could not have been avoided, those costs may still be eligible.

Bullet point 2 above introduces some flexibility. All we require is for beneficiaries to demonstrate that the costs incurred could not have been avoided.

### Article 5 of the Model Grant Agreement

The maximum grant amount set out in this Article cannot be exceeded. The maximum grant amount will not be increased — even if the eligible costs of the action are higher than planned.

Owing to the disruptive nature of COVID-19, EDCTP will exercise maximum flexibility, within H2020 rules, to ensure that all costs that meet the general conditions for costs to be eligible (Article 6 of the Model Grant Agreement) are accepted. Beneficiaries, however, must be mindful of the fact the maximum budget indicated in Article 5 of the Model Grant Agreement (for article 185 initiatives) cannot be increased.

Two of the most frequently asked questions are:

1. Question: Can we extend the project duration set out in article 3 of the Grant Agreement due to COVID-19?  
EDCTP answer: Yes, EDCTP beneficiaries can request an amendment of article 3 of the Grant Agreement. The procedure for making such requests is described in article 55 of the Grant Agreement. Before requesting an amendment, please consult with the Project Officer and Grants Finance Officer about the timing of your request. The full impact of COVID-19 on your project timelines may not be known and therefore it may be appropriate to wait until there is more certainty about how the project is affected.
2. Question: Can the maximum budget amount set out in article 5 of the Grant Agreement be increased?  
EDCTP answer: No, the maximum budget amount set out in article 5 can never be increased. Beneficiaries, however, have the flexibility to adjust the

estimated budget breakdown indicated in annex 2 - without amendment - by transferring amounts between beneficiaries and budget categories.

Beneficiaries may also consider requesting suspension (full or partial) of the project if it cannot be implemented. However, costs incurred during suspension of the project cannot be charged.

You can find more questions and answers about COVID-19 and Horizon 2020 on the EC RTD webpage by clicking the link below: <https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/portal/screen/support/faq?type=1;categories=;programme=H2020;actions=;keyword=COVID-19%20outbreak>

The EDCTP2 programme is supported under Horizon 2020, the European Union's Framework Programme for Research and Innovation. The questions and answers on the EC RTD webpage are applicable to EDCTP2 projects.