

ERCEA grant management under COVID-19



Maximum flexibility under H2020 ERC MGA rules to alleviate the consequences of the COVID-19 epidemic on the PIs

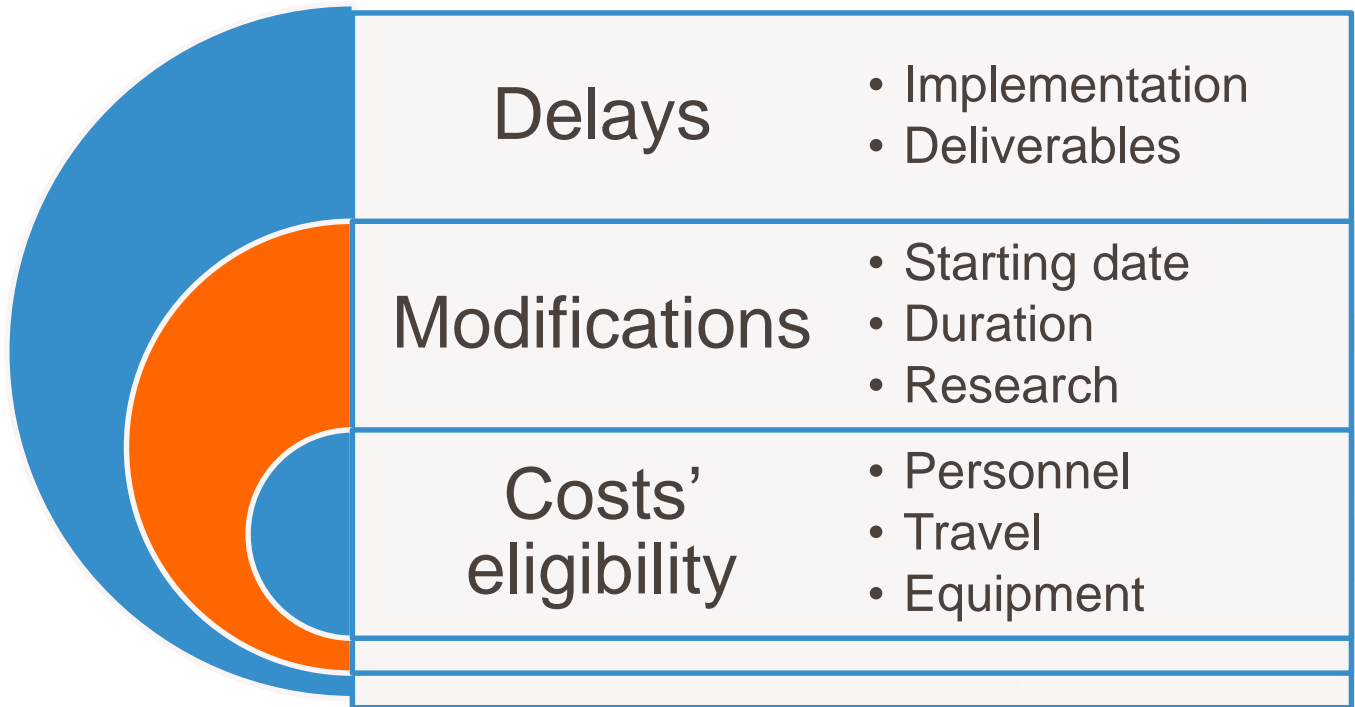


Beneficiaries must try to immediately inform the Agency

COVID-19 and H2020 ERC GA



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FLEXIBILITY IN CASE OF DELAYS DUE TO COVID-19



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Delays in granting

- Flexibility for a later starting date.

Delays in implementation

- Flexibility in the implementation of the action when impacted by the confinement. Extension of duration.

Delays in reporting

- Flexibility on the 60 days period for submission of the reports.
- For final payments: exceptionally, possibility to add a new interim period to reimburse up to 90%.

AMENDMENTS DUE TO THE IMPACT OF COVID-19



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New start date

- Only if start date in the future (no work has started yet)
- Set a fixed date later in the future

Extensions

- Up to 6 months: handled favorably and in a speedy manner.
- Beyond the 6 month: case-by-case assessment

Reorientation of the research

- To tackle COVID-19 crisis
- Assessment on a case-by-case basis

AMENDMENTS DUE TO THE IMPACT OF COVID-19



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Simplified procedure for AMD requests induced by COVID
to the **action's starting date** and **to extend the duration**
(6-month extension)
without modification of the Description of Action

Characteristics:

- Requests will be processed favorably and in a speedy manner
- The COVID induced extensions can be claimed at all moments, during the life time of the grant, yet preferably after midterm report
- Extensions can be combined with other types of extensions such as scientific/personal circumstances

AMENDMENTS DUE TO THE IMPACT OF COVID-19



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Change proposed	Is an AMD needed?
Shift of action tasks from tasks where physical presence is needed on the ground (e.g. experiments/lab work, etc.) to remote work (desk work, drafting of reports, etc.) during confinement period	No
Budget shifts between cost categories or beneficiaries to address the consequences of COVID-19, for as long as the action is implemented as per Annex 1	No
Change in annual productive hours for calculating personnel costs from Options 1 or 3 to Option 2	No
Request to introduce an additional interim period	Yes
Delay of starting date Extension of action duration	Yes
Reorientation of the action to contribute to tackling the COVID-19 crisis	Yes

COSTS' ELIGIBILITY: FLEXIBILITY IF LINKED TO COVID-19 IMPACT



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Flight
or
Meeting
Cancellation...



