



# Regulations of the Trade Fair and Project Committee (TFPC)

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Based on Section 5.4 of the Service Agreement on Export Promotion 2020-2023 (“Service Agreement”) between the Swiss Confederation, represented by the State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO), and Switzerland Global Enterprise (S-GE), the Trade Fair and Project Committee (TFPC) issues the following regulations.

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## I Introductory provisions

### 1 Basis of the TFPC

- 1.1 The appointment of the TFPC is based on Section 5.1 of the Service Agreement.
- 1.2 The TFPC performs the following tasks within the scope of its competencies and responsibilities (Section 5.2 Service Agreement):
  - a. Coordination of the third-party trade fair and project activities;
  - b. Decision on the granting of funds to support public promotional activities of the Swiss and Liechtenstein economy so as to promote exports. The decision is based on the fact that the promotional activity funding applied for serves a Swiss or Liechtenstein general interest and meets significance, effectiveness and efficiency criteria.
  - c. Ensuring a uniform appearance of the Swiss and Liechtenstein economy abroad.
  - d. Promotion of project-related activities or of exemplary and promising projects of chambers of commerce, associations or companies.
- 1.3 SECO determines the amount which is available to the TFPC for the fulfillment of its tasks in accordance with Section 1.2 (Section 5.3 Service Agreement).
- 1.4 SECO mandates S-GE with the management of the TFPC office. S-GE designates an office manager who is entrusted with the management (Section 5.7 Service Agreement).



1.5 SECO determines the rules for the compensation of the Chair of the Steering Committee (hereinafter “Chair of the Steering Committee”) and the members of the TFPC at the request of S-GE (Section 5.6 Service Agreement).

1.6 The activities of the TFPC are subject to the provisions of the Service Agreement on documentation and risk management (Section 8), supervision (Section 9) and compliance with legal requirements (Section 10), which S-GE must ensure are enforced (Section 5.8 Service Agreement).

## 2 Subject matter

These regulations govern:

- a. The organization of the TFPC
- b. The conditions and procedure for the granting of support for promotional activities by the TFPC.

## II. **Organization**

### 3 Composition and constitution of the TFPC

3.1 The TFPC consists of 5 to 7 members.

3.2 The term of office of the Steering Committee and the members of the TFPC corresponds to the term of the Service Agreement<sup>1</sup>. Re-election is possible. If a member resigns prematurely, the member appointed in his/her place shall take over his/her term of office.

3.3 The Steering Committee and the members of the TFPC are appointed by SECO at the request of S-GE (in consultation with the TFPC). Anyone who has the required expertise and experience in export promotion, the internationalization of companies and/or the areas of responsibility of the TFPC can be appointed (Section 5.5 Service Agreement).

3.4 With the exception of the appointment of the Chair, the TFPC constitutes itself and appoints at least one Vice-Chair (hereinafter “Vice-Chair of the Steering Committee”).

### 4 Steering Committee

4.1 In addition to the other tasks assigned to it in these regulations, the Steering Committee is responsible for:

- a. Ensuring contact to and communication with the parties interested in the TFPC (SECO, S-GE, export economy, applicants, beneficiaries, etc);

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<sup>1</sup> The current Service Agreement shall run from January 1, 2020 to December 31, 2023 (Section 13.1 Service Agreement).



b. Monitoring and supervision of the office as a direct point of contact.

4.2 If the Chair of the Steering Committee is unable to attend, the Vice-Chair of Steering Committee shall perform the former's tasks.

## 5 Office

The tasks of the office include, in particular, receiving applications for support, including advising applicants, preparing the basis for the decisions of the TFPC, including the formulation of a recommendation on these decisions, paying out and accounting for the support in accordance with the TFPC's guidelines, administration of the TFPC, organizing and administration of the office and conducting correspondence with applicants for funding.

## 6 Negotiations

6.1 The TFPC meets as often as business requires, usually at least three times a year.

6.2 Subject to Section 4.2, the Chair of the Steering Committee and other members may not appoint proxies.

6.3 The Chair of the Steering Committee convenes and chairs the meetings.

6.4 The office keeps the minutes for the TFPC and participates in the meetings in an advisory capacity.

## 7 Decision-making

7.1 The TFPC has a quorum if a majority of its members (including the Chair of the Steering Committee) is present.

7.2 The TFPC passed its decisions with a majority of two thirds of the members present.

## 8 Conflicts of interest

8.1 A member shall notify the Steering Committee without delay if in any matter:

a. he/she has personal or business interests;

b. a related party or business associate has interests;

c. he/she has personal or business connections with an applicant which might make him/her appear biased;



- d. he/she has personal or business connections with a competitor of an applicant which might make him/her appear biased.
- e. he/she might appear biased for other reasons.

