SPC Grants Manual

Version September 2025

Table of Contents

INTRODUCTION

The Pacific Community (SPC) is the principal scientific and technical organisation in the Pacific, owned and governed by its 27 member countries and territories. SPC's mission, as set out in the SPC Strategic Plan 2022–2031, is to work with members to achieve sustainable development that is resilient, inclusive, and led by Pacific people.

SPC delivers this mandate through a mix of approaches, providing technical expertise, building capacity, coordinating regional action, and financing activities that advance shared priorities. Among these tools, grants are a central modality. Grants allow SPC to channel funding to governments, civil society organisations, academia, and private sector actors to implement activities on the ground.

Grants serve a dual purpose:

- They enable delivery of SPC projects and programmes, ensuring activities are carried out where they are needed most.
- They strengthen local ownership and capacity, by working through Pacific organisations and communities rather than delivering everything directly.

Grants sit alongside employment, procurement, and other collaboration mechanisms as part of SPC's delivery toolbox. Each serves a different purpose:

- Employment: SPC hires staff or consultants when it needs direct technical expertise, project management, or specialist skills to be delivered under SPC's supervision.
- Procurement: SPC uses procurement when purchasing specific goods, works, or services to SPC's specifications, with competition and value-for-money as the main drivers.
- Grants: SPC provides grants when funding a partner to design and deliver activities that contribute to SPC's objectives, with flexibility in approach and delivery.
- Collaborations and partnerships: SPC may also work through Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs), co-funding arrangements, or other partnership agreements where joint resources, rather than grants or contracts, are the main vehicle for delivery.

This mix of delivery mechanisms reflects SPC's dual role as both a technical agency and a convener of regional partnerships. Grants in particular highlight SPC's commitment to strengthening Pacific ownership, building capacity, and ensuring development solutions are led from within the region.

Through grants, SPC demonstrates its commitment to:

- Regional solidarity by supporting members and partners to take the lead in addressing shared challenges.
- Accountability and transparency by ensuring funds are used responsibly, efficiently, and for their intended purpose.
- Equity and inclusion by enabling participation by smaller, community-based organisations alongside larger institutions.
- Building resilience by strengthening the long-term capacity of Pacific partners to sustain outcomes beyond individual projects.

This manual sets out how SPC manages grants to deliver these commitments consistently and to the highest ethical and fiduciary standards.

1. PURPOSE, SCOPE AND OBJECTIVES

1.1 Purpose

This manual is developed under the authority of the SPC Grants Policy, which is issued in line with SPC's Financial Regulations. These instruments sit within the broader framework of the Canberra Agreement, which established SPC as an intergovernmental organisation.

This manual translates the Grants Policy into practical procedures. It sets out how SPC staff and grantees must plan, assess, award, manage, report on, and close grants in a way that is consistent, transparent, and accountable.

The purpose of this manual is to provide a clear, step-by-step guide for managing SPC grants. It explains how grants are planned, assessed, awarded, managed, monitored, reported on, and closed.

By turning SPC's Grants Policy into practical procedures, this manual ensures that:

- Everyone involved understands their roles and responsibilities;
- Timelines and documentation requirements are clear;
- Grants are managed consistently across all divisions; and
- SPC meets the highest standards of accountability, ethics, and transparency.

The manual is designed to support both SPC staff and external partners. For staff, it offers a reliable reference for daily operations. For partners, it demonstrates SPC's commitment to fair, transparent, and effective grant making that contributes to the shared goals of the SPC Strategic Plan 2022–2031.

1.2 Scope of Application

This manual applies to:

- All SPC staff and non-staff personnel (as defined in Chapter XV of the Manual of Staff Policies) involved in any stage of the grants process.
- Implementing partners who apply for or receive SPC grants.
- Any organisation or entity applying for grant or who has been awarded a grant by SPC.

1.3 Objectives

The framework ensures that SPC:

- Uses grants appropriately and consistently across all projects and programmes;
- Manages financial, operational, and reputational risks when issuing grants;
- Demonstrates accountability and transparency to members, partners, and donors;
- Upholds the highest ethical standards in every stage of the grant lifecycle;
- Promotes social and environmental responsibility, equity, and inclusion; and
- Strengthens the capacity of Pacific partners to deliver lasting development outcomes.

2. GOVERNING FRAMEWORK

2.1 Governing Documents

SPC grants are guided by a set of organisational policies and regulations, including:

- **SPC Grants Policy** – issued under Regulation 10 of the Financial Regulations and paragraph 30 of the Pacific Community Governance Arrangement;
- **SPC Financial Regulations** – overarching rules on income and expenditure;
- **SPC Procurement Policy** – clarifying boundaries between grants and procurement;
- **SPC Manual of Staff Policies** (Chapter XV) – covering staff responsibilities and ethical standards;
- **SPC Social and Environmental Responsibility Policy** – ensuring sustainability, equity, and inclusion;
- **SPC Privacy Policy** – ensuring responsible collection, use, storage, and sharing of personal and organisational data in line with legal and donor requirements; and
- Donor-specific conditions required under external funding agreements – see **donor-specific annexes** to this manual discussed below.

SPC recognises that grants are implemented through a diverse range of partners with different levels of capacity and governance systems. In practice:

- SPC's own policies and requirements form the default framework for grant management.
- Where appropriate, SPC may agree to rely on a partner's own systems (for example, financial management, procurement, or HR), provided that:
    - a capacity and risk assessment indicates those systems are broadly consistent with SPC and donor standards; and
    - the arrangement is clearly documented in the grant agreement, including any additional safeguards or reporting requirements.

This flexible approach reflects SPC's business-as-usual practice: ensuring strong fiduciary oversight while recognising and working with partner systems, especially where this supports efficiency, ownership, and alignment with donor expectations.

