



# COMCEC ProjectFunding

## *PROJECT PREPARATION AND SUBMISSION GUIDELINES*

*(2020 Edition)*

*COMCEC COORDINATION OFFICE  
Department of Programs and Projects  
2020*

*This document sets out the rules for preparation, submission, appraisal and implementation procedures for the projects to be carried out within the framework of COMCEC Project Funding. Please visit COMCEC Project Funding web page (<http://cpf.comcec.org/>) or contact Department of Programs and Projects ([cpf@comcec.org](mailto:cpf@comcec.org)) for further inquiries regarding the procedures described in this document.*

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Definitions	
<b>Activity Report</b>	The document that indicates the content and the evaluation of works performed during each core activity.
<b>Contract</b>	The legal document signed between the Bank and the Project Owner to define the rights, obligations and responsibilities of the parties regarding the implementation, reporting, monitoring, financing and evaluation of the project activities.
<b>Coordination Committee</b>	The Committee consisting of the representatives of the Bank and the CCO and authorized to monitor the overall progress and take necessary measures to ensure smooth implementation of the projects.
<b>Detailed Work Plan</b>	The document that shows detailed timeframes of the main activities as well as preceding and following works in order to monitor the progress of the project activities.
<b>Financial Progress Report</b>	The document that states the expenditures made during the project implementation.
<b>Monthly Progress Report</b>	The document that specifies the progress of the project by detailing the works done and problems faced in each month.
<b>OIC Institutions</b>	Subsidiary, Specialized and Affiliated Institutions of the OIC operating in the field of economic and commercial cooperation.
<b>Project Completion Report</b>	The document that summarizes all financial and technical information regarding the implementation of the project.
<b>Timesheet</b>	The document that presents the work done by each project personnel in the respective month. Timesheet provides a basis for payments to project personnel.

## 1. Introduction

“*Making Cooperation Work: The COMCEC Strategy for Building an Interdependent Islamic World*” (the Strategy<sup>1</sup>), adopted by the 4<sup>th</sup> Extraordinary Session of the Islamic Summit Conference held on 14-15 August 2012 in Mecca, Saudi Arabia, is the main framework of cooperation for COMCEC Member States. Defined by the Strategy, COMCEC’s vision is to build a prosperous Islamic Ummah based on solidarity and interdependence, enhanced mobility and good governance. Accordingly, COMCEC’s mission is to provide a forum to produce and disseminate knowledge, share experiences and best practices, develop a common language/understanding, and approximate policies in the cooperation areas to address and find solutions to the economic and social challenges of the Islamic Ummah.

To materialize the objectives of the Strategy, COMCEC introduced new operational instruments, namely Working Groups and COMCEC Project Funding in order to ensure effective implementation of the Strategy. This Guidelines is prepared to give guidance to relevant stakeholders on rules and procedures of the COMCEC Project Funding Program. This document explains the details about preparing and submitting project proposals to the Program as well as implementation of the COMCEC Funded Projects (CFPs).

This Guidelines has been prepared by the COMCEC Coordination Office (CCO) and will regularly be reviewed and when necessary, updated by it. The PO shall contact with the CCO ([cpf@comcec.org](mailto:cpf@comcec.org)) if additional explanation or clarification is needed during the project submission process.

## 2. Strategic Framework

The Strategy aims to serve sharing experiences and good practices, as well as developing common understanding and approximating policies among the member states thereby addressing the major development challenges of the Islamic world. The COMCEC Project Funding mechanism contributes to the realization of the goals and objectives of the Strategy giving due consideration to its principles. These principles are as follows:

- **Enhancing Mobility:** Enhancing interconnectivity among the Member States through reducing the barriers and enabling the easier movement of goods, persons, capital and knowledge among them.

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<sup>1</sup> The COMCEC Strategy is available at COMCEC web site ([www.comcec.org](http://www.comcec.org)).

- **Strengthening Solidarity:** Pooling the resources and efforts and sharing experiences and best practices to address the common challenges of the Islamic Ummah.

- **Improving Governance:** Increasing the quality and effectiveness of public services and making public administrations more transparent.

