

GUIDEBOOK ON IORA SPECIAL FUND

CONTENTS

DEFINITIONS	I(iii)
1. Introduction	I(iv)
2. Purpose of the Special Fund	I(iv)
3. Objectives	I(iv)
4. General Guidelines	
4.1 Who can apply and is eligible for IORA Special Fund?	I(v)
4.2 When can one apply for IORA Special Fund?	I(v)
4.3 What types of projects can be funded by IORA Special Fund?	I(v)
4.4 Ceiling on percentage of funds from the Special Fund	I(v)
4.5 Limit on Awards	I(v)
4.6 Allowable Expenses for IORA Projects	I(vi)
4.7 Procedures to Request, Assess, Approve, Monitor, Report and Disburse Funding	
4.7.1 Submission of Application	I(vii)
4.7.2 Secretariat's Preliminary Assessment	I(vii)
4.7.3 Review by Member States	I(vii)
4.7.4 Approval of Grant from the Special Fund	I(vii)
4.7.5 Issuance of Grant Letter	I(viii)
4.7.6 Applicants role immediately after Letter of Grant has been issued	I(viii)
4.7.7 Monitoring of the Project	I(viii)
4.7.8 Disbursement procedures	I(viii)
4.7.9 Submission of Project Report/Findings/Outcomes/Contents	I(viii)
4.7.10 Re-Submission of Application	I(ix)
4.7.11 Project Completion/Accountability Report	I(ix)
Annexures	
B – IORA APPLICATION FORM FOR THE SPECIAL FUND	
E2 – FUNDING TERMS AND CONDITIONS	
F - PROJECT MONITORING REPORT	
G – IORA PROJECT COMPLETION/ACCOUNTABILITY REPORT	

DEFINITIONS:

For the purpose of this Guidebook, the terms used are defined as follows, unless the context otherwise indicates:

- (a) "COM" means the Council of Ministers of the IORA which is the highest authority of the Association and which meets annually or more often as mutually decided. The COM formulates policy, reviews progress on co-operation, make decisions on new areas of co-operation and on the establishment of additional mechanisms and Specialized Agencies and decisions on matters of general interest.
- (b) "CSO" means Committee of Senior Officials of the IORA which is composed of the Senior (Government) Officials of Member States. It meets as often as mutually decided and since 2011 it has been meeting twice a year. The CSO submits periodic reports and refers policy matters to the COM for its decision.
- (c) The "National Focal Point" is composed of the Officials from the Ministry of Foreign/External Affairs of Member States who coordinate and advance the implementation of the activities of the Association and the achievements of its objectives.
- (d) "Applicant" means any individual or organisation from any public and non-profit organization from IORA Member States.
- (e) "Member States" means the Member States of the IORA

1. Introduction

The Indian Ocean Rim Association for Regional Cooperation (IORA), launched in Mauritius in March 1997, consists of twenty Indian Ocean Rim states, whose aim is to facilitate trade and investment in the region. Member States include Australia, Bangladesh, Union of the Comoros, India, Indonesia, Islamic Republic of Iran, Kenya, Madagascar, Malaysia, Mauritius, Mozambique, Sultanate of Oman, Seychelles, Singapore, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Tanzania, Thailand, United Arab Emirates, and Yemen. China, Egypt, France, Japan, United Kingdom and United States of America are the Dialogue Partners, while the Indian Ocean Tourism Organisation (IOTO) and the Indian Ocean Research Group (IORG) are the Observers.

The Guidebook on IORA Special Fund is a practical handbook for providing important information to the stakeholders involved in IORA projects. The Council of Ministers (COM), which is the highest authority of the Association, may change the content from time to time with the updated version being posted on the IORA website. Changes will also be communicated through the IORA Secretariat. All application and reporting templates can be downloaded as individual files from the IORA website: <http://www.iorarc.org/>

2. Purpose of the Special Fund

The Special Fund was established in 2008 as a financial mechanism for supporting and complementing the funding of Projects and Programmes adopted by the Association.