This manual should be read alongside the SPC Grants Policy. Terms used in this manual have the same meaning as in the Grants Policy.

This manual provides the core SPC framework for managing grants. Where external funders impose additional requirements, these are set out in a donor-specific annex. This ensures SPC has *one consistent organisational manual*, while also allowing project and programme teams to easily find and apply donor-specific rules.

2.2 Core Principes of SPC Grants

All SPC grants follow a set of principles that ensure fairness, accountability, and responsible use of funds:

- **Shared contribution (co-financing):** SPC expects grantees to contribute their own resources (such as staff time or funding from other sources). This shows commitment and helps ensure sustainability.
- **Forward-looking funding (non-retroactivity):** SPC supports activities from the time of application onwards. Costs incurred before an application is submitted are not eligible. This keeps funding fair and ensures all applicants are treated equally.
- **One source per cost (non-cumulation):** Each cost item can only be covered once. A single expense cannot be funded by more than one grant or donor contribution. This prevents double-funding and protects accountability to members and donors.
- **Cost recovery, not profit (no-profit rule):** Grants are designed to balance income and expenditure for an activity. They are not intended to create profit, except where strengthening the financial capacity of the grantee is an agreed objective. This ensures funds are focused on project results and community benefit.

2.3 Ethics and Integrity

SPC is committed to the highest standards of ethics and integrity in all aspects of grant management. This commitment comes directly from the SPC Manual of Staff Policies (Chapter II: Code of Conduct), which applies to all staff and non-staff personnel.

What this means in practice:

- **Transparency and accountability:** Grant processes must be open, fair, and fully documented so that an independent observer could clearly see that decisions were made fairly and reasonably.
- **Integrity in conduct:** SPC staff must avoid any behaviour, or even the appearance of behaviour, that could suggest favouritism, undue influence, or personal benefit in relation to a grant.
- **Zero tolerance for corruption:** Offers of bribes, commissions, or irregular approaches, no matter how small, must be reported immediately to the Director-General, in line with section II.10.3 of the Manual of Staff Policies.
- **Managing conflicts of interest:** A conflict of interest arises when personal interests interfere (or appear to interfere) with professional duties, independence, or impartiality. All staff must declare any actual, potential, or perceived conflict of interest under section II.9 of the Manual of Staff Policies.

2.4 Policy Exceptions and Derogations

In rare cases, SPC may approve a derogation from standard grant procedures. This can only be authorised by the Director-General, and only where SPC's interests, integrity, and accountability are fully protected. (See Grants Policy paragraphs 9.1 and 9.2.)

All derogations must be:

- documented in writing;
- clearly justified; and
- reported to the Audit and Risk Committee.

3. KEY DEFINITIONS

Term	Definition
Applicant	An organisation or legal entity that submits a grant proposal in response to SPC's solicitation for grants or SPC's invitation to submit an application.
Grant	A non-commercial payment from SPC to an implementing partner to undertake an action or activities in line with project or programme objectives. It is a different modality to a procurement process, where competition and value for money are the foremost considerations.
Grants and Collaboration Team	The team within SPC that centrally coordinates SPC grant functions. The team ensure that the grant decision making process stays on schedule and is conducted in accordance with SPC policies and procedures.
Grantee	The recipient of a SPC grant.
Granting Section	The Division within SPC initiating the grant action (division, section, team, or programme).
Grants Committee	A committee established by the Director General to make the final recommendation on the award of a grant and/or amendments to a grant agreement.
SPC Member Governments	Government agencies or departments in SPC member countries or territories.
Evaluation Subcommittee	SPC staff or external experts, with relevant subject matter expertise tasked to evaluate and score applications as per the established evaluation criteria. Their review is largely technical in nature and will focus on the viability of a proposed grant in the context of the host country and the overall program. Members may evaluate entire applications or specific sections of an application as requested by SPC.

4. SPC GRANT TYPES

In carrying out its mission, SPC provides grants to different types of partners for different types of activities. For this reason, the SPC Grants Policy provides for three different types of grants (sometimes referred to as modalities), each designed to suit different partners and/or activities. The choice of grant type depends on who is applying, their capacity, and the nature of the work.

This section provides an **overview** of these different types of grants and the **commonalities** between them. **Section 8** below on the granting process will explain the **differences** in the pre-award stage of each type of grant.

4.1 Direct Grant

A direct grant is awarded without competition when only one organisation is clearly best placed to deliver the activity. This may be because of their role, expertise, or because they are specifically named by the donor.

SPC uses direct grants in the following situations:

- **SPC Member Governments** – When funding government agencies or departments in SPC member countries and territories to carry out agreed activities.
- **Exclusive expertise or authority** – When only one organisation has the required technical expertise, legal mandate, or operates in the relevant geographic area.
- **Donor-identified entities** – When the recipient is named in the donor funding agreement or expressly approved by the donor.
- **Research and technical development** – When grants support research or specialised technical activities identified in SPC divisional work programmes.
- **Sponsorships** – Small-scale support (under EUR 45,000) for events or activities aligned with SPC's goals, in limited and exceptional circumstances. Sponsorships must not replace procurement or standard grant processes and require review by SPC's Communications Team.

4.2 Single-Stage Competitive Grant

Single-stage competitive grants are awarded through an **open Call for Proposals (CFP)**. This approach ensures transparent, merit-based selection and is most effective in sectors where there are multiple capable organisations with demonstrated capacity. It promotes innovation, competitive excellence, and value-for-money.

Single-stage competitive grants are suitable for:

- **Well-developed sectors** with established networks of capable organisations;
- **Innovative or scalable projects** that can be replicated or expanded across the Pacific; and
- **Established organisations** such as NGOs, CSOs, universities, and private sector partners with strong grant management capacity.