The cooperation areas of the Strategy and the COMCEC Project Funding are as follows:

- Agriculture
- Financial Cooperation
- Poverty Alleviation
- Tourism
- Trade
- Transport and Communications

An important aspect of the COMCEC Mission defined by the COMCEC Strategy is to approximate policies among the Member Countries in the respective cooperation areas. In this regard, a special policy debate session is held in each Working Group meeting to come up with concrete policy recommendations on the theme of the meeting based on the findings of the research studies as well as the responses by the Member Countries to the policy questions, which are communicated to the participants before each meeting. These draft policy recommendations are later submitted to the annual COMCEC Ministerial Session for its consideration and adoption. Projects financed under the COMCEC Project Funding shall serve for the implementation of the COMCEC Ministerial Policy Recommendations.

In addition, the Strategy's components namely Principles, Strategic Objectives and Output Areas as well as multilateral nature of the cooperation under the COMCEC shall be paid due regard in designing projects.

### **3. Major Actors and Roles**

The roles and responsibilities within the context of the COMCEC Project Funding are distributed among three entities, namely the Project Owner (PO), the CCO and the Development and Investment Bank of Turkey (Bank).

**Project Owner:** The PO, which is the relevant public institution of a Member Country or an OIC Institution operating in the field of economic and commercial cooperation, is responsible for the submission, management and implementation of the project in order to utilize the funds allocated under the COMCEC Project Funding. The Member Country

must be a member of the respective working group in order to submit a project proposal in a certain cooperation area.

The PO submits regular progress reports during the implementation of the project. The PO is financially responsible to the Bank for the implementation of the project. The PO shall also work in close cooperation and communication with the Bank and the CCO in the fulfillment of its responsibilities (either in terms of implementation or reporting) as defined in the Contract.

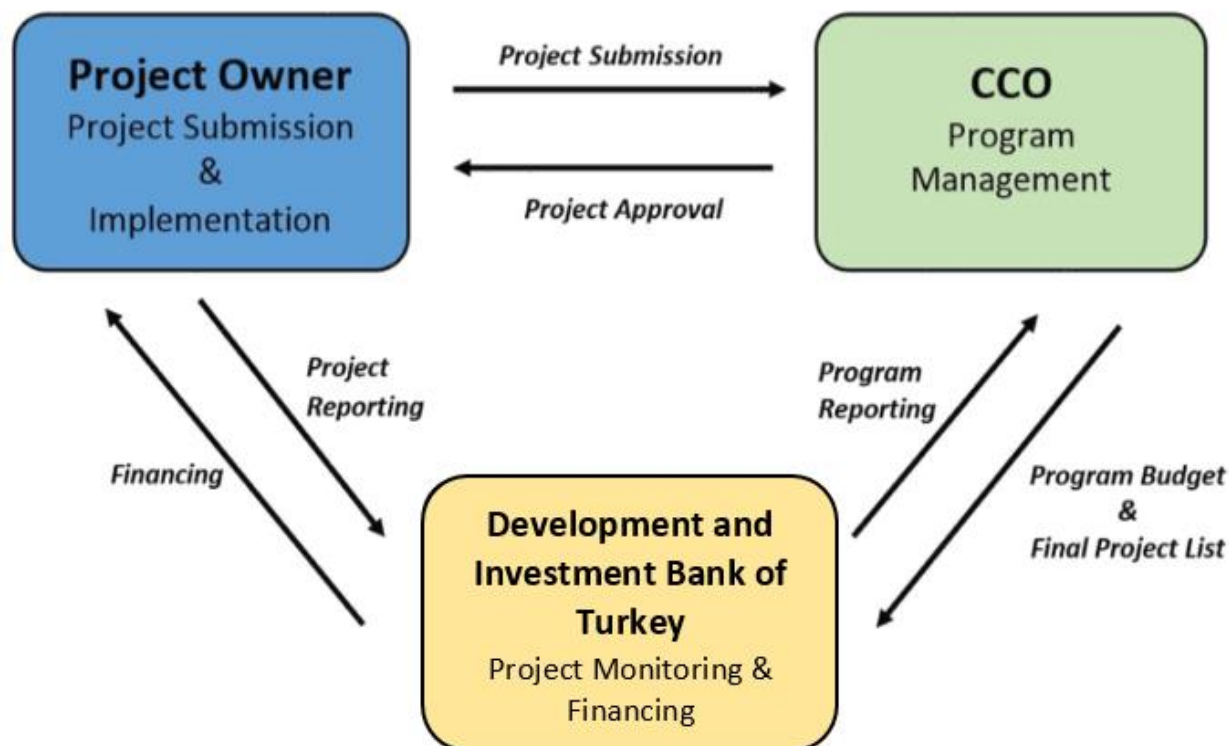
All the rights of reproduction and distribution of the outputs (reports, research studies, data, training materials, etc.) belong to the CCO. The PO shall not share the study in any phase with other people or institutions without the permission of the CCO.

