

Funding Guidelines

Vienna Meeting Fund 2021–2023

MEETING
DESTINATION
VIENNA

NOW ♦ TOGETHER

Valid from 1 May 2021

Imprint

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1 Goals

1.1 General objective

Before the outbreak of the pandemic, congresses and corporate meetings in Vienna generated around one billion euros in added value for the city per year; in a long-term comparison, one in eight overnight stays in Vienna was attributable to a conference. In the record year 2018, Vienna's meetings industry was responsible for more than 21,000 year-round jobs and generated tax revenue in excess of the 300-million-euro mark across Austria. Attendees are particularly high spenders: While the average guest in Vienna spends a total of 276 euros per day (2019 value), at 541 euros per day, congress guests spend almost twice as much. Due to the pandemic and the resultant cancellation of conferences, Vienna and Austria are currently losing around 100 million euros per month in added value and tax revenue.

In its status as an international meeting destination, Vienna plays an important role in the city's Economy and Innovation Strategy 2030 and in Vienna Tourist Board's Visitor Economy Strategy. In addition to direct economic and networking effects, meetings are also an opportunity to draw international attention to the city's individual areas of strength and individual sectors.

(Association) congresses and corporate events are of central importance for Vienna's tourism industry and should be promoted according to their roles as an economic asset, as a driving force for the internationalization of the city, and as a trigger for local value creation.

The funding measure is expressly not meant to compensate for damage incurred. Funding will only be provided for costs incurred for actually holding a meeting.

1.2 Target group

The programme is aimed at all national and international legal entities (organizers, cf. point 3) planning to hold and stage an event in Vienna as defined in point 4.

2 Legal basis

2.1 National legal basis

The national legal basis for the present Funding Guidelines comprises the corresponding resolutions of the Supervisory Board and the Vienna Tourist Board's Experts Committee of Congress Promotion as well as the resolution on this funding measure carried by the Vienna City Council on 28 April 2021, under e-Recht-376050-2021.

These Funding Guidelines are valid for submissions from 1 May 2021 to 3 December 2023, subject to possible revisions due to relevant board resolutions or early termination.

2.2 Applicable law/Place of jurisdiction/ Language of these funding guidelines

All legal relationships arising on the basis of these Funding Guidelines will be governed exclusively by Austrian law as well as by the provisions of EU law applicable to these Funding Guidelines or otherwise relevant.

The place of jurisdiction for all legal disputes arising from or in connection with these Funding Guidelines shall be the competent court in Vienna.

The German version of these Funding Guidelines is authoritative and legally binding – this English version is only for information.

2.3 Exclusion of a legal claim

The decision to award funding is made according to the budget funds available on the basis of these Funding Guidelines (see also point 8.5). There is no legal claim to the granting of funding.

2.4 EU law

Funding under this programme is based on the de minimis Regulation. The following legal basis for state aid, as amended from time to time, therefore applies:

Commission Regulation (EU) No 1407/2013 of 18 December 2013 on the application of Articles 107 and 108 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union to de minimis aid; published in the Official Journal of the European Union L 352/1 on 24.12.2013, as last amended by Commission Regulation (EU) 2020/972 of 02.07.2020 amending Regulation (EU) No 1407/2013 as regards its prolongation and amending Regulation (EU) No 651/2014 as regards its prolongation and relevant adjustments; published in the Official Journal of the European Union L 215/3 on 07.07.2020, (in short: "de minimis Regulation").

De minimis subsidies are de minimis state aid that is exempted from state aid control because it is considered to have no effect on EU competition and interstate trade.

3 Which organizers are eligible?

3.1 Eligible applicants

The following organizers (within the meaning of these Funding Guidelines) are eligible to apply if they plan and organize an event as defined in point 4 and bear the economic risk and thus all costs for the event:

- a) Legal entities under private and public law,
- b) Natural persons,
- c) Joint partnerships with legal capacity,
- d) Societies with legal capacity (federations/associations), and
- e) International organisations (Ö-NACE U99).

Agencies (in the sense of these Funding Guidelines) are eligible to apply if they themselves act as organizer or can demonstrate they are working on behalf of the organizer. A maximum of one agency per event is eligible to apply.

3.2 Ineligible applicants

The following organizers are not eligible to apply:

- a) Applicants with pending insolvency proceedings,
- b) The federal government, regional governments, and municipalities as well as area municipalities under public law (*Gebietskörperschaften*),
- c) Political parties within the meaning of the Political Parties Act 2012 or comparable foreign organizations, and
- d) Any entities that do not have legal capacity.

