

Rapid Response Fund (RRF) - Guidelines for Applicants

1. General Information

The second Swiss Contribution¹ to selected EU Member States consists of a Framework Credit on Cohesion and a Framework Credit on Migration. Within the Framework Credit on Migration, 25 million Swiss Francs are set aside in a Rapid Response Fund (RRF) for urgent actions aimed at addressing unforeseen circumstances that might arise in the area of migration in any EU Member State, following a crisis.

The RRF is managed by Switzerland through the State Secretariat for Migration (SEM), who directly selects project partners.

2. Objectives

The objective of the Framework Credit on Migration is to strengthen migration management structures in Europe. Within this framework, the RRF shall support measures meeting needs linked to important migration flows which arise in crisis situations. The focus is primarily on asylum seekers whose applications are pending or have been rejected, refugees and persons who have been granted (temporary and permanent) protection status. Special attention is paid to vulnerable groups.

Projects with the following specific objectives can be supported:

- Strengthening asylum procedures
- Strengthening infrastructures for migrants (accommodation)
- Strengthening assisted voluntary return and reintegration procedures
- Supporting Integration measures

¹ [The Swiss contribution in brief \(admin.ch\)](#) & available in German, French and Italian [BBI 2018 6665 - Botschaft zum zweiten Schweizer Beitrag an ausgewählte EU-Mitgliedstaaten zur Verringerung der wirtschaftlichen und sozialen Ungleichheiten in der erweiterten EU sowie zur Unterstützung von Massnahmen im Bereich der Migration \(admin.ch\)](#)

3. Rules

3.1 Eligibility criteria

Possible partners are mainly International Organisations, NGOs or national authorities. The projects must contribute to at least one of the specific objectives mentioned above.

The project applicant can either submit an emergency project or a targeted project, which has to take place in an EU member State.

3.2 Emergency Project

Emergency projects shall enable an immediate reaction and can last up to one year. No co-funding is needed for these projects.

3.3 Targeted Projects

Targeted Projects must enable a short to mid-term reaction and can last up to two years. Priority for targeted projects will be given for those which correspond to geographical priorities identified and defined by the SEM. A co-funding of min. 15% is expected, unless duly justified.

3.4 Application Procedures

The project application template provided by the SEM has to be filled out and sent back with the relevant annexes to the SEM by e-mail swiss-contribution@sem.admin.ch. Project applications can be submitted at any time.

3.5 Evaluation, selection and approval process

Evaluation of applications and approval of projects are in the competence of the SEM. The first step will consist of the evaluation of administrative compliance and of eligibility. In a second step, the SEM will perform a narrative and financial evaluation of the applications. This process covers strategic criteria as well as quality and soundness of narrative and financial provisions.

During this process, the SEM may contact the applicant to complete or clarify specific aspects related to the application. The decision-making process is kept efficient and lean without neglecting quality-related aspects.

The result of the evaluation and the approval process will be communicated to the applicant directly.

3.6 Contracting

A project agreement will be signed between the applicant and the SEM, which will also include the reporting and compliance modalities, information on the instalments as well as obligations linked to communication and visibility. The legal obligations of both parties will be stipulated in this agreement.

3.7 Reporting and audit

Interim reports are required if the project lasts more than one year. A final report has to be sent within two months of the end of the project. The final financial report has to be certified through an external audit and needs to include all expenses that took place within the project. In specific cases, upon agreement between SEM and the project partner, the organisation may instead provide proof that it is regularly audited by external auditors.

3.8 Implementation and monitoring

Based on the signed project agreement, the applicant is fully responsible for the implementation of the foreseen activities and for the achievement of the proposed objectives.

A reliable monitoring system must be established to guarantee the successful implementation process of the project and the adequate management of risks.

SEM or its representatives have the right of access to all relevant information concerning the project at any time, including through on-the-spot visits, for evaluation and monitoring purposes, in accordance with what has been defined between the SEM and the partner organisation in the contract

The project applicant will clearly communicate the fact that a specific project has been co-financed by Switzerland in an adequate manner. Successful approaches and lessons learnt shall be shared with other actors or the public, where applicable.