4.3 Multi-Stage Competitive Grant

Multi-stage competitive grants combine **capacity development** with **competitive selection**. They are designed for emerging sectors or contexts where potential grantees may need support before they can manage a grant effectively. This approach ensures inclusive access while helping to build long-term implementation capacity in the Pacific region. It follows a **two-step process**:

1. **Call for Expressions of Interest (EOI)** for pre-qualification, followed by
2. **Closed Call for Proposals (CFP)** for shortlisted applicants, with capacity-building support provided during the process.

Multi-stage competitive grants are most appropriate when:

- **Emerging sectors** – implementation capacity is limited and potential applicants are small NGOs, CBOs, or informal groups with little experience in grant processes.
- **Capacity building is required** – applicants need support to develop full proposals or strengthen financial/administrative systems before managing a grant.
- **Inclusive access is a priority** – ensuring participation of smaller or less experienced organisations that would otherwise be excluded from traditional competitive processes.

Fig. 1: Summary table of SPC grant types

Grant Type	What it is	When SPC uses it	Who it's for
Direct Grant	A grant awarded without competition.	• When SPC funds member governments to deliver activities • When only one organisation has the required authority, expertise, or operates in the relevant area • When the donor names the recipient • When supporting research or technical development identified in SPC programmes • For small sponsorships (under EUR 45,000) aligned with SPC goals, in exceptional cases	SPC member governments, specialised organisations, donor-identified partners, research institutions, and in limited cases, event organisers
Single-Stage Competitive	A competitive grant awarded through a single competitive CFP	• When there are multiple capable organisations in a sector • For projects that are **innovative** and can be scaled across the Pacific • Where applicants already have strong grant management capacity	NGOs, CSOs, universities, and private sector organisations with proven capacity
Multi-Stage Competitive	A two-step competitive process: Expressions of Interest (EOI) followed by a closed CFP	• In **emerging sectors** or new areas with limited local capacity • When applicants need **capacity building support** before applying • To ensure **inclusive access** for smaller or less experienced organisations	Community-based organisations, small NGOs, informal groups, and other emerging actors needing support to compete fairly

4.4 Common Principles, Roles and Grant Lifecycle

Regardless of whether SPC awards a direct grant, single-stage competitive grant, or multistage competitive grant, the **same core principles and oversight arrangements** apply. These ensure that SPC's grants are managed fairly, consistently, and transparently.

4.4.1 Core Principles

All SPC grants follow these principles:

- **Transparency and fairness** – all decisions are evidence-based and clearly documented.
- **Proportionality** – processes are scaled to the size and risk of the grant.
- **Accountability** – SPC remains accountable to its members, donors, and beneficiaries.
- **Strategic alignment** – grants must support SPC's strategic plan and donor agreements.
- **Ethics and integrity** – staff and partners are expected to act responsibly and declare any conflicts of interest.
- **Sustainability and inclusion** – activities must reflect SPC's commitment to equity, inclusion, and social and environmental responsibility (SER).

4.4.2 Roles in Grant Management

Grant management at SPC is a shared responsibility across different teams and governance levels:

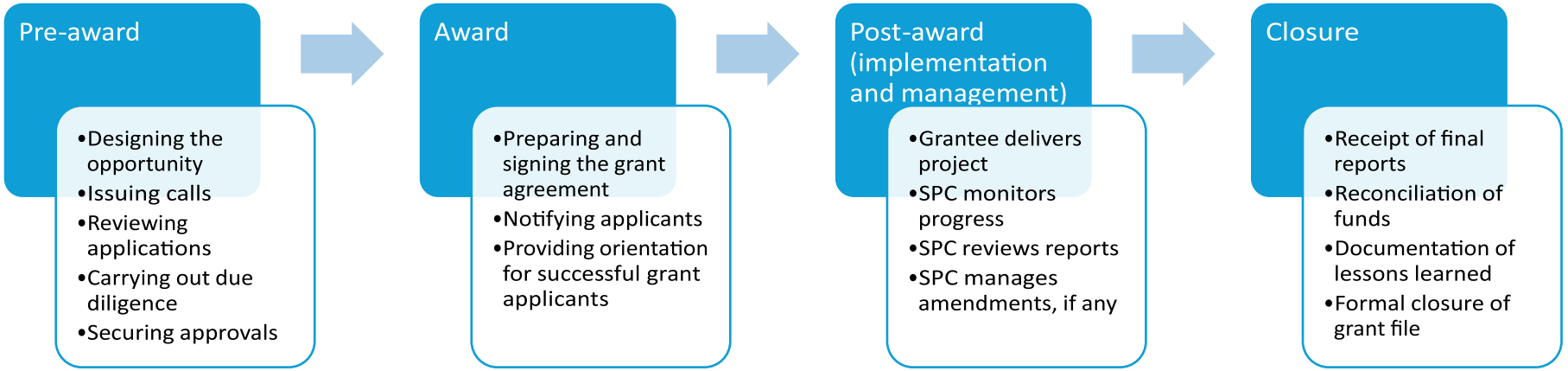
Actor	Role
Granting Section	Designs and initiates the grant; provides technical input and oversight during implementation.
Grants Team	Coordinates grant processes; ensures consistency with SPC policy and donor requirements; provides guidance and training.
Technical Subcommittees	Provide subject-matter expertise when reviewing proposals.
Grants Committee	Reviews higher-value grants (above EUR 45,000), ensures compliance with SPC policy and ethical standards, and recommends to the Director-General.
Director-General (or delegated authority)	Provides final approval for all grants and signs Grant Agreements.
Legal, Finance, and other support teams	Provide review and advice on contracts, compliance, budgeting, and risk.