**Responsible Authority:** The Responsible Authority, who must be at least at the Director General level, is the high level representative of the PO and is the main responsible actor for effective and timely implementation of the project activities.

**Contact Person:** The Contact Person is the representative of the PO and mainly responsible for assisting the Responsible Authority with regard to all project related tasks. The responsibilities of the Contact Person include ensuring smooth implementation of the project activities, supervising project personnel, checking the conformity of reports and documents submitted by the PO on behalf of the Responsible Authority.

Graph 3.1 summarizes the roles and responsibilities of each actor within the COMCEC Project Funding.

Graph 3.1. Actors & Responsibilities



**COMCEC Coordination Office:** The CCO is responsible for the overall implementation and monitoring of the COMCEC Project Funding Program. The POs are advised to consult the CCO during the project preparation and submission processes. After the appraisal phase, the CCO finalizes and announces the list of projects eligible for financing, and conveys the respective list to the Bank.

**Development and Investment Bank of Turkey:** The Bank, which is mainly responsible for transfer of payments and monitoring of the projects during the implementation period, signs an operational and financial contract with the PO. The Bank is also responsible for submitting regular progress reports to the CCO regarding the status of the projects.

**Coordination Committee:** The Committee, which consists of the representatives of the Bank and the CCO, is the main body authorized to monitor the overall progress and take necessary measures to ensure smooth implementation of the projects. The Committee convenes at least once a month to discuss the progress of each project. In case of irregularities and/or non-compliance with the Program rules and procedures, the



Committee is authorized to take the necessary measures including abolition of the Contract.

## 4. Project Preparation

### 4.1. Project Essentials

The CCO finances projects serving the implementation of the COMCEC Ministerial Policy Recommendations. To that end, the CCO determines the sectoral themes for projects to be funded under COMCEC Project Funding each year by considering the recent Policy Recommendations and the themes of the upcoming Working Group Meetings.

For the list of the **current supported sectoral themes**, please see the **COMCEC Project Funding web-page**<sup>2</sup>. The project proposals that are not in line with the sectoral themes will not be taken into consideration.

CFPs shall aim at strengthening human, institutional and administrative capacity of the Member Countries along with promoting multilateral cooperation among them. The added-value of the projects shall be demonstrated by the PO in the Project Fiche submitted to the CCO.

The implementation period of the CFPs shall be **7 months**<sup>3</sup> maximum. The PO should select appropriate duration for its project implementation period in the relevant section of the Online Project Fiche. Nevertheless, the CCO reserves its right to shorten the duration of projects during the appraisal as well as the implementation phase.

In order to ensure multilateralism in CFPs, the CCO seeks the participation of at least two other OIC member countries to the project activities. In this sense, POs are required to propose at least two other OIC member countries that are member of the respective working group as project partners. The PO shall choose the project partners by considering their potential contributions to the project. The PO is required to communicate with project partners before the final submission of the project proposal.

Project partners can contribute to the project by participating to the project activities, hosting study visits, providing human resources, transferring expertise or knowledge in a specific area, providing institutional support for the overall implementation of the project, etc. Project partners do not have any responsibility during the submission phase and they do not play a role regarding the financial aspects of the project. The PO makes

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<sup>2</sup> <http://cpf.comcec.org/>

<sup>3</sup> Duration might be shorter depending on the type and number of the project activities.

necessary logistical arrangements for the project partners by using the relevant cost items in the project budget.

## 4.2. Project Types

CFPs are typically soft in character (technical cooperation and capacity building projects) and have two types: **activity-based projects** and **research projects**.