8.2 If the Chair of the Steering Committee is aware of circumstances according to Section 8.1, he/she shall inform the Vice-Chair of the Steering Committee.

8.3 The Chair or the Vice-Chair of the Steering Committee shall ask the TFPC to take measures appropriate to the severity of the possible bias. The TFPC decides on the measures without involving the member concerned.

## 9 Reporting

9.1 The TFPC regularly reports to S-GE and submits an annual report, which serves in particular to monitor the effectiveness of the federal funds used. This report contains the following information:

- a. Details of the promotional activities that receive support;
- b. Details of how the funds are used; and
- c. Details of the ongoing evaluation based on the reports on promotional activities.

9.2 Upon request, the TFPC shall grant S-GE and SECO access to all files and provide all other information required by S-GE for the fulfillment of the provisions of the Service Agreement on documentation and risk management, supervision and compliance with legal requirements.

9.3 The Steering Committee shall also regularly report directly to SECO. It determines the form and frequency of reporting in consultation with SECO.

## III. **Granting of support**

### 10 Support

10.1 The TFPC may grant support for the public services of promotional activities geared to the needs of the Swiss and Liechtenstein export economy, serve the public interests and promote exports.

10.2 All services of promotional activities are deemed to serve public interests if they do not benefit individual companies but rather an entire industry or the Swiss or Liechtenstein economy in general.

10.3 Promotional activities may be supported if they pursue one or more of the following goals for the benefit of the Swiss and Liechtenstein export economy in accordance with the objectives of the Export Promotion Act:



- a. the maintenance and expansion of export activities;
- b. the tapping of new markets and the creation of new sales potential abroad;
- c. the positioning of Swiss or Liechtenstein goods and services abroad;
- d. the support and promotion of initiatives and activities of associations, chambers of commerce and companies;
- e. the creation, management and distribution of knowledge;
- f. the development and strengthening of national and international networks;
- g. the achievement of synergies through cooperation and networking.

## 11 Eligible promotional activities

11.1 Trade fairs and projects are regarded as promotional activities.

11.2 With regard to the organization of and participation in **trade fairs**, the following are eligible for support:

- a. Joint stands at trade fairs abroad;
- b. Supporting events and events as part of trade fair appearances abroad;
- c. Formats with trade fair characteristics, as well as
- d. hybrid, virtual and digital trade fair formats

11.3 The following **projects** are eligible for support: initiatives and project-related activities that

- a. are innovative, exemplary and promising, and have a lighthouse function in export markets, or
- b. focus on the promotion of networks or cooperation with a view to export promotion, and
- c. are normally implemented by associations, chambers of commerce or companies as sponsors

11.4 The TFPC shall assess the applications submitted for **trade fairs** on the basis of the following **criteria**:

- a. Demonstrable importance for the target market;



- b. Ability to permanently promote sales;
- c. Acceptance of the trade fair within the industry;
- d. At least 6 participating companies (without funding institutions, partners, sponsors, etc.);
- e. Involvement of external network partners, associations, etc.;
- f. Self-financing;

11.5 The TFPC shall assess the applications submitted for **projects** on the basis of the following **criteria**:

- a. Lighthouse function, i.e. innovative, exemplary and promising projects in export markets;
- b. Promotion of networks and/or cooperation;
- c. Impact abroad for the Swiss and Liechtenstein export economy;
- d. Socio-economic relevance
- e. Self-financing

## 12 Costs and financing key

12.1 The sponsor must finance at least two thirds of the total costs of the promotional activity (self-financing); the support may amount to up to one third of the total costs. In justified exceptional cases, the TFPC may grant more support.

12.2 The TFPC only pays support for public services.

12.3 Financial contributions from other federal funding instruments (e.g. Innosuisse, Swissnex, Switzerland Tourism, Innotour, NRP/RIS, location promotion) are not considered self-financing.