4 Subject of funding

4.1 Eligible events

Funding is available for events that take place between 1 May 2021 and 31 December 2023.

The following business events (events with (registered) participants known to the organizer), which strengthen Vienna as a business and innovation location, are eligible for funding:

- a) (Association) Congresses & Meetings and
- b) Corporate Events & Meetings

4.2 Explicitly excluded events

- a) Pure (corporate) evening events (such as galas, award ceremonies, Christmas parties, etc.), and
- b) Exhibitions & fairs as well as cultural and sporting events.

5 Overview of funding opportunities

5.1 Funding modules

Three modules are defined within the framework of the funding measure. Modules 2 and 3 are based on Module 1. Funding for Modules 2 and 3 can only be applied for if the requirements for Module 1 are also met.

Qualification for Funding Module 1

The event takes place on a site in Vienna

- a) Location: The event takes place in a Viennese hotel or a Viennese (event) location operating commercially on the market against payment of room rental/a conference flat rate.
- b) Event duration: At least 4 hours.
- c) Participants: At least 50 participants must be present on site.

Qualification for Funding Module 2

In addition, the event generates hotel overnight stays

In addition to the requirements for Module 1, the following conditions must be met:

- a) 2021: The number of overnight stays in Viennese hotels for the purposes of participation in the event must be at least 10% of the total number of participants in the event on site.
- b) 2022: The number of overnight stays in Viennese hotels for the purposes of participation in the event must be at least 30% of the total number of participants in the event on site.
- c) 2023: The number of overnight stays in Viennese hotels for the purposes of participation in the event must be at least 50% of the total number of participants in the event on site.

Example 2021: Module 2 funding can be requested in 2021 if, at a two-day event with 1,000 participants on site, 100 participants spend one night in a Viennese hotel. Similarly, Module 2 funding can be requested in 2021 if 50 participants in a five-day congress with 1,000 participants spend two nights each in a Viennese accommodation facility.

Qualification for Funding Module 3

The event is also carried out as a hybrid event

In addition to the requirements for Module 1, the following conditions apply:

- a) The event takes place as a hybrid event throughout.
- b) A hybrid event is defined as one that takes place on site in Vienna and is simultaneously visited online by a live audience that interactively participates and for which costs have demonstrably been incurred or services have been used.

The Funding Module(s) for which funding is requested must be declared when submitting the application.

Possible in 2021 and 2022:

Module 1
Modules 1 and 2 combined
Modules 1 and 3 combined
Modules 1, 2 and 3 combined

Possible in 2023:

Modules 1 and 2 combined
Modules 1, 2 and 3 combined

The funding amount resulting from Funding Modules 1 to 3 corresponds to the costs actually paid by the organizer, but not more than the maximum funding amount stated for the respective Funding Module. If Module 1 or Module 2 is used, it is irrelevant whether the costs are incurred for overnight stays in Viennese hotels or other event-related costs.

5.2 Funding table at a glance

Beginning with May 2021	Module 1	Module 2	Module 3	
Number of participants on site	Event takes place on site in Vienna	Event generates overnight stays in Viennese hotels amounting to at least 10% of the total number of participants in the event on site	Event is also carried out as a hybrid event	
	Maximum funding in EUR Module 1	Maximum funding in EUR Module 2	Maximum funding in EUR Module 3	Maximum funding in EUR OVERALL
50–99	1,500	900	600	3,000
100–199	3,000	1,800	1,200	6,000
200–499	5,000	3,000	2,000	10,000
500–999	8,000	4,800	3,200	16,000
1,000–1,499	12,000	7,200	4,800	24,000
1,500–1,999	16,000	9,600	6,400	32,000
2,000–2,999	20,000	12,000	8,000	40,000
More than 3,000	30,000	18,000	12,000	60,000

Year 2022	Module 1	Module 2	Module 3	
Number of participants on site	Event takes place on site in Vienna	Event generates overnight stays in Viennese hotels amounting to at least 30% of the total number of participants in the event on site	Event is also carried out as a hybrid event	
	Maximum funding in EUR Module 1	Maximum funding in EUR Module 2	Maximum funding in EUR Module 3	Maximum funding in EUR OVERALL
50–99	900	1,500	600	3,000
100–199	1,800	3,000	1,200	6,000
200–499	3,000	5,000	2,000	10,000
500–999	4,800	8,000	3,200	16,000
1,000–1,499	7,200	12,000	4,800	24,000
1,500–1,999	9,600	16,000	6,400	32,000
2,000–2,999	12,000	20,000	8,000	40,000
More than 3,000	18,000	30,000	12,000	60,000