4.4.3 The Grant Lifecycle

Every SPC grant passes through four main stages:

1. **Pre-award** – designing the opportunity, issuing calls, reviewing applications, carrying out due diligence, and securing approvals.
2. **Award** – preparing and signing the Grant Agreement, notifying applicants, and orienting successful grantees.
3. **Post-award implementation and management** – the grantee delivers the project; SPC monitors progress, reviews reports, and manages any amendments.
4. **Closure** – SPC receives final reports, reconciles funds, documents lessons learned, and formally closes the grant file.

Fig. 2: Four main stages of all SPC grants



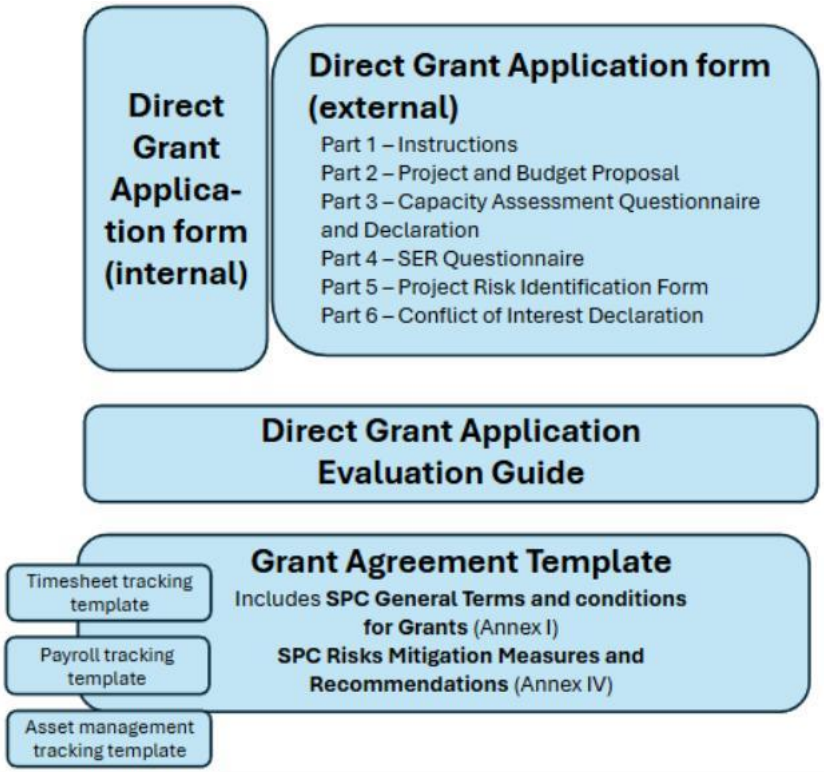
GRANT PRE-AWARD STAGE

In this section, we will look at the grant's pre-award stage. This includes the grants application stage, as well as SPC carrying out capacity assessments, due diligence and securing the required approvals for proceeding with grant action.

5. CAPACITY ASSESSMENT FRAMEWORK

SPC's capacity assessment framework – alternatively referred to as the grant application assessment framework – consists of tools and processes intended to ensure that SPC adheres to the highest standards in its grants award activities.

Fig. 3: Graph of SPC capacity assessment framework



5.1 Purpose of the capacity assessment

The capacity assessment seeks to gauge a prospective grantee's ability to undertake grant actions and manage grants effectively. It identifies required capabilities, existing capabilities, and areas needing strengthening or risk mitigation measures.

A capacity assessment is a systematic evaluation conducted to assess the capacity, viability, reliability and compliance of grants applicants seeking a SPC grant, as well as the feasibility of the project, including its budget and associated risks. This process involves a thorough review of the direct grant application forms (internal and external) and in particular the responses to

the capacity assessment questionnaire and supporting documents to verify key aspects such as financial stability, operational capacity and social and environmental responsibility (SER).

By carefully analysing these factors, the assessment identifies potential risks and assesses whether the applicant can implement the grant responsibly while adhering to SPC's values and objectives. This process informs decision-making and ensures that SPC awards grants to applicants who demonstrate capacity, compliance, and a commitment to delivering positive outcomes, the mitigating measures recommended for a specific grantee and grant action, and the precise conditions of the Grant Agreement.

When assessing the application for a direct grant, it is important to be aware of the project that will fund the grant. Depending on the case, the grant may be part of a project funded by an external donor (DFAT MFAT, EU, GCF, World Bank, other) and the funding agreement between SPC and the donor may impose certain sub-grant management measures.

In this case, one must understand the terms of the funding agreement (with the help of the Granting Section and the Legal team) and identify the specific requirements or recommendations of the donor for sub-grantees. This may include areas such as specific SER requirements, timing of financial and narrative reporting, procurement terms and conditions, audit requirements, grievance redress mechanisms, insurance obligations and/or mandatory training that SPC must provide to sub-grantees prior to grant implementation.

5.2 Areas covered by the capacity assessment

The direct grant application assessment follows a structured process to evaluate the suitability of grants proposals and identify risks before awarding SPC funding.

5.2.0 Sanction scanning

As a part of the pre-award risk assessment, all applicants will be screened for debarment, sanction, and/or affiliation with terrorism. To do this, the Grants team will check Sanction Scanner and the US Department of Treasury's Office of Foreign Asset Control (OFAC) list to ensure none of the applicants are debarred from receiving funding from institutional funders. At a minimum, the registered name of the grantee, as it appears on the registration (or equivalent) documentation, must be searched, as well as the name of the individual who signed the grant application. It is important that the spelling of the name of both the organization and the principle(s) is consistent with what appears in the documentation.

Applicants found to be debarred will be immediately excluded from receiving a grant. Instructions for performing these searches are below.