Activity-based projects may include main activities such as;

- **Training:** An educational activity, which includes theoretical and practical studies, aimed at improving personal and institutional capacity of the participants. Following conditions must be considered while designing a training:
  - Maximum duration: 4 days
  - Maximum foreign participants per partner country: 5 people
  - Maximum total participants: 50 people
- **Workshop:** A meeting with a specific focus, which gathers relevant experts, technical personnel and academicians from partner countries, facilitating discussions and hand-on-practices on a specific topic with an aim of reaching some concrete results. Following conditions must be considered while designing a workshop:
  - A written output must be produced at the end of the activity
  - Maximum duration: 3 days
  - Maximum foreign participants per partner country: 5 people
  - Maximum total participants: 40 people
- **Conference and seminar:** Knowledge sharing meetings, which are led by professional or academic speakers, aimed at increasing familiarization or expertise of the participants on a certain topic. Following conditions must be considered while designing a conference/seminar:
  - A final declaration must be produced at the end of the activity
  - Maximum duration: 2 days
  - Maximum foreign participants per partner country: 5 people
  - Maximum total participants: 100 people
- **Study visit<sup>4</sup>:** A technical visit, which is preferably made to one of the partner countries, aimed at collecting information to be used for a training by

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<sup>4</sup> This activity must be linked with a training to be conducted within the framework of the respective project.

interviewing relevant people and institutions in the host country. Following conditions must be considered while designing a study visit:

- Visit must be linked with a training activity within the respective project
  - Maximum two study visits can be performed for each linked training activity
  - Maximum duration per country: 4 days (including travel time)
  - Participants can only be the project personnel (i.e. Responsible Authority, Project Coordinator, Project Contact Person and Trainers) and maximum 2 officials from the project owner institution.
- **Publicity meeting:** A promotional meeting that aims to increase the awareness about project subject or project outcomes by gathering relevant people together. Following conditions must be considered while designing a publicity meeting:
    - Maximum duration: 2 days
    - Maximum foreign participants per partner country: 5 people
    - Maximum total participants: 100 people
  - **Preparation of audio, visual and written promotion materials:** Preparation and dissemination of all kinds of promotional materials in order to increase awareness and knowledge of people on the project topic.
  - **Other similar activities**

An activity-based project can include maximum 3 main activities in total and at most 1 activity from each activity type<sup>5</sup>.

Research projects may include the following activities;

- **Research Study:** Preparation of a written output which may either aim at increasing the stock of knowledge in a specific area or drafting a policy document such as Sectoral Plans, Guidelines, Strategy Documents, Feasibility Studies, etc. by conducting systematic and comprehensive analyses.
- **Field trip related to the research:** A technical visit aimed at collecting data and information to be used for the research study.

Non-Eligible Activities;

- Project preparation
- Physical infrastructure investments

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<sup>5</sup> As an exception, an activity-based project may include 2 different trainings.

- Non-associated investments
- Language courses
- Other activities irrelevant to project

### **4.3. Project Personnel**

The following positions are eligible as project personnel within CFPs; (i) Project Coordinator, (ii) Trainer and (iii) Lead Project Researcher. The CCO prefers OIC member country nationals to be employed to that end.

Please note that public officials cannot be employed as project personnel.

For activity-based projects, the PO will hire a Project Coordinator and Trainer(s) (if the project includes a training activity). For research projects, the PO will only hire a Lead Project Researcher.

The OIC Institutions can propose their own staff as a project coordinator or a trainer within an activity-based project. Nevertheless, they cannot employ their own staff within a research project.

#### **4.3.1. Project Coordinator**

Project Coordinator is a full time employee whose job description can only include project related issues in order to maintain the quality of the project activities and outcomes.

POs can employ only one Project Coordinator.

#### **The Project Coordinator is responsible for:**

- Overall management of all project activities and coordination of the project partners and other relevant stakeholders.
- Evaluating overall project performance and proposing corrective action whenever required.
- Working in close cooperation with the Bank, the CCO and the Project Owner during the implementation of the Project and conducting his/her project related tasks efficiently and in a timely manner.
- Supporting the Responsible Authority, the Contact Person and Trainer(s) (if available) in all project related works.
- Providing relevant information and documents to the Project Owner, the Bank and the CCO.

- Drafting Detailed Work Plan, progress reports along with supplementary documents, Activity Reports, Project Completion Report and conveying them to the Responsible Authority to be submitted to the CCO and the Bank.
- Preparing his/her own timesheets in every month and conveying them to the Responsible Authority to be submitted to the CCO and the Bank.
- Checking and sending training materials that are prepared by Trainer(s) to the Responsible Authority to be submitted to the CCO and the Bank.
- Extending official invitations to the participants from the partner countries to the relevant project activities (training, workshop, etc.)
- Attending COMCEC events and other relevant international meetings (where necessary) to present project activities and outcomes.
- Attending project related meetings, drafting and disseminating minutes of meetings.
- Performing necessary office management tasks including filing.
- Complying with the health and safety law, regulations, ordinance in order to create a safe working environment.
- Following the rules and procedures stated in the Project Preparation and Submission Guidelines, Project Implementation Guidelines, Visibility Manual and the Contract.