12.4 In consultation with SECO, the TFPC may limit the maximum amount of funding for an individual application.

## 13 Formal requirements for grant applications

### 13.1 Grant applications

- a. may be submitted by public and private organizations and companies (“sponsors”);
- b. must be submitted at the end of January, May or September each year and will be answered within three months of these submission dates;



- c. must be justified, accompanied by available supporting documents, explaining how the requested support is to be used.
- d. must be submitted together with proof that the sponsors will notify the Swiss and Liechtenstein participants involved in the promotional activity that the goods and services they market must comply with “Swissness” legislation.

13.2 The TFPC may stipulate further formal requirements for grant applications.

#### 14 Assessment and selection of the promotional activity

- 14.1 The TFPC only accepts grant applications that meet the formal requirements.
- 14.2 The TFPC selects the promotional activities to be supported and determines the support for each.
- 14.3 The promotional activities to be supported are selected on the basis of the significance, effectiveness and efficiency of the promotional activity. Furthermore, the goods and services marketed by the Swiss and Liechtenstein companies involved in the promotional activity must meet the requirements of “Swissness” legislation.
- 14.4 The TFPC may make the granting of the support subject to conditions and requirements.
- 14.5 If Swiss Pavilions participate in trade fairs, the trade fair manual for the uniform presentation of Swiss and Liechtenstein business abroad must be observed.
- 14.6 There is no legal claim to the granting of support. The TFPC shall pay support only within the scope of the funds made available to it.
- 14.7 The supported promotional activities are selected without prejudice to future promotional activities.

#### 15 Use of the support

- 15.1 Support may only be granted and used as follows:
  - a. It shall be used exclusively to cover the costs of the public service part of the promotional activity supported;
  - b. Unless the TFPC decides otherwise, the support may be used to cover all types of costs (personnel, material and operating costs including external services) of the public service part of the promotional activity supported.



- c. The support may not be used to preserve existing structures, i.e. they may not be granted for the operation, maintenance, development and expansion of structures.

15.2 The sponsors must inform the TFPC immediately if the promotional activity is substantially changed or not implemented. The TFPC will not pay any support for unauthorized promotional activities or those not implemented.

## 16 Payment of support

16.1 The support is paid out only after the promotional activity has been implemented.

16.2 All documents and other information required for monitoring the lawful use of the support must be submitted to the TFPC. In any case, the following documents are to be submitted:

- a. the final report on the implementation of the promotional activity and the results achieved in the case of support of less than CHF 15,000;
- b. the complete final statement, the income and expense receipts and the detailed final report on the implementation of the promotional activity and the achievement of its objectives in the case of support of CHF 15,000 or more.

16.3 The final report must contain detailed information on the achievement of objectives by the participants and the sponsors as well as other information specified by the TFPC (structure according to TFPC specifications).

16.4 The documents required and further information must be submitted to the office within three months of the implementation of the promotional activity. Reasons must be given for late submission.

16.5 If a promotional activity generates a surplus, the support may be reduced accordingly.

16.6 Payment shall normally take place within 60 days of receipt of all documents needed to check the lawful use of the support.

16.7 Upon substantiated application, the TFPC may approve earlier payments up to a maximum of 30 percent of the support.

## 17 Controlling

17.1 The TFPC continuously assesses the impact of its support measures and makes the necessary adjustments to increase the efficiency.

17.2 The sponsors must inform the TFPC of their experiences and findings from the implementation of the promotional activity in the final report. The TFPC may also make findings available to third parties.



17.3 The TFPC shall ensure the transparent and efficient handling of the procedure from the submission of the application for support to the payment thereof.

#### 18 Refusal and repayment of support

18.1 If the promotional activity is not implemented, the sponsors must repay any support paid out prematurely in accordance with Section 16.7.

18.2 If a sponsor violates the provisions of these regulations or of the support grant, TFPC may decide not to pay support, to withhold payment until these provisions have been met, or to demand the reimbursement of any support already paid.

#### 19. Reconsideration and continuation

19.1 If the TFPC does not or only partially accepts a grant application, the applicant may apply for reconsideration. The application must be submitted in writing and must contain reasons and evidence of the facts asserted.

19.2 If the TFPC rejects the application for reconsideration, the applicant may request that SECO assess the grant application.

### **IV. Final provisions**

#### 20 Entry into force

20.1 These regulations enter into force on January 1, 2021.

20.2 The Organizational Regulations of the Trade Fair and Project Committee dated August 26, 2009 and the Regulations for Grants to Support Joint Export Promotion Projects, in force since January 1, 2007, are repealed.

Approved by the State Secretariat for Economic Affairs SECO on October 22, 2020.