



Appendix 4.0: Guideline for Project Administration

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Overview of the framework

Framework for ICARS' Demonstration Projects

Appendix 0.1 Tasks and Responsibilities of the Project Coordinator and the Lead Researcher

Appendix 1.0 Guideline for the Expression of Interest

Appendix 1.1 Expression of Interest Template

Appendix 2.0 Guideline for the Concept Note

Appendix 2.1 Concept Note Template

Appendix 3.0 Guideline for the Project Proposal

Appendix 3.1 Project Proposal Template

Appendix 3.2 Log Frame Template

Appendix 3.3 Template for CVs of the Project Coordinator and Researchers

Appendix 3.4 Budget Template (to be requested)

Appendix 3.5 Grant Letter Template (to be requested)

Appendix 4.0 Guideline for Project Administration (**this document**)

Appendix 4.1 Partnership Agreement Template

Appendix 4.2 Audit instructions



1. Introduction

This guideline introduces good practices and the rules and regulations that must be followed during implementation of an ICARS demonstration project.

The guideline should be used by all project participants, and in particular the Project Coordinator/Finance Manager and the Lead Researcher, to ensure appropriate administration and sound financial management of practices. For additional information about the project participants please see *Framework for ICARS' Demonstration Projects*. For information about eligible budget items please see *Guideline for the Project Proposal*.

For questions please contact ICARS at contact@icars-global.org.

2. Grant Framework

Implementation of the research project must adhere to the following documents that constitute the Grant Framework. The Project Coordinator and the Lead Researcher must have an overview of the existing documents, regulations and procedures in order to administer the project in accordance with good practices – in an accountable, transparent, effective and efficient manner.

The Grant Framework

- The Grant Letter
- *Framework for ICARS' Demonstration Projects*
- *Guideline for the Expression of Interest* and appendices
- *Guideline for the Project Proposal*, the approved Project Proposal and appendices (budget, draft log frame, signature page and CV's from key researchers and participants)
- *Guideline for Project Administration*
- The Partnership Agreement (prepared after project initiation)
- Full log frame (prepared after project initiation)

Other documents

- Local, official letters of approval (when such are required)
- Research permits, approvals etc.
- In-country rules and regulations on employment conditions, financial procedures, procurement etc.



3. Good Practice Principles

Good project administration is about organising and using resources (staff, equipment, funds) in a *transparent* and *accountable* manner, and in such a way that the research project is implemented as *effectively* and *efficiently* as possible. A transparent, accountable, effective and efficient administration of the research project is essential to ensure proper use of project funds and resources, and to avoid misuse.

The Project Coordinator and the Lead Researcher have, on behalf of the Responsible Ministry and/or the Lead Research Institution, the responsibility of ensuring that the project is administered in accordance with good administration and anti-corruption practices as specified below. See *Tasks and Responsibilities of the Project Coordinator and the Lead Researcher* for a description of the tasks and responsibilities.

Good administration practices

Transparency is about access to information. Timely access to reliable and relevant information about decisions and actions, or lack thereof, is essential to good project administration. It must be ensured that decisions taken and their enforcement follow appropriate rules and regulations, and that documentation is available on *how*, *why* and *based on what regulations* decisions have been taken.

Accountability refers to the obligation to account for decisions and actions (activities) taken, assume responsibility for them, and transparently disclose the results of the decisions or actions taken.

Effectiveness refers to how well the administration of the research project supports and facilitates project implementation, the achievement of project outputs and solving problems if such occur. In order to be effective, the Project Coordinator and the Lead Researcher must be responsive to demands and changes in the project, and follow good practices.

Efficiency refers to how well project funds are used to achieve outputs.

Anti-corruption

ICARS' tolerance towards corruption is zero. Corruption is defined as *the misuse of entrusted power for private gain*. Corruption is perhaps better known in the form of bribery, fraud, embezzlement or extortion. However, corruption does not exclusively involve money changing hands. It may also include providing services to gain advantages, such as favourable treatment, special protection, extra services or quicker case processing. This means that no offer, payment, consideration or benefit of any kind, which could be regarded as an illegal or corrupt practice, shall be made, promised, sought, or accepted – neither directly nor indirectly – as an inducement or reward in relation to the research project. Any such practice will be grounds for the immediate termination of the research project and for such additional action, civil and/or criminal, as may be appropriate.

ICARS must be notified immediately upon suspicion or awareness of specific cases of corruption involving project staff, research partners, and others with whom the project cooperates.

Anti-terrorism

All participating ministries, research institutions, universities, partner stakeholders and others who receive part of the allocated funds must not be registered on either the UN or EU list of terrorist organisations.