#### **General Qualifications for Project Coordinator:**

- Bachelor's degree with 10 years of experience in the relevant field OR advanced degree (M.A., MSc., PhD, etc.) with 5 years of experience in the relevant field
- Fluency in oral and written English
- Previous experience in coordinating international projects
- Strong communication, administrative and organization skills
- Full computer literate
- Preferably an OIC member country national

#### **4.3.2. Trainer(s)**

If the project includes a training activity, the PO needs to hire a Trainer(s). Trainer(s) can be employed only for the duration of the training program(s).

#### **The Trainer is responsible for:**

- Contributing to the preparation of the Detailed Work Plan and Activity Reports.
- Preparing the content and program of the training in collaboration with the Project Coordinator.

- Preparing the training materials in line with the time-frame presented in the Project Implementation Guidelines and the Detailed Work Plan as well as sending them to the Project Coordinator to be later submitted to the CCO and the Bank.
- Collecting and analysing data which is essential to preparation of training program through study visits, interviews, desk-based research, etc.
- Training relevant target groups on the specific subject(s) stated in the Project Fiche.
- Preparing his/her own timesheet and conveying them to the Responsible Authority to be later submitted to the CCO and the Bank.

#### **General Qualifications and Skills for Trainer(s):**

- Bachelor's degree with 10 years of experience in delivering training programs OR advanced degree (M.A., MSc., PhD, etc.) with 5 years of experience in delivering training programs
- Publication in the relevant field (handicraft and similar skill-based training excluded)
- Fluency in oral and written English
- Professional command of local language(s) of the target countries is an asset
- Preferably an OIC member country national

#### **4.3.3. Lead Project Researcher**

If the proposed project is a research project, PO needs to hire a Lead Project Researcher. The Lead Project Researcher is the contractor who will prepare the research report and conduct all project related tasks together with his/her team.

#### **The Lead Project Researcher is responsible for:**

- Overall management and coordination of all project activities in communication with the PO, project partners, the Bank, the CCO and other relevant stakeholders.
- Evaluating overall project performance and proposing corrective action whenever required.
- Forming the research team (selection and hiring of researchers, assistants, etc.) and ensuring the execution of their duties.
- Conducting the field visits in accordance with the Technical and Financial Proposal as well as Terms of Reference document.

- If requested, proving the field visits with the relevant documentation including photos, list of interviewees, signed approval from the interviewees, travel tickets and similar documents.
- Collecting and analysing data which is essential to preparation of the research report through study visits, interviews, desk-based research, etc.
- Sending draft of the research report to the Responsible Authority for pre-assessment and submission to the CCO.
- Conducting the validation meeting in accordance with the Technical and Financial Proposal as well as Terms of Reference document.
- Editing and revising the draft research report(s) by considering the comments and suggestions of the PO, the CCO and participants of the validation meeting.
- Sending the final version of the research report to the Responsible Authority for pre-assessment and submission to the CCO.
- Ensuring that all the requirements of the Technical and Financial Proposal as well as Terms of Reference document are satisfied properly and on time.
- Preparing monthly progress reports and conveying them to the PO to be later submitted to the Bank and the CCO.
- Providing relevant information and documents to the Project Owner, the Bank and the CCO.
- Communicating with the relevant parties from the partner countries regarding the field visits and validation meeting.
- Attending COMCEC events and other relevant international meetings (where necessary) to present project activities and outcomes.
- Attending project related meetings, drafting and disseminating minutes of meetings.
- Performing necessary office management tasks including filing.
- Complying with the health and safety law, regulations, ordinance in order to create a safe working environment.
- Following the rules and procedures stated in the Project Preparation and Submission Guidelines, Project Implementation Guidelines, Visibility Manual and the Contract.

**General Qualifications and Skills for Lead Project Researcher:**

- PhD. degree or at least 10 years of experience in the relevant field
- Publications in the leading academic journals in the relevant field
- Fluency in oral and written English (TOEFL iBT -min. 100- or IELTS -min 7.0-scores are preferred)
- Previous experience in coordinating international projects
- Research experience with a leading international organization is an asset

- Strong communication, administrative and organization skills
- Relevant computer skills (office programs, project management tools, statistical software, etc.)
- Professional command of relevant language(s),
- Preferably an OIC member country national

#### 4.4. Financial Issues

The CCO determines the program budget according to its financial means, the implementation of the CFPs and principles, objectives and priorities set out in the Strategy.