5.2.1 Grant activities

The assessment of the project proposal looks at the alignment of the proposed project with SPC's overall objectives, mandate, and grant policy requirements. It also considers the clarity and feasibility of the proposed activities and expected outcomes, as well as the project's relevance and potential contribution to SPC's strategic priorities.

5.2.2 Grant budget

The assessment of the proposed grant budget looks at the alignment between the requested funds and the actual costs required to implement the project. It also examines compliance with SPC's grant policy requirements, including:

- **co-financing**, which ensures that SPC does not fund the entire cost of an activity and that applicants contribute their own or third-party resources;
- **non-retroactivity**, which prohibits the funding of actions already completed or costs incurred prior to the submission of the grant application;
- **non-cumulation**, which prevents an SPC grant from financing parts of an activity already funded by other sources; and
- **no-profit rule**, which ensures that grants do not generate profit but instead balance income and expenditure for the approved action.

5.2.3 Grantee Operational Capacity

The operational capacity assessment determines whether prospective grantees have the required capacity to undertake grant actions and manage grants effectively. It identifies existing capabilities, required capabilities, and areas needing strengthening or risk mitigation. The operational capacity assessment is an assessment of key existing capabilities of the prospective grantee against required capabilities in the following operational areas: (1) Structure and Governance, (2) Project Management Capacity, (3) Financial Management and Internal Controls, (4) Purchasing/Procurement Procedures and Asset Management, (5) Travel procedures and (6) Staff Management.

Fig. 4: Areas covered by operational capacity assessment questionnaire

Area	Assessment Focus
Structure and Governance	Legal status, organizational structure, governance
Project Management Capacity	History of grants management; M&E systems, insurance, processes to address complaints and grievances.
Financial Management and Internal Controls	Financial management, accounting systems, audit compliance
Purchasing/Procurement Procedures & Asset Management	Systems and capacity for procurement Inventory systems, asset tracking, maintenance
Travel Procedures	Travel procedures, approval processes, documentation
Staff Management	Staff capacity, payroll systems, HR policies

5.2.4 SER screening

The SER assessment identifies and mitigates potential social and environmental risks associated with the proposed activities. It also assesses the extent to which the proposal aligns with SPC's Social and Environmental Responsibility (SER) Policy and relevant international standards. Furthermore, the assessment examines evidence of the applicant's commitment to promoting community engagement, environmental sustainability, and social and gender inclusion throughout the project's design, implementation, and monitoring.

5.2.5 Project risk screening

The project risk assessment identifies and considers the internal and external risks that may affect successful project delivery. It also evaluates the extent to which the proposal assesses risks related to the political context, logistical challenges, and long-term project sustainability. The assessment recommends mitigation measures to address identified vulnerabilities and ensure effective implementation and continuity of outcomes.

5.2.6 Conflict of interest screening

This section reviews the grant applicants declared real, potential, or apparent conflicts of interest, and assesses the impact of any declared conflict of interest.

5.2.7 Grant applicant declaration

The capacity assessment also requires for the grant applicant signatory to declare, on behalf of the grant applicant, that:

1. Neither the applicant nor any member of its executive management is listed on any national or international sanctions list.
2. Neither the applicant nor any member of its executive management is engaged in or facilitates money laundering and/or terrorism financing activities.
3. None of the funds received or to be received by the applicant will be used for criminal activities, including financing terrorism or money laundering.
4. Neither the applicant nor any member of its executive management is involved in any activities related to child labour.
5. The applicant has policies or practices in place on protection from sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment (PSEAH).
6. The applicant is committed to preventing fraud, corruption and other prohibited practices.
7. The applicant complies with applicable taxation laws and regulations.
8. All information provided in the questionnaire is true, accurate, and complete to the best of the signatory's knowledge. Supporting documents have been provided where requested.

5.3 Outcomes of the Capacity Assessment

The SPC Capacity Assessment Framework enables SPC to systematically identify and implement capacity assessment outcomes based on the specific grantee categories (Tiering System). This Framework also produces recommendations for the specific terms and conditions in the grant agreements, which are then carefully discussed with the Granting Section and the prospective grantees to decide whether and which recommendations should be included as legally binding grant conditions in the grant agreement. As defined in Section F.28.1 of the Grants Policy, the outcome of the capacity assessment will be used by the Grants Team and Grants Committee to recommend conditions or requirements for an individual grant, based on a risk assessment of the value of the grant, the nature of the grant, and the capacity of the prospective grantee.

A capacity assessment is valid for three years, and in the case of a government entity, for all government entities in the same country applying the same government policies, procedure and guidelines as those of the assessed government entity.

6. THE GRANTS COMMITTEE

The SPC Grants Committee plays a central role in overseeing and ensuring the integrity of SPC's grant processes. It may be established for individual grant activities or serve across multiple activities, with its composition – approved by the Director-General or his delegate – consisting of at least a Director (as Chair), a representative from the granting section, and another from a different programme area. The Committee is responsible for ensuring compliance with SPC's Grants Policy, and confirming that the grants process is applied consistently, fairly, and without favouritism. It reviews all documentation and justifications for completeness and appropriateness, makes recommendations on the award or rejection of grants, and provides advice on exceptional cases or policy waivers. In doing so, the Committee has a duty to act ethically and with due care, declaring any conflicts of interest. Through these functions, the Grants Committee upholds transparency, fairness, and accountability in SPC's grant management.

6.1 Composition and Appointment of the Grants Committee

The Grants Committee is composed, at a minimum, of:

- one SPC Director, who chairs;
- a representative from the Granting Section; and
- one representative from another programme area. (See Grants Policy, paragraph 3.4.2.)

Additional members may be appointed to the Committee based on the complexity of a grant action and its technical requirements.

The composition of the Committee is proposed by the Grants Team based on a Committee Roster and put before the Director-General's delegate for approval.

Note that a Grants Committee may be established for one or multiple grant activities.

