

## PROJECT QUICK START

(Sections and Annexes refer to the SPS Project Management Handbook available at [www.nato.int/science](http://www.nato.int/science) (Managing my Grant – How to Report)

All correspondence/documents should be sent to [sps.admin@hq.nato.int](mailto:sps.admin@hq.nato.int).

The official starting date of an SPS Multi-year project is the date of the first (“initial”) Grant Letter. The original Grant Letter is sent to the NPD who should circulate it for signature by each Co-Director and the heads of each institution. The completed original document should be returned to the SPS Office by both mail and e-mail. The granted money will only be available after the SPS Office has received all required signatures, the completed Co-Director Operational Account Request form from each Co-Director and any additional documentation mentioned in the award letter under “Specific”.

While the signatures for the first Grant Letter are being collected, the Co-Directors should not lose time and already prepare the start of the project. Co-Directors will have to, amongst other issues, agree on meetings and reporting (Section 8), prepare specification and competitive bidding procedures for large equipment (Section 4) and get acquainted with the tax exoneration procedures for their country. SPS funds cannot be used to pay indirect costs such as taxes and customs duty (Section 2.2).

The NPD should inform the SPS Office about the effective starting date, which is usually marked by a kick-off meeting. The project duration and due date of the final report is linked to the effective starting date.

Please note that the first or “initial” Grant Letter gives the estimated total NATO budget and an indicative budget allocation for each Co-Director. The estimated total NATO budget will be granted step-by-step through “supplementary grants”, depending on the needs and advancement of the project. These grant steps are, in fact, independent from the indicative budget allocations of the Project Plan or Progress Reports.

SPS funds granted through “initial” and subsequent “supplementary” Grant Letters will be kept on a NATO bank account. Please note that NATO’s financial rules permit payments from this account only until the end of the second year following the date of a Grant Letter!

Payments from an SPS grant will be requested by the Co-Directors through Payment Request Forms (PRF; see Annex ) that have to be signed by the NPD. All PRFs have to be channelled through the NPD. For easy reference, the NPD should give each PRF that will be sent to NATO a sequential number that he/she should communicate to the Co-Directors. NATO provides an on-line service for the follow-up of PRFs that have been received by NATO. With the submission of the first PRF the Co-Directors will receive their specific “PRF log-book” address.

As soon as the project starts, each Co-Director should prepare a PRF for his/her one-off advance (maximum 15,000 EUR) to be transferred to an “operational account” (Section 3.3). From this advance the Co-Director may pay small items (below 10,000 EUR) in accordance with the budget forecast without additional authorisation from the NPD or NATO.

When needed, a replenishment of the operational account should be requested by the Co-Director. In order to do so, back-up documents of the payments made from the operational account, an overview table of these back-up documents (see Annexes) and a PRF in the amount of the total of these back-up documents is required by NATO. NATO will then pay the exact amount that has been paid from the advance which will lead to the filling-up of the account to the originally advanced amount. (The advance has to be closed at the end of the project with a last overview table and back-up documents.)

Amounts greater than 10,000 EUR will be paid by NATO directly to the vendor.

The first six-monthly Progress Report is due if more than six months have passed since the date of the first Grant Letter. The due dates for receiving the Progress Reports by NATO are fixed:

20 April and 20 October