Projects that are submitted by the Member Countries are eligible for financing up to **225.000 USD**. Upper grant limit of the projects submitted by the OIC Institutions is **75.000 USD**. POs need to provide co-financing -**cash or in kind contribution**- for the certain expenses of the projects. The co-finance of the projects submitted by the Member Countries should be **at least 10 percent** of the total project budget. This rate is **at least 25 percent** in case the project is submitted by an OIC Institution, as shown in Table 4.1.

**Table 4.1. Project Budget Limits, Co-Finance Rates and Grant Limits**

Project Type	Project Owner	Project Budget Maximum Limit (USD)	Minimum Co-Finance Rates by the PO	CCO Grant Limit (USD)
Activity-based	Member Countries	250.000	10%	225.000
Research	Member Countries	77.000	10%	69.300
Activity-based	OIC Institutions	100.000	25%	75.000
Research	OIC Institutions	77.000	25%	57.750

The activities or items that will be co-financed by the PO should be clearly demonstrated in the budget section of the online Project Fiche. The PO can present its own institution's equipment, office expenditure (including rent, stationary,



maintenance) etc. as in-kind contribution in the project budget. The PO needs to estimate its in-kind contribution by using the prices of the similar goods and services in the market. In the research projects, co-finance of the PO can only be in cash.

If the PO plans to provide cash as the co-finance contribution, it should make sure that sufficient funds in the national/institutional budget are allocated to be used for its project.

During the selection of projects, the CCO could request additional justification, documents and/or rearrangement (increase or reduction) of the budget among others.

The PO, in any case, cannot request additional financing that is not stated in the project budget. The PO **cannot request advance payment or pre-financing** for any expense.

For activity-based projects, an incidental budget item will be automatically calculated as the 10 percent of the total project budget. This amount can only be used if the realized expense for any budget item exceeds the estimated cost of the respective budget item<sup>6</sup>.

Daily fee for project coordinator cannot exceed \$100 Project coordinator can work maximum 22 days in a month.

For research projects, the total project budget includes payments to the Lead Project Researcher and his/her team as well as other expenses (field visits, travel and administrative costs etc.) related to the research project.

#### **4.4.1. Relevant and Irrelevant Costs**

CFPs have to include only costs relevant to the project activities. Relevant costs should be **necessary, predictable** and **cost-effective** in terms of project implementation.

The relevant costs are:

- Fees of the project personnel
- Allowances and travel expenses of the project personnel
- Organizational costs such as airfare, local transportation, boarding and lodging, interpretation, meeting hall rent and other relevant costs
- Equipment relevant to project implementation (PC, Notebook, Projector, Consumable Materials etc.)
- Refurbishing expenses relevant to project implementation

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<sup>6</sup> Incidental budget cannot be used for the human resource payments.

- Publicity and visibility costs (Web sites, publications, translation, promotional merchandise such as flags, signs, brochures etc.)
- International shipping cost regarding sending official documentations to the Bank

The irrelevant costs are:

- Debt payments
- Payments to public servants except travel expenses and allowances
- Activities already funded under another project
- Project preparation costs
- Interest payments
- Already realized costs
- Purchase of used machinery and equipment
- Building construction
- Vehicle purchase
- Other costs irrelevant to project

Although investment projects are not eligible, **investments associated** with project activities such as supply, small-scale renovation etc. which is directly related with project objectives can be funded. Associated Investments cannot exceed 15 percent of the total project budget.

Please note that projects that were financed partially or entirely, during the project implementation period or previously, by other funding agencies such as World Bank, European Union etc. will not be financed under the COMCEC Project Funding. The Coordination Committee reserves the right to withhold and/or recall funds that are already allocated and abolish the Contract (cancellation of the project) if this situation is determined.

## **5. Project Submission**

The CCO annually issues a call for project proposals in early September. The call is made through the COMCEC web-site. Project proposals are submitted in two stages: Preliminary and Final Submission. Project proposals and any additional project documentation should be submitted **in English** through Online Project Submission System<sup>7</sup>. Timeline of call for project proposals is stated in Table 5.1.