6.2 Duties of the Grants Committee

The duties of the Grants Committee are as follows:

1. To adhere to the requirements of the Grants Policy, especially the obligations to act ethically and with due diligence;
2. To declare any potential, perceived or actual conflicts of interest;
3. To ensure that SPC's grants process is followed for the relevant grant activity;
4. To ensure that a consistent and equitable method has been used for evaluation, and which does not favour any applicant;
5. To review documents and justifications provided to ensure that the justification and documentation is complete and appropriate;
6. To make recommendations for awards, or not, of grants; and
7. To provide advice on any exceptional processes or cases of waiver of policy requirements. (See Grants Policy, paragraph 3.4.3.)

6.3 Grants Committee Review Triggers

The Grants Committee must be convened for:

- all grant requests exceeding EUR 45,000;
- amendments to any grant type that would increase the amount of a grant by more than 20% of the amount originally awarded.

Further to the above triggers, in certain circumstances, the Grants Team may decide that a specific request for award or amendment should be considered by the Grants Committee, even if not explicitly required under the rules of the Grants Policy.

Fig. 5: Table of Grants Committee triggers

Grant Type	Committee Review Trigger
Direct and Competitive Grants	All grants >EUR 45,000
All	Proposed amendment to increase original value >20%

6.4 Grants Committee Process

To ensure that the Grants Committee can carry out its duties carefully and efficiently, it is supported by the Grants Team both before and after the meeting of the Committee.

6.4.1 Pre-Grants Committee meeting steps

Prior to a meeting of the Grants Committee, the Grants Team collaborates closely with the Granting Section (i.e. SPC Division) to ensure that all documentation required by the Committee is in place.

Every step, from the preparation of the information package to the Committee members' briefing, follows strict timelines and documentation requirements to ensure readiness and accountability. In particular:

- The pre-meeting process begins with a full grant package submission and ends with meeting documentation circulated to Committee members.
- Each step ensures compliance with review procedures and that required materials reach key stakeholders on time.

The detailed steps of the pre-Grants Committee meeting are shown in the table below.

Fig. 6: Table of pre-Grants Committee meeting steps

Step	Process	Key Documents	Timeframe
1	Submission by the Granting Section of full grants package to the Grants Team	Finalised grants package; confirmation email	At least 10 working days before GC meeting
2	The Grants Team reviews for completeness, accuracy, and integrity	Grant package review checklist	Within 2 working days of receipt
3	Selection, confirm availability, delegated endorsement of GC members, and completion of Conflict-of-Interest Declaration	GC member roster; nomination email Conflict of Interest Declaration Form	Upon scheduling
4	Circulation of meeting documents to Grants Committee members	Agenda, grants package, supporting documents	Minimum 5 working days before meeting
5	Grants Team briefing to Granting Section	Agenda; briefing notes	1 day prior to meeting day
6	Conduct GC meeting	Grants Committee Meeting Documents Grants Team Meeting Report Template	Meeting day

6.4.2 Post-Grants Committee meeting steps

Following a meeting of the Grants Committee, a systematic process ensures all outcomes are documented, reviewed, endorsed, and implemented as required by the SPC Grants policy. In particular:

- The Grants Team drafts, reviews, and finalises the meeting report, securing signatures from Grants Committee members before endorsement by the Director-General or his delegate(s).
- For those grant actions approved for award, grant agreements are drafted and vetted according to the Grants Committee and capacity assessment recommendations.

Fig. 7: Table of post-Grants Committee meeting steps

Step	Process	Key Documents	Timeframe
1	Draft meeting report and internal GT review	Draft GC report	Within 1- 2 working days post-meeting
2	Circulate report to GC members for review	Draft GC report	2 working days for feedback
3	Finalise report and obtain signatures	Final GC report	Within 2 working days after review
4	Submit signed report for DG approval and Endorsement	Signed GC report, GC meeting Complete Package	Immediately after signature
5	Draft and vet grant agreements per recommendations	Draft agreements; GC report	Upon GC report approval
6	Approval and signing of grant agreements (per delegated authority)	Signed grant agreements	According to authority level

