

What to do with changes within NICHE projects?

Nuffic is aware that projects are only rarely implemented exactly as planned. Below some changes that may occur, as well as a description of how partners and Nuffic are expected to deal with them.

If you want to receive additional information or advice, please do not hesitate to contact the responsible Nuffic Programme Administrator.

In case of doubt we suggest to request permission for changes in advance to avoid the risk of rejection afterwards.

I. Type of changes that always have to be approved by Nuffic in advance.

These changes may only be implemented after written approval from Nuffic.

- *Changes in objectives or outputs:* project objectives and outputs are described in the final project proposal (based on the approved inception report). Changes at these levels could alter the character of the project and could therefore lead to unfair situations for other organisations that participated in the tender process, but did not win the tender. If adaptations are deemed necessary, both implementing organisations should submit a substantiated joint proposal to Nuffic. Nuffic will then decide whether the proposed changes are justified and, if so, whether the project can continue or whether it should be stopped, which would require a new tender procedure.
- *Use of contingencies:* The budget for contingencies is set at 5%. Contingencies are unforeseen extra costs that cannot be avoided if the project is to achieve its objectives. These extra costs could not be anticipated when the budget was drafted but are essential for the project to achieve its objectives. 'Contingencies' cannot be spent on new activities and have to be stated in the budget in accordance with the prescribed budget format. Please note that contingencies are not part of the operational budget.

II. Type of changes where Nuffic should be informed retrospectively.

- *Changes in inputs or at the activity level:* Changes may occur in the context of the project, and the project has to adapt to them. It is NICHE policy that the Southern and the Dutch project implementers take joint responsibility for changes in the project execution at input or activity level. Nuffic's position is that the project implementers are best placed to judge the suitability and necessity of changes at these levels.
- *Any budgetary deviations of more than 20% of the annual budget per output should be analysed / explained in the annual reporting.*

Exception:

Changes in the experts proposed by the Dutch consortium as part of their bid: such replacements are only permitted if the circumstances and/or the Southern partners demand it. These changes at the input level must be explicitly agreed upon by both project partners and should be submitted to Nuffic in advance. The expert should be replaced by an expert with comparable experience and expertise.

Assessment

We will check the legitimacy of the implemented changes during our review of the annual reporting. We will check whether the change was necessary in order to achieve the planned results or objectives, and whether it was cost-efficient. If this is not the case, we may reject the changed input or activity and, as a result, withhold payment of the related costs. If changes have occurred without the explicit consent of one of the partners, we may also reject them.