



COVID-19 Policy for IBRO-funded Programs & Activities [2021 Update]

IBRO leadership is closely monitoring the COVID-19 pandemic situation as it evolves in 2021. Due to the impact of continuing travel restrictions, new cases and emerging variants of the virus, we have modified our Covid-19 policy for 2021 IBRO-funded activities and programs.

We are grateful to our organizers who have worked diligently toward the successful planning of their respective events, including those that are now implemented as virtual events. We also greatly appreciate the patience of our individual grantees who have likewise had to adapt their travel and exchanges. The IBRO secretariat will continue working closely with IBRO leadership, local organizers and individual awardees to support our community as much as possible during this difficult time.

1. Recurrent events

Recurrent events are defined by their receipt of IBRO funds over a period of several consecutive years. Such events include all schools hosted by the IBRO Advanced Training Centers in Africa and Asia and schools funded by IBRO's Regional Committees. The repetitive nature of such events is documented in approved budget requests from previous years or partnership agreements. Hence, Schools run by Regional Committees are considered recurrent if all cases where a regional school program has been funded regularly in prior years even though these events have changed venue(s), organizers and/or focus area(s).

Postponement of approved recurrent events scheduled to occur in 2021 and remaining within the same calendar year will be allowed. If recurrent events cannot occur in 2021, a new request for support must be submitted by the local organizers and shall thus form part of the regional budget requests for 2022. Recurrent events that are based on multi-year partnership with IBRO, 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. The IBRO secretariat will continue to liaise with the organizers to provide the necessary administrative support.

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 2021 or implemented as a virtual event with an updated budget will be accepted and funded (more information below). If the event organizers are not able to implement the event either physically or virtually in 2021, funding cannot be extended into 2022. In this case, new requests for funding must be submitted through the relevant Regional Committees for approval by the IBRO Finance and Executive Committees.

3. Cancelled events

Organizers of cancelled events must return funds already received by the end of 2021. A reimbursement request may be made by the organizers for documented 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.

4. Virtual events

In the case where a previously scheduled in-person event is modified to take place online, IBRO reserves the right to adjust the previously approved budget to reflect the actual expenses of the altered event. If the organizer has already incurred expenses, they may request a reimbursement for these. 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 2021. Organizers are still required to submit the appropriate report form upon completion of the event.

5. Individual grants and laboratory exchanges

Individual grant recipients, such as awarded travel grants, may postpone their start dates to later in 2021 if their conferences, events or activities have been postponed. Requests for postponements to 2022 will be evaluated by IBRO leadership on a case-by-case basis, and justifications will be required. Requests to change to a different conference or meeting from the one designated in the original travel award will not be accepted. Individual grants where no requests for postponement have been submitted are automatically cancelled.

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 letters.

Those participating in laboratory exchanges may modify their intended starting dates. Exchanges may take place later than originally planned in 2021. Requests for postponements to 2022 will be evaluated by IBRO leadership on a case-by-case basis, and justifications will be required. 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 Wednesday, 10 February 2021.