6.4.3 Endorsement of the Grants Committee Report

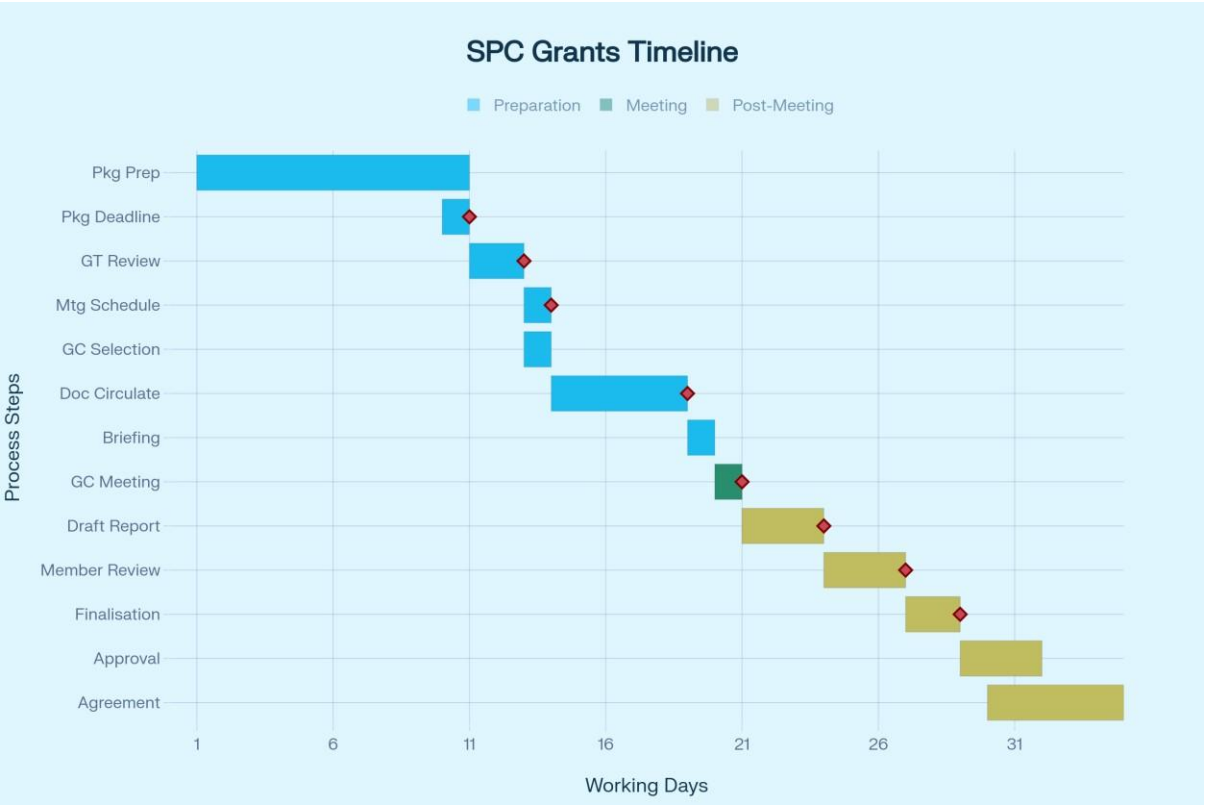
The final step of the Grants Committee process is the endorsement of the Grants Committee Report.

Under SPC's Grants Policy read in tandem with the Instrument of Delegations and Authorisations, any Grants Committee Report for a grant action up to EUR 400,000 is endorsed by the Chief Legal Counsel, while a Report for a grant action exceeding EUR 400,000 must be endorsed by the Director-General.

6.4.4 Grants Committee Process Timeline

The Grants Committee process generally takes approximately 30 working days from beginning to end.

Fig. 8: Detailed timeline of Grants Committee process



7. PRE-AWARD PROCESS PER GRANT TYPE

Now that we have considered the commonalities in the pre-award stage, we will look at the pre-award process by grant type.

7.1 Pre-award – Direct Grants

Stage 1: Application and Technical Review

The prospective grantee submits a grant application, setting out the proposed activities, expected results, and budget.

- The Granting Section reviews the application to confirm it aligns with SPC's programme objectives and donor requirements.
- The Grants Team then works with the applicant to strengthen the proposal where needed. This includes reviewing the budget in detail and, if necessary, negotiating adjustments.
- Budget review involves checking that:
    - costs are clearly broken down and supported by data,
    - each budget item is reasonable, necessary, and eligible, and
    - the overall budget will allow the grantee to achieve the expected results in an economical and efficient way.
- At the same time, the Granting Section prepares a justification note explaining why the direct grant approach (rather than competition) is appropriate in this case.

Stage 2: Capacity Assessment

Stage 3: Grants Committee if above EUR 45,000

7.2 Pre-award – Single-stage competitive

Stage 1: Planning and Call for Proposals

- The Grants Team, working with the Granting Section, confirms the funding priorities, focus areas, and the eligibility and selection criteria.
- Based on this, the Grants Team prepares and publishes a CFP**.**
- The CFP sets out the requirements, deadlines, and submission process.
- Applicants are given a deadline to submit any questions, usually two to three weeks after the CFP is issued.
- Within two weeks of the deadline, the Grants Team publishes all questions and SPC's responses on the same webpage as the CFP. This ensures that all applicants have equal access to the same information.

Stage 2: Receiving, Logging, and Screening Proposals

- The Grants Team logs all proposals received by the deadline.
- Each application is checked against a document checklist to confirm that all required forms and attachments are included.
- If an application is incomplete, it is flagged. The Division Director, with inputs from the Grants Team decides whether minor omissions can be corrected or whether the application is ineligible.
- The Grants Team also conducts an eligibility screening based on the criteria in the Call for Proposals, including:
    - submission by the due date and time,
    - proposed project period,
    - proposed budget,
    - proposed project location(s), and
    - alignment with the priority sectors set out in the CFP.
- Minor omissions should not automatically disqualify an application if they do not affect fairness or transparency. Any decisions on incomplete applications must be documented.

Note on Late and Incomplete Applications

A late application is one received by the SPC after the deadline of the solicitation. An incomplete application is an application that is missing mandatory components/content required in the solicitation. Late or incomplete applications may be reviewed, at the discretion of the Granting Section and the Grants Team. Late or incomplete applications may be reviewed for possible award if:

- The solicitation does not specifically state that late or incomplete applications will not be evaluated; and
- All late applications or incomplete applications are treated consistently.

Stage 3: Technical Evaluation of Proposals

- During this stage the Grants team, in coordination with the Granting Section, convenes a Technical Subcommittee of subject matter experts. Experts may be SPC staff or external specialists with relevant knowledge.
- The Technical Subcommittee evaluates and scores applications using the evaluation criteria provided in the Call for Proposals.
- The review focuses on:
    - The technical soundness and feasibility of the proposal
    - Alignment with SPC's programme goals and priorities
    - The potential impact and sustainability of the project
    - Budget to gives SPC sufficient certainty that funds will be used responsibly and for the intended purpose. The review checks that:
        - all costs are clearly explained and broken down,
        - costs are reasonable, necessary, and eligible,
        - the budget is efficient and economical, and
        - the level of funding will allow the project to achieve the expected results.