Year 2023	Combination of Modules 1 & 2	Module 3	
Number of participants on site	Event takes place in Vienna and generates overnight stays in Viennese hotels amounting to at least 50% of the total number of participants in the event on site	Event is also carried out as a hybrid event	
	Maximum funding in EUR Modules 1 & 2 combined	Maximum funding in EUR Module 3	Maximum funding in EUR OVERALL
50–99	2,400	600	3,000
100–199	4,800	1,200	6,000
200–499	8,000	2,000	10,000
500–999	12,800	3,200	16,000
1,000–1,499	19,200	4,800	24,000
1,500–1,999	25,600	6,400	32,000
2,000–2,999	32,000	8,000	40,000
More than 3,000	48,000	12,000	60,000

6 Eligible costs, cost recognition period and assessment bases

6.1 Eligible costs

Funding is provided for variable costs that are incurred or have been incurred directly in connection with organizing the event (see point 4) and are paid to third parties. As a rule, these are the costs paid to the event location or hotel and other service providers such as technical companies or caterers.

To be eligible, these variable costs must:

- a) be clearly itemized,
- b) be directly related to the event (only third-party costs),
- c) not be excessive or outside the range of what is customary in the locality,
- d) be borne by the organizer (exception: agencies (demonstrably) acting on behalf of the organizer),
- e) be proved to have been paid at the time of the final settlement (cancellation costs will not be reimbursed),
- f) be evidenced by invoices (in accordance with the legal requirements),
- g) be included exclusively as net costs, unless the organizer is demonstrably not VAT exempt, and
- h) comprise invoices with a total net amount of EUR 500 or more.

Evidence of the costs actually paid by the organizer (up to the respective maximum funding amount) must be provided.

6.2 Cost recognition period

The planned start and end of the event must be stated when applying.

After these funding guidelines enter into force, the maximum cost recognition period for an event extends from the time of the first event-related invoice to no later than three months after the end of the event.

6.3 Assessment bases

In total, there are three Funding Modules (see point 5) with different assessment bases.

- a) The assessment basis for the Modules 1 and 2 is the sum of the event-related costs (see point 6.1).
- b) The assessment basis for Funding Module 3 is the sum of the event-related costs (see point 6.1) that are additionally incurred due to the hybrid implementation of the event. These include e.g. service costs for technical and conceptual implementation, virtual platform solutions or interaction tools.
- c) The amount of funding corresponds to the costs actually paid but cannot be more than the maximum amount of funding indicated according to the respective category of number of participants (see point 5.2).
- d) Points 6.3.a to 6.3.c apply both to the submission (the preliminary funding commitment) and to the settlement or payment (cf. points 8 and 9).

7 Combination & Cumulation of funding

7.1 Combination of subsidies

Subsidies handled by the Vienna Tourist Board can in principle be combined with other public subsidies if:

- a) this is possible under the EU state aid law cumulation provisions (cf. point 7.2),
- b) a financing risk that is reasonable for the organizer remains in his/her/its sphere of influence,
- c) the financing mobilized for the project through several subsidies of different types (grants, guarantees, loans) does not exceed the planned costs of the overall project,
- d) the combination of subsidies does not lead to the substitution of other public funds, and
- e) doing so does not promote project elements that already receive cash subsidies from other public funds of the City of Vienna.

The combination of subsidies with other monetary subsidies of the Vienna Tourist Board is explicitly excluded.

7.2 Cumulation of aid provisions

The de minimis aid awarded under this programme may be

- a) cumulated with other de minimis aid, provided that, pursuant to Article 3 of the de minimis regulation, the total amount of de minimis aid granted by a Member State (i.e., by Austrian funding bodies) to a "single undertaking" does not exceed EUR 200,000 over a period of three fiscal years.
- b) cumulated with other aid awarded by third parties on the basis of block exemption regulations for the same eligible costs, provided that the maximum aid intensities or amounts are not thereby exceeded.

8 Submission process

8.1 Online submission

Applications are possible on an ongoing basis until 3 December 2023 or until the funds are exhausted (for cumulative committed funding amounts, ranked by receipt and already approved, see point 8.5) and must be submitted exclusively at www.vienna.convention.at. The required information and documents must be filled out completely and correctly.