Child labour clause

UN conventions on child labour must be complied with, i.e. all participating ministries, research institutions, universities and partner stakeholders must abide by the local laws and by applicable international instruments and conventions.



4. Ethical and Other Approvals

The Lead Researcher and the Lead Research Institution must obtain all relevant ethical approvals and other required permits prior to the initiation of the project activities requiring approval. They must further ensure that the research is carried out in accordance with current international and national conventions and regulations. Compliance with these matters must appear in the annual and completion reports.

5. Partnership Agreement

Written roles and responsibilities, as well as stated commitments and expectations from all project participants, constitute an important co-operation and communication tool for the practical administration of the project. Thus, when a grant has been awarded a Partnership Agreement must be developed between the Responsible Ministry, the Lead Research Institution, co-applicants and partner stakeholders.

The Partnership Agreement must be entered into within the first half year of the research project. The second disbursement to the project is conditional on the timely submission of the Partnership Agreement to ICARS. A template for a standard Partnership Agreement is available in appendix 3.1. It is, however, the responsibility of the project participants to ensure that the Partnership Agreement details all their commitments and expectations to the cooperation and follows the rules of the involved institutions and stakeholders.

It is expected that the Partnership Agreement addresses and includes the following:

- Brief description of the project and its funding;
- The Grant Framework
- Budget and how it is split between the project participants
- The obligations and responsibilities of the Responsible Ministry, the Lead Research Institution, co-applicants and partner stakeholders;
- Project management
- Accounting, monitoring, reporting and audit
- How to settle possible disputes;
- Agreement on how to handle possible conflict of interest
- Agreement on the use and publication of research results
- Amendments and timeframe for the termination of the agreement

While the Partnership Agreement provides a good starting point for the partnership it does not in itself ensure an effective and successful partnership. In order to ensure such during the full lifespan of the research project, it is important to plan the cooperation and build the partnership on values such as trust, mutual respect and sharing.

6. Period of the Grant

The research project must be completed within the approved duration within the Grant Framework. In cases of delays, the Project Coordinator must inform the ICARS Advisor and discuss if and how the problem can be overcome. Any extensions must be well justified and approved by ICARS.

7. Project Adjustments

Adjustments in the research project that need ICARS' approval include:

- Changes in the approved objectives and outputs
- Change of Project Coordinator/Finance Manager or Lead Researcher
- Change of any participating research institution, university or stakeholder
- Reallocations of funds between budget lines exceeding 10% (see below)
- Other changes that influence the project substance e.g. change of objective(s) and change of work packages.



The Project Coordinator should discuss potential needs for adjustments with the ICARS Advisor.

Reallocations

The grant must be used exclusively for approved objectives, outputs and budget items. The expenditures must be within the approved budget. All expenditure must be effected within the duration of the research project.

On the condition that the fulfilment of the project's objectives will not change, reallocations between main budget lines within the approved total budget can be made by up to 10 % of the lowest of the involved budget lines. Reallocations exceeding 10 % must be justified and approved by ICARS. Any reallocations between budget lines must be described and substantiated in the next annual accounts, as well as in the final accounts, with reference to the documented approval from ICARS of changes about the 10 % limit.

8. Disbursement

Participating ministries, research institutions, universities and partner stakeholders must establish a separate finance account/activity for the grant in order to distinguish the funds from other grants.

The disbursement of grant from ICARS will be according to Grant Framework, including the Grant Letter. Instalments are disbursed on the basis of a disbursement request from the Project Coordinator using a Disbursement Request Form.

9. Non-compliance and Revocation of the Grant

Non-compliance will occur if the research project is not fulfilling the terms conditions of the Grant Framework, amongst others:

- Delayed initiation of the project. If the project is not initiated within six months after the anticipated project start, or date of local official approval, the grant will be discontinued, unless the Responsible Ministry and the Project Coordinator forward a justifying request considered acceptable by ICARS
- Other delays not approved by ICARS
- Lack of satisfactory progress towards the planned activities and achievement of the approved outputs
- Missing or unsatisfactory submission of reports and accounts
- Lack of obtainment of the necessary ethical and other approvals and authorization
- Significant non-approved changes in the project in relation to the Grant Framework
- Other irresponsible administration of the grant, including violation of the conditions presented here
- Suspicion of or actual cases of theft, fraud or corruption
- Misuse of funds

The Responsible Ministry and/or the Lead Research Institution is required to immediately, and in writing, inform ICARS about any cases of non-compliance. In the event of non-compliance, ICARS is entitled to take appropriate action with a view to limiting the consequences of the violation, and may require the corrective action to be performed and confirmed to ICARS in writing by mutually agreed deadline. If the Responsible Ministry and/or the Lead Research Institution fails to remedy the non-compliance by the specified deadline, ICARS may discontinue funding, revoke any residual funding and claim repayment of amounts already disbursed.