The purpose of the Special Fund is to contribute to the Association's objectives through the provision of funds and to assist members in their fund-raising for the implementation of approved projects which include studies, conferences, workshops, exhibitions, forums, research, capacity building, establishing institutions of regional interest, and/or programmes.

3. Objectives

The principal objectives of the Special Fund are the following:-

- (a) to assist with the provision of funds needed for the preparation and implementation of projects and programmes;
- (b) to support technical assistance for preparation and/or implementation of projects;
- (c) to assist Member States with pre-feasibility and feasibility project studies.

4. General Guidelines

4.1 Who can apply and is eligible for IORA Special Fund?

A project can originate from any public or non-profit organisation in an IORA Member State and should be routed through the National Focal Point of the respective Member State (the details of the Focal Point of Member States can be provided on request by the Secretariat).

4.2 When can one apply for IORA Special Fund?

Any time during the year.

4.3 What types of projects can be funded by IORA Special Fund?

IORA projects include studies, conferences, workshops, exhibitions, forums, research, capacity building, establishing institutions of regional interest, and/or programmes as defined in the Administrative Arrangements for the IORA Special Fund.

For now, the projects are restricted to the project proposals within the identified priority areas of the Association viz Maritime Safety and Security, Trade and Investment Facilitation, Fisheries Management, Disaster Risk Reduction, Academic and S&T Cooperation, Tourism and Cultural Cooperation. Projects not being accommodated under any of the identified priority areas may be discouraged.

The proposals requesting funding from the Special Fund must be regional or sub-regional in nature, rather than focusing on a single country. Projects should meet the IORA cluster approach (1+4) of Lead Coordinator plus four supporting Member States.

Applicants requesting funds would not be required to confirm the (1+4) supporting Member States at the time of application. However, the National Focal Point will seek the support of at least four other Member States for that project and will convey the same to IORA Secretariat for onward transmission for information to the CSO or COM.

4.4 Ceiling on percentage of funds from the Special Fund

Applicants may request funds from the Special Fund up to a maximum of 50% of the total project cost. The remainder will have to be borne by the Applicant through the sponsoring Member State(s), other organisations or any other co-sponsors of the project.

4.5 Limit on Awards

As per the provisions of the Administrative Arrangements for the Special Fund, a particular project can be awarded only one grant. Therefore, the approved project will not be eligible for any additional grant from the Special Fund.

Applicants may note that they will not be given Special Fund support for more than two projects within a period of two years determined by the calendar year in which the first grant was paid. In this regard, the IORA Secretariat will appraise Member States of the status of projects on a regular basis.

If any Applicant completes a project funded by the Special Fund within a period of two years, that Applicant may seek funding from the Special Fund for a new project.

4.6 Allowable Expenses for IORA Projects

Exclusions & Limitations

- (a) Purchase of items like office equipment, communication equipment, or any other items of a fixed nature which approximate to capital items to be used beyond the programmes/activity concerned or even related to the activity or programme will not be admissible for reimbursement from the Special Fund except in projects or programmes which will have a longer lifespan and where the renting or hiring of the equipment would be costlier than to purchase.
- (b) Similarly the purchase of souvenirs, conference bags, gift items, complementary photograph or articles of a similar nature will not be permissible. (Promotional items)
- (c) Expenditure on repair/maintenance of office equipment and fixtures should not be part of the expenditure of the activity. However, expenditure on procurement of a reasonable quantity of office stationery items required for the programme/activity will be permissible.
- (d) The overall funds earmarked for administrative costs of the project should be limited to 10 percent of the overall funding costs.
- (e) The host country will determine the level of accommodation for the participants as per the practice being followed for IORA Member States. Where funding includes accommodation of overseas participants, such accommodation costs will NOT include any expenditure on long distance and overseas calls, fax, email, tobacco and alcoholic beverages.

Exception:

The payment of air travel from the Special Fund will apply to LDC countries only.