8.2 Required information and documents

The following information and documents must be enclosed with the submission or completed in full on the online application form:

- a) title, date, and duration of the event,
- b) planned number of participants on site in Vienna,
- c) planned number of total overnight stays,
- d) location offer or location contract,
- e) expected total costs of the event for the organizer,
- f) type of event and industry classification,
- g) company address, contact details, VAT number, legal form and account details,
- h) in case of submission in another name, corresponding powers of attorney/evidence,
- i) de-minimis declaration (the de-minimis declaration is a document in which the organizer discloses the amount of all de-minimis subsidies applied for or granted in Austria in the current and the last two tax years and confirms this in the company's name), and
- j) consent to these Funding Guidelines and consent to the processing of personal data.

The submission documents must be received in full no later than three weeks before the start of the event. Late or incomplete submissions will not be considered. This only applies to events taking place as of July 2021. For events taking place in May 2021 or June 2021, the documents can also be submitted at shorter notice.

8.3 Obligation to report changes

After receiving a provisional commitment, the organizers are obliged to notify the Vienna Convention Bureau without delay and in writing of quantitative or qualitative changes in connection with the event without being requested to do so.

Significant changes must be communicated in writing without unnecessary delay as soon as they become known, together with any resulting changes in costs and/or associated changes to the event period on which the funding is based.

If the event is postponed within the defined cost recognition period, no new application needs to be submitted.

8.4 Formal assessment

The Vienna Tourist Board carries out a preliminary examination of all applications, paying particular attention to whether the formal criteria listed in the previous points are fulfilled and there is a sufficient basis for evaluation. The following applies:

- a) Failure to meet necessary conditions will result in exclusion from the process, and
- b) Failure to fully meet the formal requirements or to submit the de minimis declaration will result in a corresponding one-off additional request.

8.5 Ranking

- a) Submitted applications will be ranked according to the date of their receipt.
- b) The "First-Come First-Served" principle applies: As soon as the funds distributed and approved/committed under this funding measure have reached the stipulated funding volume, the funding will be deemed to have been exhausted.
- c) A ranking on the waiting list is not possible.

8.6 Funding decision

Following submission, a preliminary funding decision is made based on the preliminary key figures including a preliminary funding amount.

The organizer is notified in written form of the provisional decision to grant funding.

The actual funding decision and the actual funding amount will be determined after the event has been held and all information has been submitted.

9 Billing & Payment

9.1 Settlement documents

The following event information and documents are required within three months of the end of the event and are to be submitted to the Vienna Tourist Board exclusively in digital form as pdf files.

- a) Invoices in accordance with the legal requirements (see points 4–6). For all cost items to be settled, the settlement form must be completed in full and corresponding invoice and payment receipts must be enclosed:
 - i) Location invoice,
 - ii) Invoices for other event-related services (accommodation, A/V, catering, etc.),
 - iii) Invoices for services involved with the hybrid implementation of the event (Module 3), or implementation of a digital infrastructure, e.g., technology costs, agency costs for concept implementation.
- b) Statistics of participants (number & national or international origin).

If the documents submitted by the organizer for the final account are defective, and do not provide a sufficient basis for evaluation, a one-time additional demand will be made. If this additional demand is not met within four weeks, the granting of funding will be revoked in accordance with point 11.1.d.

Statistics on the origin of the participants must be submitted as proof for Modules 1 and 2. The Vienna Tourist Board reserves the right to verify the accuracy of the participant statistics on a random basis by means of the participant lists. The verification will be carried out by an auditor nominated by the Vienna Tourist Board on a confidential basis.

9.2 Payment

After reviewing the complete documentation submitted (see point 9.1), the funding amount will be recalculated on the basis of the actual costs of the event that have been reviewed and recognized as eligible for funding. The organizer will be informed of the final funding amount in writing.

The subsidy amount is paid out in the form of a transfer by the Vienna Tourist Board to the organizer's company account.

10 Publication & Retention obligations

10.1 Publication

In the event of funding approval, the organizer must prominently display the Vienna Tourist Board sponsorship with the Meeting Destination Vienna logo in all marketing measures related to the sponsored event whenever it makes sense and is thematically coherent.

In the event of a funding commitment, unless otherwise provided for by federal or regional or EU law, the Vienna Tourist Board and the City of Vienna are entitled after the event ends to communicate non-personal data on funded events and their funding amounts in the overall context of funding reporting.