Force Majeure – COVID-19

Extra costs for the implementation of the action, may be eligible if:

- they fulfil the eligibility conditions (Art. 6 MGA)
- beneficiaries take necessary steps to limit any damage

Cost eligibility assessed on case-by-case basis

COST ELIGIBILITY: FLEXIBILITY DUE TO COVID-19 IMPACT



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Travel

- Eligible even if not in line with usual travel costs practices if needed for exceptional situations

Equipment

- Exclusively used for the action: full depreciation costs eligible even if not used
- New equipment: costs eligible from the day its depreciation starts
- Not used exclusively for the action: unused periods not taken into account

Personnel

- Teleworking costs eligible even if not usual practice
- If teleworking not possible, the mandatory confinement period set out by the authorities qualifies as special absence

COSTS' ELIGIBILITY: FLEXIBILITY IF LINKED TO COVID-19 IMPACT



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- **Teleworking**

- Highly recommended where possible
- Hours/costs charged as normal as long as there is no state intervention in salary payments (furlough schemes)
- 25% indirect costs can be charged
- PI's need to ensure effective supervision of the team

TIMESHEETS FLEXIBILITY IF IMPACTED BY COVID-19



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If beneficiaries encounter **difficulties in obtaining the monthly signature** of their timesheet or if electronic signature is not possible...

they can exceptionally:

- delay the signature until the end of the confinement
- or
- have an electronic version of the timesheet (scan or photo) approved by the supervisor via email.



Note: originals need to be kept

COSTS' ELIGIBILITY: FLEXIBILITY IF LINKED TO COVID-19 IMPACT



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Will the EU contribute to researcher salaries for the time they could not work due to the COVID-19 confinement measures?

NO

Horizon 2020 grants only provide EU funding for the hours actually worked on the action

COSTS' ELIGIBILITY: FLEXIBILITY IF LINKED TO COVID-19 IMPACT



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P e r s o n n e l

- *How do I handle furlough income?*
- Personnel costs must be “Actual” - Article 6(2) of H2020 MGA eligibility condition
- Any amounts partly or totally reimbursed from other sources (e.g. short-time work scheme, social security or public schemes), must be deducted from the annual personnel costs when calculating the hourly rate



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European Union funding
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• Covid Leave as a Special Absence

- Use of Individual Annual Productive Hours (Option2) = *flexibility to contribute to costs of unworked confinement time*
- Requires a switch to Annual methodology if using Monthly (*required for all on-going H2020 grants*)
- Other Productive Hour options can be used for staff who can continue to work
- Formula = Workable Hours + Overtime – Absences (incl. Covid 19)

COSTS' ELIGIBILITY: FLEXIBILITY IF LINKED TO COVID-19 IMPACT



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- **Productive Hour Option 2 - Individual Annual Productive Hours**
- Deduction of absences = **lower productive hours resulting in higher hourly rate**
 - Higher hourly rate can also be used in next incomplete financial year

$$\text{Annual hourly rate} = \frac{\text{Annual Personnel costs}}{\text{Annual Productive hours}}$$

PI's TIME COMMITMENT



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If due to COVID-19, PIs cannot fulfil the time commitment, they may:

- Compensate in upcoming months,
- Request an extension,
- Suspend the action's implementation,
- **Exceptionally**, use teleworking arrangements for PIs who are confined abroad due to Covid-19 so that it counts as time spent on the ERC project and in EU/AC for a duration that is reasonable in relation to the situation of the country concerned.



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SUMMARY



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A stylized graphic of a virus or spherical protein structure, composed of blue and light blue geometric shapes, is positioned on the left side of the slide, partially overlapping the three blue callout boxes.

Flexibility regarding delays

Flexibility to adapt the GA

Flexibility on cost eligibility

**Maximum flexibility by ERCEA
within the H2020 MGA**

USEFUL INFORMATION



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- Funding and tenders opportunities portal

<https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/portal/screen/home>

- COVID-19 FAQs

<https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/portal/screen/support/faq?type=1;categories=;programme=H2020;actions=;keyword=COVID-19%20outbreak>

- Helpdesk for Host Institutions

ERC-HI-EVENTS@ec.europa.eu

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