



***Publication
Reference***

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Guidelines For the implementation Of EA projects

PURPOSE

The purpose of this guideline is to provide assistance by the implementation of EA projects, notably on behalf of the European Commission. But this guideline is also applicable to other projects, identified by the Executive Committee.

The general procedure on how to implement a project includes subjects as feasibility review, responsibilities, contract review, processes and financial provisions.

Authorship

The publication has been written by the EA Executive committee.

Official language

The text may be translated into other languages as required. The English language version remains the definitive version.

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Further information

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1 INTRODUCTION

The European co-operation for Accreditation (EA) is the association of National Accreditation Bodies (NABs), which conduct and administer accreditation of Conformity Assessment Bodies (CABs) in Europe.

The tasks and objectives of EA are laid down in the Articles of Association and the Rules of Procedure (EA-1/17A).

EA has been appointed as the European accreditation infrastructure according to Article 14 in Regulation (EC) 765/2008, setting out the requirements for accreditation and market surveillance relating to the marketing of products. Article 13 of Regulation (EC) 765/2008 specifies the activities the Commission may request EA to provide in relation to development of sectoral accreditation schemes and evaluation criteria and peer evaluation procedures.

Furthermore, the General Guidelines for the Cooperation between EA and the European Commission, the European Free Trade Association and the Competent National Authorities include in detail the expectations towards EA and related tasks.

The implementation of the tasks pursuant to the objectives of EA is subject of the regular EA Plan, covering a period of 4 years, and of the annual EA Work Programmes.

The Framework Partnership Agreement (FPA) defines the general rights and obligations of the European Commission and EA in implementing their partnership. The EA Plan and the Work Programmes are essential components of the FPA. For the purpose of implementing the partnership the Commission may award to EA specific grants for an action and specific operating grants.

The implementation of the defined tasks is carried out from the various committees of EA, which are composed of representatives from the NABs and recognised stakeholders.

Considering the increase of tasks over the last years and their complexity EA has recognised that the implementation of tasks has become more difficult. This concerns in particular certain tasks to be performed in relation to the role of EA according the Regulation (EC) 765/2008. Examples are the implementation of a peer evaluation program of NABs according to ISO 14065 and Commission Regulation (EU) No 600/2012, and the project of a Quality Assurance scheme for Breast Cancer Services underpinned by Accreditation.

Therefore, it is intended to establish a project-based approach to conduct certain tasks, notably related to the European Commission.

2 SCOPE

The scope of this guideline is only related to certain tasks, which are identified as projects by the Executive Committee and endorsed by the EA General Assembly. Thereby particular attention has to be paid to ensure that projects or project work do not interfere the committees and their work.

The following issues may support the decision to identify a project:

- have specific objectives, suitable to the EA Plan and/or the FPA;
- create new outputs and deliverables;
- have a specific, temporary management organisation and governance arrangements set up for the duration of the project;
- may use methods and approaches that are different from regular operations of EA;
- have special financial provisions, in particular for reimbursement of expenses.

3 FEASIBILITY REVIEW

Before commencing a project the Executive Committee will review the aim and content of the proposed project in order to determine:

- Availability of resources and competencies required within EA,
- Financial consequences and if applicable the adequate funding being provided by the European Commission, EFTA or other organizations in question

If necessary the EA Secretariat will ask the EA members about the availability of resources and the involvement in the project in question.

Based on this review the Executive Committee will provide a recommendation to the EA General Assembly about the acceptance of the project for endorsement.

4 RESPONSIBILITIES

4.1 EA General Assembly

The EA General Assembly is responsible for the endorsement of projects based on a proposal from the Executive Committee. The Rules of Procedure (EA-1/17A) shall be applied for the process of endorsement.

Note: In general projects will be endorsed by the EA General Assembly with the endorsement of the annual EA budget.

Depending on the nature of a project and the project ownership the final results and reports are endorsed by the:

- EA General Assembly, if the report contain criteria or requirements mandatory for NABs to comply with
- Project owner (e.g. European Commission)
- Executive Committee

4.2 EA Executive Committee

The Executive Committee is responsible for management of projects. It appoints the Project Manager, provides support to her/him and has final approval of all scopes changes, and signs off on approvals to proceed to each succeeding project phase. Other responsibilities are but not limited to:

1. Identifying of projects and their definition
2. Prearrangement, including time scale, of a project
3. Nomination of the Project Team members
4. Monitoring compliance by the parties involved with their responsibilities and obligations
5. Overseeing the management, the conduct and the progress of a project
6. Monitoring the expenditure and costs of a project

7. Acting as Project Coordinator, if appropriate
8. Confirmation of the draft final results and report

Some or all responsibilities may be transferred to a Project Steering Group (PSG) appointed by the Executive Committee from its members, or to other appointed groups/persons.