10.2 Retention of documents

Organizers must keep all documents submitted in connection with the application and all documents relevant to it, as well as the Vienna Tourist Board's documents relevant to the granting of the subsidy and its administration and submitted by the Vienna Tourist Board, properly, carefully, and in an appropriate form. This obligation ends 10 years after the payment of the subsidy according to point 9.2.

This duty of retention includes, in particular, documents suitable for clarifying the following facts:

- a) the net amounts used for the funding assessment,
- b) the amount of the respective funding, and
- c) other de minimis aid specified in the application and applied for or granted in the current tax year as well as in the last two preceding tax years before the application is submitted.

Within the retention period, organizers must grant the Vienna Tourist Board, the Municipality of the City of Vienna, the Vienna City Audit Office, the Federal Audit Office, the European Union bodies or representatives of the aforementioned bodies access to these documents at any time. In particular, organizers must, upon request, provide, transmit or make available these documents in the original or as copies – and in electronic form. If necessary, the aforementioned bodies or their representatives must also be granted access to their premises, offices, warehouses, etc. for inspection purposes.

11 Revocation & Repayment

The following grounds for revocation apply mutatis mutandis to all eligible legal entities.

11.1 Reasons for revocation

If one or more of the items below occurs and becomes known within 10 years of the payment according to point 9.2, the promised funding will be revoked:

- a) the funding was used inappropriately,
- b) any requirements or conditions for the granting of a funding under these Funding Guidelines are not fulfilled,
- c) controls by the Vienna Tourist Board, the Municipality of the City of Vienna, the Vienna City Audit Office, the Federal Audit Office, the organs of the European Union, or agents of the aforementioned bodies are refused or obstructed,
- d) information on circumstances that were decisive for the granting of the subsidy subsequently turn out to be incomplete or incorrect, obscured or omitted, in particular if, contrary to the information provided in the application:
 - i) the event is delayed until after 31 December 2023,
 - ii) the event has been changed so significantly that it no longer meets the basic requirements for this form of funding,
 - iii) the event was not held, or
 - iv) the funded event took place outside Vienna.
- e) the organizer revokes a declaration of consent in accordance with point 12.1 (data protection).

11.2 Announcement of the revocation

If there is a reason for revocation, the revocation must be issued no later than six months after the period specified in point 11.1 expires. In the event of revocation, the grant amount received – plus 4% interest p.a. from the date of transfer – must be repaid within four weeks.

Further claims under civil law remain unaffected by this.

12 Data protection

12.1 Processing of personal data

The organizers are obliged to consent to the processing of all the personal data required in the course of applying for, implementing, and monitoring funding by the Vienna Tourist Board. The Funding Agreement provides that these data are also processed by the following bodies for the purposes of implementing the funding (reviewing and granting):

- a) the City of Vienna, the Vienna City Audit Office, and the funding agencies of the City of Vienna,
- b) the funding agencies of the Republic of Austria and the federal provinces and the Federal Audit Office, and
- c) the institutions of the European Union (European Commission, European Court of Auditors).

The data is stored for a period of 10 years due to legal requirements.

Organizers have the right to revoke declarations of consent at any time by notifying the Vienna Tourist Board in writing. A revocation should be addressed to the data protection officer of the Vienna Tourist Board at datenschutz@wien.info. If a declaration of consent is revoked, all uses of data which are inadmissible without the consent in question will be discontinued within the framework of the legal deadlines at the Vienna Tourist Board.

The revocation of a declaration of consent by the organizer leads to the revocation of the funding award and the reclaiming of grants already paid out, in accordance with point 11.1.e.

13 Compliance with anti-discrimination provisions

Grants under these Funding Guidelines are awarded exclusively to natural persons and legal entities that comply with the prohibition of discrimination pursuant to Section 2 of the Vienna Anti-Discrimination Act (LGBL 35/2004 as amended) and the prohibition of discrimination pursuant to Section 4 para. 3 of the Vienna Anti-Discrimination Act. The organizers must comply with all statutory provisions and legal bases to be observed in connection with the application, the granting and processing of the funding as well as its control and the like. The organizers must assume any damages resulting from the non-observance of the prohibition of discrimination (Section 2 and Section 4 para. 3 of the Vienna Anti-Discrimination Act) or other provisions with which the organizer must comply in connection with the handling of funding or the implementation of the funded project and undertake to fully indemnify and hold harmless the Vienna Tourist Board and the City of Vienna against third-party claims.

A translation of the Vienna Anti-Discrimination Act can be found [here](#).

14 Contact & Submission Point

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