COVID-19 Cancellation Policy for IBRO-Funded Programs & Events

IBRO leadership has closely monitored the COVID-19 (coronavirus) situation as it has quickly evolved over the previous weeks. The health, safety and well-being of the IBRO community is our highest priority. The World Health Organization’s (WHO) declaration of a global pandemic, combined with numerous institutional travel restrictions and ever-increasing numbers of confirmed cases indicate a clear need for action.

In response to the rapidly changing circumstances, it is necessary for IBRO to implement a strategy addressing the concerns of our grantees. The policy outlined below relates to the postponement or cancellation of IBRO-funded programs and events originally scheduled for 2020.

We are grateful to our organizers who have worked diligently toward the successful planning of their respective events. The IBRO secretariat will be working closely with IBRO leadership and local organizers to appropriately respond to further questions and provide additional information as and when it becomes available.

Rescheduled Events

1. Recurrent Events

Recurrent events are defined by their receipt of IBRO funds over a period of several consecutive years. Such events include schools hosted by the IBRO Advanced Training Centers in Africa and Asia and those funded by IBRO’s Regional Committees. The repetitive nature of such events is documented in approved budget requests from previous years or partnership agreements.

Recurrent events postponed to a later date within 2020 will be accepted and funded as previously approved. The IBRO secretariat will continue to liaise with the organizers to provide the necessary administrative support.

Recurrent events approved for the 2020 budget period (January through December 2020) and postponed to a later date in 2021 will have their funding automatically roll over to the 2021 budget period. For budgetary reasons, organizers and hosts should not hold two equivalent events within a single year. As recurrent events are typically funded on a yearly basis, a new request for support must be submitted for approval by the local organizers and form part of the regional budget requests for 2021. Those based on multi-year partnership agreements do not have to submit a new request for support. Cases where funds have already been received by the organizer will be evaluated on a case by case basis by IBRO leadership.

2. Singular Events

Singular events are defined as not having received IBRO funding within the previous two years. Events which have been rescheduled for a later date in 2020 or rolled over to 2021 will be accepted and funded as previously agreed. The IBRO Secretariat will provide the necessary
administrative support to the local organizers, without requiring new budgetary approval by the IBRO Finance Committee and Executive Committee.

**Cancelled Events**

Organizers of cancelled events must return funds already received by the end of 2020. A reimbursement request may be made for expenses already incurred. Such requests will be considered on a case by case basis by IBRO leadership and must be accompanied by the appropriate justification and relevant receipts.

**Virtual Events**

In the instance where a previously scheduled in-person event is modified to take place online, the organizer may request a reimbursement for expenses incurred. Such requests will be considered on a case by case basis by IBRO leadership and must be accompanied by appropriate justification and relevant receipts. Unspent funds must be returned to IBRO by the end of the 2020. Organizers are still required to submit the appropriate report form upon completion of the event.

**Travel Grants and Laboratory Exchanges**

Travel grant recipients may retain their travel awards for a later date in 2020 or 2021, provided the original conference or meeting has been postponed or cancelled. Requests to modify the conference or meeting for which the travel award has been given will not be accepted.

Where a physical conference or meeting is modified to occur online, grantees are expected to attend virtually. Awardees will receive reimbursement for actual costs incurred (e.g. registration fee), upon presentation of the relevant receipts.

All grantees are required to submit a certificate of attendance to the meeting to receive reimbursement, as stated in their official award letter.

Those participating in laboratory exchanges may modify their intended starting dates. Exchanges may take place later in 2020 or in 2021. The IBRO Secretariat will work closely with all grantees to provide the necessary administrative support. Final reports are still required upon completion of the exchange.

This policy is effective as of Monday, May 18, 2020.

With our best wishes,

Professor Tracy L. Bale
President, IBRO

Professor Keiji Tanaka
Secretary General, IBRO