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<sup>7</sup> <http://project.comcec.org>

**Table 5.1. Timeline of Call for Project Proposals**

Timeline	Description
Early September	CCO issues a call for project proposals
End of September	POs submit their preliminary proposals to the CCO (30 days)
End of October	CCO makes <u>preliminary</u> appraisal and declares the short list on the COMCEC web site. (30 days)
Early November	CCO declares the Short List and notifies successful POs via official letters
Mid-December	POs submit the <u>final</u> version of project fiche to the CCO (45 days)
Mid-December to Mid-January	CCO makes final evaluation and may request changes in the project proposals
End of January	CCO declares the Final List of projects on the COMCEC website and notifies successful POs via official letters
Mid-March	Training Program and deadline for the finalization of the signature procedures for the Contract
April 1st- October 31st	Project Implementation Period (7 months max.)

Following the Timeline of the Call for Project Proposals is of crucial importance. Failure to comply with any of these deadlines in the above-mentioned timeline may lead to the elimination of the project proposal.

A member country or an OIC Institution can submit maximum **three project proposals** in any cooperation area. Among these project proposals, the CCO finances **only one project** of each PO per cooperation area. On the other hand, the number of OIC Institutions' projects **cannot exceed one fifth** of the total number of the selected projects in an implementation period. The respective ratio for OIC Institutions can be increased if sufficient number of projects, which are proposed by member countries, are not deemed as successful.

### 5.1. Preliminary Project Submission

In the preliminary phase, the PO provides general information on activities, duration, partners and qualifications of the project personnel.

For research projects, the PO shall prepare and submit a Terms of Reference (ToR) document in the preliminary phase. The ToR shall explain the scope, purpose, methodology, data sources and other issues related to the research study (please see Annex 3 for the ToR Template). The ToR is the main reference document which defines the essentials of the research study to be undertaken by the Lead Project Researcher. Thus, the PO is expected to pay due attention to the preparation of the ToR at the preliminary submission stage.

The PO submits only the qualifications of the Project Coordinator, Trainer(s) and Lead Project Researcher (only for research projects) at the preliminary phase of the project proposal submission.

The POs should submit project proposals only electronically in the preliminary phase; they **are not required to send the hard copies** of their proposals via official channels in the preliminary phase.

The deadline for electronic submission of the preliminary project proposals is the **30<sup>th</sup> day** of the call. Proposals received after the submission deadline shall not be considered.

In 30 days after the submission deadline, the CCO makes preliminary appraisal and declares the short list in early November.

## **5.2. Final Project Submission**

If a project proposal is short-listed, the PO is requested to complete the rest of the project fiche at the final submission phase.

**For the activity-based projects**, in the final phase;

- The PO shall provide additional details about the activities and prepare the project budget,
- The PO shall submit the CVs of at least two candidates for the Project Coordinator position and the CVs of at least two candidates for each Trainer position with the qualifications stated in the project fiche. The PO should use the CV Template in the Online Project Submission System. The CCO selects the project personnel for each position in consultation with the PO. The CCO may request the PO to reconsider the candidates.

**For the research projects, in the final phase;**

- The PO shall first find potential Lead Project Researchers. The potential Lead Project Researchers will prepare their Technical and Financial Proposals (including outline of the study, methodology, budget, CVs of research team, list and samples of similar publications, etc.) to meet the essentials of the research study defined in the ToR. The Technical and Financial Proposals shall be 20-40 pages excluding annexes.
- After collecting the Technical and Financial Proposals from potential Lead Project Researchers, if necessary, the PO shall request some revisions on proposals in order to ensure their compliance with the requirements of the ToR.
- Afterwards, the PO shall submit at least two Technical and Financial Proposals in the final project submission period via the Online Project Submission System. One of the Technical and Financial Proposals will be selected after the evaluation process. The CCO reserves its right to request revisions and amendments on the selected Technical and Financial Proposal.

The PO should submit the final project proposal electronically to the CCO in **45 days** following the declaration of the short-list.

During the final submission phase, the POs are advised to consult the CCO regarding project preparation procedures and/or the content of their projects. For both preliminary and final appraisal phases, the CCO reserves its right to request the POs to make revisions in the project content in order it to be eligible.

## **6. Project Appraisal**

The CCO takes into account following main criteria while evaluating the project proposals. POs should give utmost importance to each criterion in order their project proposals to be selected for funding.

