



Dear members of the Administrative Board and the Budget Committee,

Dear observers,

May I thank you for the excellent response we have had by way of suggestions for the Cooperation Fund following my letter to you of 5 March 2010 and the subsequent Cooperation Fund ('CF') Progress Report for March 2010.

Over the past few weeks the CF Programme Office has been hard at work and the Management Board (MB) had a most productive meeting on 18 May 2010. All the suggestions from national delegations were most carefully assessed in order to produce a Provisional Portfolio of projects from which your formal choice should be made. This was a complex and challenging task for the MB but I believe that, with your continued support, the Provisional Portfolio now provides the solid foundations for the future success of the CF.

The Provisional Portfolio

The Provisional Portfolio is contained in Annex 1 whilst Annex 2 contains a brief description of each project proposal on that list. Annex 3 includes a few notes on how the Fund will be managed on a day to day basis, in order to provide you with greater clarity. With the limited (albeit substantial) funds available, you will appreciate that the Management Board needed to assess each suggestion to identify possible synergies and thereby achieve the optimal leverage in terms of providing the greatest impact across the largest number of National Offices and other stakeholders using the monies spent. This objective is to be achieved while at the same time ensuring that each proposed project enshrines the closest "fit" to the CF Principles and goals as set out in previous Notes and explained at the AB/BC meetings.

Our Approach

The Board adopted a three-fold approach to mould your suggestions into a coherent package that best delivers sustainable and common benefits. On one hand, we were able to identify amongst the different proposals many similar needs and shared challenges between different National Offices. By merging these suggestions, the project proposals derive from a large number of your suggestions. On the other hand, we identified suggestions which appeared to overlap with current projects or activities funded by other bodies (e.g. DG TAXUD, DG Enterprise). These schemes we have set out in Annex 4 and our clear view is that such proposals would be best dealt with by those bodies rather than duplicating initiatives by the CF.

An essential feature of CF projects is that they are self-contained 'one-off projects' which do not constitute ongoing activities without a date of project completion – an issue we discussed at some length in the AB/BC meeting.

The suggestions about the training of examiners and the ongoing TMView project represented somewhat of a challenge in terms of avoiding CF funding of open-ended activities. The Management Board and the Office have been analysing such suggestions for training and comparing them with activities that are already ongoing (e.g. Seconded National Experts framework, IP seminar, etc.). The Office has agreed to draw from them ideas in a further review of the existing activities.

With regard to TMView, running costs to date have been payable to participants. Now that TMView will fall under the CF auspices, the Board looks to OHIM urgently to find a solution in order to avoid discriminating against new participants who may wish to sign up to the project.

Next Steps

The CF Programme Manager (Simon White) will shortly be contacting your officials to provide information on the deadline for indicating your commitment to one or more of the project proposals set out in the Provisional Portfolio in Annex 1.

May I add a couple of personal remarks? First, you will clearly need to consult with your National Office colleagues before indicating your firm commitment to one or more Provisional Portfolio projects. Nonetheless I believe it is very important to sign up sooner rather than later to them. In addition I hope you will identify suitable candidates to work as seconded national experts to aid in the delivery of this programme. OHIM will provide details of the profiles for these posts in the usual way.

Finally, I should like to thank all Members for their constructive engagement and the many valuable suggestions we have received. Our careful selection of project proposals – whilst not easy – will I hope meet with your approval and benefit from your continued support. I look forward to reporting to you shortly on the progress of the Provisional Portfolio.

Yours sincerely,

Lord John Mogg

Annexes:

- 1: Project portfolio
- 2: Outline project descriptions
- 3: Note on project management
4. DG TAXUD and DG Enterprise programs