4.7 Procedures to Request, Assess, Approve, Monitor, Disburse Funding and Accountability

4.7.1 Submission of Application

The proposal of a project and request for funding will be submitted by the Applicant to the National Focal Point of the concerned Member State (the details of the Focal Point of Member States can be provided on request by the Secretariat). The project proposal and request for funding must be submitted in the specified format attached as **Annexure B**.

4.7.2 Secretariat's Preliminary Assessment

On receipt of the project proposal from the respective National Focal Point with its recommendation, the IORA Secretariat will examine the concept note of the proposal and ascertain whether the project meets all the conditions laid down in the guidelines.

4.7.3 Review by Member States

The Secretariat will thereafter forward the project proposal to the National Focal Point of each Member State along with its Preliminary Assessment Report. The Member States will present their views on the Assessment Form within 60 days of the date of forwarding of the proposal by the Secretariat. If the views from any of the Member States are not received within the prescribed time frame, it may be presumed that the concerned Member State has no objection to the project being funded.

4.7.4 Approval of Grant from the Special Fund

The funding of the projects is approved as follows:

- (a) For applications of up to US\$ 20000 may be approved by the Secretariat, subject to consensus by the Member States through e-mail circulation;
- (b) For applications exceeding US\$ 20000 and up to US\$ 60000, the project proposals with the comments from Member States will be presented to the next CSO for consideration.
- (c) For applications exceeding US\$ 60000, CSO will make recommendations to COM for approval.

4.7.5 Issuance of Grant Letter

On being approved as per Paragraph 4.7.4, a successful Grant Letter and a standard funding Terms and Conditions (**Annexure E2**) will be issued to the applicant(s) by IORA Secretariat.

4.7.6 Applicants role immediately after Letter of Grant has been issued

The final approval for the disbursement of the funds from the Special Fund is subject to the Applicant providing support and details (through the National Focal Point of the Lead Member State) of the remaining funding for the project by other Member States or co-sponsors within 90 days of the date of issue of the Grant Letter. If the Applicant fails to provide the above said information within the specified time frame, the approval for the grant will be cancelled.

4.7.7 Monitoring of the Project

Applicants will submit progress reports on a regular basis to the National Focal Point of its country and to those Member States that have offered their assistance in any form to the project. The National Focal Point of the Lead Coordinator Member State will submit a Monitoring Report, bi-annually to the IORA Secretariat by 1st September and 1st March of each year. (**Annexure F**)

4.7.8 Disbursement procedures

Payment/Grant from IORA Special Fund will be made as final payment in the payment schedule of any approved project.

The applicant will send the details of the bank account including Bank Account No., Bank name, Branch name, Branch code, Address of Bank, Telex, Swift Code, IBAN No. through its National Focal Point which will endorse its recommendation.

4.7.9 Submission of Project Report/Findings/Outcomes/Contents

The Applicant will submit project report/outcomes/findings/contents to the IORA Secretariat through the National Focal Point of its country after the completion of the project for onward submission to the CSO and COM.

The IORA reserves the right to use the project's final report/outcomes/findings/contents as it considers appropriate.

All written communications or other documents will be in English. Where any source material or document is in a language other than English, the Applicant will be responsible for producing an accurate translation thereof in English.

4.7.10 Re-Submission of an Application

Any application, which has not been approved after consideration, may be re-submitted for review by the CSO of its earlier decision.

4.7.11 Project Completion/Accountability Report

The Applicant will complete the work as per the projected completion date in the Application Form. In cases where the project will not be completed within the stipulated period, the Applicant through the National Focal Point will either seek an extension stating the reasons for such an extension or return the unspent money of the grant (within 30 days from the date of completion/annulment/postponement of the project) together with a Project Completion/Accountability Report (**Annexure G**) for the spent funds. The Secretariat will keep the Committee of Senior Officials informed of this procedure.

The Applicant must note that the National Focal Point of its country is responsible for submitting a Project Completion/Accountability Report (inputs to be provided by the Applicant) within 3 months of the completion of the project and the Applicant will therefore allow access to its project/site etc, to the National Focal Point of its country for the necessary inspection, as required.