- a) Relevance to the COMCEC Strategy
  - (i) Principles
  - (ii) Strategic Objective of Respective Cooperation Area
  - (iii) Output Areas of Respective Cooperation Area
- b) Compliance with the COMCEC sectoral themes published on the COMCEC website
- c) Promotion of multilateral cooperation among COMCEC member countries
- d) Regular participation of the PO's focal points to the relevant Working Group Meetings
- e) Filling out the Project Fiche properly and with sufficient details
- f) Qualifications of the proposed project personnel

- g) Realistic cost estimations in the project budget
- h) Cooperation and communication with the CCO
- i) Connection with previous COMCEC funded projects implemented by the PO

## 7. Project Implementation

After the evaluations, the CCO declares the final-list of the projects that will be funded. The Bank starts the procedures for signing the Contract with each PO after receiving the final project list from the CCO. The Bank signs the Contract with each PO until mid-March and the implementation period for final-listed projects starts on April 1<sup>st</sup>.

If the signing procedures of the Contract are not finalized (signed and sent to the Bank) by Mid-March at the latest, the CCO might give Project Owners additional time to complete the respective procedures. However, the CCO reserves its right to cancel selected projects whose Contracts have not been finalized within the given time.

After the Contract is signed, the PO starts implementing its project in line with the Project Implementation Guidelines, the Contract, Project Fiche, ToR (for research projects) and the Visibility Manual.

All documentation of the project, including research reports, monthly and financial progress reports, timesheets, minutes of meetings, proceedings, visual and other materials etc., must be prepared and -if available- printed in English. In addition to English versions, POs might choose to print respective documents in other languages if it is stated in the Project Fiche.

### 7.1. Payments

Payments are processed based on Detailed Work Plan, Monthly Progress Reports, Financial Progress Reports, Activity Reports, Project Completion Report, Draft and Final Research Reports (for research projects), Timesheets, invoices and other supporting documents submitted by the PO through Online Monitoring System<sup>8</sup>.

In activity-based projects, all expenses, except for human resources payments, will be paid by the Bank when a main activity<sup>9</sup> is undertaken and necessary reports are approved by the Bank and the CCO. Payments to the Project Coordinator can only be made upon approval of the relevant Monthly Progress Report and Timesheet by the Bank and the CCO. Payments to the Trainer(s) can only be made upon approval of the relevant

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<sup>8</sup> Can be reached Online Project Submission System (<http://project.comcec.org>) with the same username and password once the project is approved for funding.

<sup>9</sup> Main activities of the project such as training, workshop, study visit, etc.

Activity Report and Timesheets by the Bank and the CCO. Human resources payments are made by the Bank directly to the bank accounts of Project Coordinator and Trainer(s).

Payments other than human resources are transferred either to the bank account of the project owner institution stated in the Contract or directly to the bank account of the vendors providing the service or equipment. For the latter method, Responsible Authority must send an official letter to CCO in which the exact amount of payment to each vendor and its bank account are explicitly stated.

In research projects, payments will be made either to the Lead Project Researcher's or his/her firm's bank account in two installments upon approval of the draft and final versions of the research report as well as relevant Monthly Progress Reports by the Bank and the CCO.

Due to financial regulations of the host country (Turkey), all payments are subjected to **stamp duty** (%0,948). The exchange rate for US Dollars used in the invoices submitted to the Bank will be based on the rate of the date the invoice is billed.

## **7.2. Monitoring and Evaluation**

In order to ensure smooth implementation of the projects, the Bank and the CCO performs monitoring activities via both document reviews and site visits. The Bank also monitors project activities in terms of risks related to project implementation and informs the CCO accordingly if any problem occurs during the project implementation.

For the activity-based projects, the PO submits the following reports to the Bank and the CCO for financial and technical monitoring:

- In the first month of the project, the PO submits a Detailed Work Plan
- Each month, the PO submits the Monthly Progress Report and Timesheet of the Project Coordinator
- After a core activity is undertaken the PO submits;
  - Financial Progress Report along with invoices and other supplementary documents
  - Activity Report along with photos, videos and similar materials
  - Timesheet of the Trainer(s)
- At the end of the project, the PO submits the Project Completion Report

For the research projects, the PO submits the Monthly Progress Reports to the Bank and the CCO each month in addition to the draft and final versions of the research report in accordance with the timeline in the Technical and Financial Proposal as well as Terms of Reference Document.

Detailed information about the implementation phase of the COMCEC Funded Projects can be found in the Project Implementation Guidelines.

**Annexes:**

1. Project Fiche
2. ToR Template (For Research-Based Project)
3. Visibility Manual



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