4.3 Project Manager

The Project Manager manages the project from its start to the final report. Its responsibilities include:

- assisting by formulating the accurate scope of the project and the expected deliverables
- developing the project plan, including schedule
- determining the organizational structure of the project team and identify roles and positions
- identifying services to be provided by third parties
- controlling the project, including risk management
- communication and status reporting, including the final report
- ensuring that the project is delivered in budget, on schedule and within its scope
- ensuring that all relevant project documents are duly conveyed to the Secretariat at the end of the project for final retention

Note: In general the Executive Committee appoints the Project Manager from one of the EA members, based on a call for experts.

4.4 Project Team

The Project Team is the group responsible for planning and executing the project. It consists of the Project Manager and a variable number of project team members.

The Project Team members are responsible for executing tasks, producing deliverables as outlined in the Project Plan and supporting the Project Manager.

Note: In general the Executive Committee appoints the Project Team members from the EA members, based on a call for experts.

4.5 Other experts involved

For certain tasks there could be an additional need to involve further experts. These experts have to be nominated by the Executive Committee or the EA PSG.

4.6 Secretariat

The EA Secretariat provides administrative project assistance, unless otherwise defined. The assistance comprised inter alia:

- Financial issues, e.g. mandating and compensation of persons contributing to the project
- Project meetings (web – and face to face meetings)

- Preparation of contracts / agreements, if applicable
- Retention of (final) project documents, including contracts / agreements

5 BUDGET AND REIMBURSEMENT OF EXPENSES

The budget for each project, as part of the EA annual budget, has to be defined by the Executive Committee. The budget has to comprise at least the following:

- expenses (daily rates) for the Project Manager and the Project Team members,
- expenses (daily rates) for the Executive Committee members involved in the project,
- expenses (daily rates) for other experts or consultants involved,
- travel and subsistence expenses,
- expenses for hosting of meetings and workshops,
- expenses for the administration (secretariat, accounting, etc.).

The compensation of expenses will be accomplished according to:

- EA-1/20 S1 A-AB Terms and Conditions for Financial Compensation from the Operating Grant to an EA Member Accreditation Body or
- the contract / agreement, signed for the specific project.

6 CONTRACTS / AGREEMENTS

Contracts / Agreements with third parties related to projects are reviewed by the Executive Committee and with support by the EA Secretariat.

Contracts / Agreements will be signed by the EA Chair and/or the Executive Secretary under the following conditions:

- Contract reviewed by the Executive Committee
- Feasibility review of the project by the Executive Committee with positive recommendation to the EA General Assembly (see item 2)
- Endorsement of the project by the EA General Assembly

The Executive Committee may decide that certain project issues related to EA members / persons involved should be defined in special agreements (e.g. consortium agreements). Depending on the type of project those agreements may comprise:

- Purpose of the agreement
- Entry into force, duration and termination
- Responsibilities of the parties
- Liability towards each other's
- Project structure

- Financial provisions
- Confidentiality

7 PROCESS

The process operation depends on various influencing factors and may be specific to each project, notably if projects are conducted on behalf of third parties (e.g. European Commission). Nevertheless it is useful to describe the general process operation. Deviations from this general process operation are possible and sometimes useful, but the deviations in a certain project should be noted and implemented in the project plan.

GENERAL PROCESS OPERATION

1. Project proposal
Description of the project proposal, including resources and budget needed.
2. Feasibility review (see item 2)
3. Project endorsement
4. Subscription of contracts / agreements, if applicable (see item 5)
5. Project establishment and selecting of the Project Manager, Project Team members and if applicable further persons (see item 3)
6. Elaborating of the final project description and project
Part of the project plan is the definition of project phases and/or milestones and/or deliverables.
The allocation of tasks for the Project Team members and further persons involved will be defined, if applicable.
7. Endorsement of the project description and project plan
Note: In particular by projects in cooperation with the European Commission the project description and project plan may be part of the official tender and/or agreed with the European Commission.
8. Accomplishment of the Project
Parts of the accomplishment are the monitoring and regular reporting about the defined milestones and/or deliverables.
9. Preparation of the final project results and report
10. Endorsement of the final project results and report (see item 3)