10. Termination

A project agreement may be terminated in writing by both parties (i.e. the Responsible Ministry and ICARS) with three months' notice. However, in the event of gross violation, ICARS is entitled to terminate the agreement with immediate effect. Before a possible termination, all parties are obliged to seek to resolve conflicts through negotiation. Unresolved conflicts that cannot be brought before a court, but must be resolved through arbitration.



11. Terms and Conditions for Employment

External researchers not identified in the application should be recruited in a transparent manner. National/the institution's own regulations must be followed. The responsibility for employment conditions (announcement, leave, salary, etc.) for staff engaged by the research project and whose salaries are covered by the grant rests with the institution/ministry/university at which the individual staff is employed.

If the Project Coordinator/Finance Manager or the Lead Researcher leaves his/her place of employment, the Responsible Ministry or Lead Research Institution must notify the ICARS Advisor and seek consensus on a named replacement. Changes in any of the institutional participants must also be agreed with ICARS the other participants accompanied by a signed agreement endorsing the transfer of responsibilities with regards to the grant. Should it be impossible to continue the project in a way that ensures that the objectives can be met, the responsibility to end the project rests with the Responsible Ministry, showing the greatest possible consideration for the partners involved, especially ensuring that the PhD students included in the project can finalize their study programmes.

No additional funding can be provided in connection with illness and parental leave, but no-cost extensions are possible in special circumstances (see section 6). See *Guideline for the Project Proposal* for information about ICARS' rules concerning salary and emoluments.

12. Purchases

All purchases as per the approved budget must be made in accordance with international and/or national procurement regulations.

Project expenses must not include VAT, in the case that it is possible for ICARS or co-applicant research institutions/universities or partner stakeholders to receive VAT refund.

The handling of equipment bought as part of the research project must be agreed with ICARS before finalization of the research project.

13. Accounts and Audit

The annual and the final accounts must be externally audited, and the audit is to include the entire set of project accounts, including the accounts of every project participant receiving funding as part of the research project. The externally audited report should follow the rules and regulations as outlined in the *Audit Instructions*.

The maximum amount to be used for external audits is 4,500 USD per year and 7,700 USD for the final audit. The funds for audit are earmarked. Additional expenses will not be accepted, but must be borne by the research institution or ministry responsible for the financial reporting. The audit expenses are not subject to overhead.

ICARS, Rigsrevisionen and the Public Accounts Committee (Statsrevisorerne) have the right to request all relevant information from the project at any time. Project staff must provide assistance and full access to the information needed. Throughout the duration of the research project ICARS must have access to carry out investigations of the material serving as the basis for the grant accounts, as and when ICARS deems it necessary.

Any interest gained, any exchange rate gains will be recognised as income and will be specified separately in the annual accounts. Any unused funds and interest gained will be returned to ICARS at the end of the project with a clear indication of the ICARS project reference and project title.



14. Reporting

All projects must report on the progress of project implementation on an annual basis and submit a completion report after project completion. It is the responsibility of the Project Coordinator to report in a timely manner to ICARS. The annual report must also include externally audited accounts.

The deadlines for the annual reports and externally audited accounts are set one year after the initiation of project implementation. The deadline for submission of the completion report and the final accounts is six months after the approved completion date.

Annual reports and externally audited accounts must be signed by the Project Coordinator, the Lead Researcher, the Responsible Ministry and the Lead Research Institution who thereby confirm that the report is mutually agreed upon among all project participants, is true and accurate and is complying with the conditions presented here. The completion report must, in addition, be signed by all co-applicants and partner stakeholders.

The content of the reports must be agreed by all project partners and it is the responsibility of the Project Coordinator to ensure that all project partners are involved in the preparation of the reports. Internal deadlines must be agreed for input and consultations concerning the reports. The report should strike a balance between being technical and easy for laymen (non-researchers in the specific field) to understand the progress and results.

15. Dissemination

When communicating about the project or disseminating project results all project participants should be mentioned and given credit as contributors. When referring to ICARS the full name of the organisation should be used (International Centre for Antimicrobial Resistance Solutions). The ICARS logo can be requested in various formats by email to contact@icars-global.org.

As part of the Project Proposal the country is expected to develop a dissemination strategy which will be implemented with support from ICARS. The strategy should include communication to the scientific community (through publications, conferences etc.) as well as a wider range of relevant stakeholders.

16. Rights

Any intellectual property claim to outputs related to the projects must first be cleared with ICARS in line with the *ICARS' Intellectual Property Policy*.