- **Each evaluator completes their scoring and comments independently** to ensure fairness and to avoid undue influence.
- The Grants Team also reviews and negotiates budgets to ensure costs are reasonable, necessary, and efficient.
- Once all individual evaluations are complete, the Grants Team consolidates the results into a technical evaluation report. Independent scoring first ensures transparency and reduces bias, while consolidation provides a single, consistent record for decision making. This combined report forms the basis for the next stage of the assessment.

Stage 4: Capacity Assessment

Stage 5: Grants Committee

7.3 Pre-award – Multi-stage competitive

Stage 1: Planning and Call for Expressions of Interest (EOI)

- The Grants Team, working with the Granting Section, confirms priorities, focus areas, and eligibility/selection criteria.
- A Call for EOIs is prepared and published, outlining requirements, deadlines, and submission process.
- Applicants are given a deadline to submit questions (typically 2–3 weeks after release). SPC publishes all questions and answers to ensure fairness.

Stage 2: Receiving and Screening EOIs

- The Grants Team logs all EOIs and screens them for completeness and eligibility.

- Screening checks cover deadlines, project period, budget, location, and alignment with priority sectors.

Note on Late and Incomplete EOIs

A late EOI is one received by the SPC after the deadline of the Call for EOIs. An incomplete EOI is an EOI that is missing mandatory components/content required in the Call for EOIs. Late or incomplete EOIs may be reviewed, at the discretion of the Granting Section and the Grants Team. Late or incomplete EOIs may be reviewed for possible award if:

- The solicitation does not specifically state that late or incomplete EOIs will not be evaluated; and
- All late or incomplete EOIs are treated consistently.

Stage 3: Shortlisting to Full Proposal Stage

- The Grants Team and Granting Section review EOIs against the published criteria.
- Shortlisted applicants are invited to submit Full Proposals. Capacity-building support may be provided at this stage (e.g. training workshops, mentoring, proposal-writing guidance).

Stage 4: Receiving and Screening Full Proposals

- The Grants Team logs all Full Proposals and checks them for completeness and eligibility.
- Incomplete proposals are flagged. The Division Director decides whether minor omissions can be corrected.
- Eligible proposals move forward for technical evaluation.

Stage 5: Technical Evaluation of Proposals

- A Technical Subcommittee of subject matter experts (SPC and/or external) reviews and independently scores all eligible Full Proposals against published criteria.
- Evaluations focus on feasibility, alignment with SPC priorities, potential impact, sustainability, and budget.
- The Grants Team also reviews and negotiates budgets to ensure costs are reasonable, necessary, and efficient.
- The Grants Team consolidates individual scores and comments into a technical evaluation report.

Stage 6: Capacity Assessment

Stage 7: Grants Committee

GRANT AWARD STAGE

The grant award stage ensures each SPC grant is formalised through a clear and consistent contractual framework. The Grants Team prepares agreements incorporating Grants Committee recommendations, donor requirements, and SPC policy standards, using a standard six-article template. All agreements are reviewed for legal, policy, and compliance accuracy before being formally signed by authorised representatives of both SPC and the grantee.

8. GRANT AGREEMENT PROCESS

The Grants team develops grant agreements incorporating Grants Committee recommendations, special conditions, and donor-specific requirements into the standardised SPC grant agreement template. All terms, deliverables, performance indicators, and compliance obligations are clearly articulated to ensure mutual understanding between SPC and the grantee, establishing the contractual foundation for successful project implementation.

8.1 Grant Agreement Structure and Key Components

All SPC grant agreements follow a standardised six-article structure that provides comprehensive coverage of essential contractual elements while maintaining consistency across the grant portfolio. This structured approach ensures all critical aspects of the grant relationship are clearly defined and legally enforceable.

Article	Key Components	Purpose
Article 1: Purpose and Agreement Documents	Project objective, scope, definition, referenced documents, deliverables framework	Establishes the fundamental purpose and comprehensive document framework governing the grant relationship
Article 2: Grants Disbursement Conditions	Payment schedule, milestone requirements, verification procedures, financial compliance	Defines conditions and procedures for fund disbursement ensuring accountability and milestone achievement
Article 3: Reporting and Acquittals	Progress reporting schedule, financial acquittal requirements, documentation standards	Establishes comprehensive reporting framework and acquittal procedures for transparency and accountability

Article 4: Special Terms and Conditions	Project specific requirements, risk mitigation measures, compliance obligations, donor conditions	Addresses unique project requirements and specific risk management measures tailored to grant circumstance
Article 5: Focal Point and Personnel	Key personnel identification, communication protocols, responsibilities matrices, contact procedures.	Establishes clear communication channels and personnel accountability frameworks for effective project management
Article 6: Entry into Force and Duration	Commencement conditions, Project duration, termination provisions, extension procedures.	Defines agreement lifecycle including activation, duration and termination parameters ensuring clear temporal boundaries.

8.2 Grant Agreement Review and Approval Process

All grant agreements undergo comprehensive review to ensure compliance with SPC policies and donor requirements. The review process includes assessment of terms and special conditions, risk provisions, compliance obligations, and enforceability, ensuring agreements protect SPC's interests while enabling effective project implementation.

8.3 Grant Agreement Execution

Following finalisation, agreements are executed through formal signature processes involving authorised representatives of both parties. The signature process follows established delegation of authority, with appropriate approvals obtained based on grant value for the case of SPC and the authorized signatory on the Grantee's side.

Fig. 9: Table of Grant Agreement process

Step	Process	Key Documents	Responsible Party	Timeframe
1	Draft agreement based on approved grant package	Grant package, GC report, standard template	Grants Team	3 working days
2	Circulate the draft to Granting Section with GC report	Draft agreement, signed GC report	Grants Team	1 working day

3	Granting Section reviews with grantee and confirm or propose changes	Reviewed draft, confirmation memo	Granting Section	5 working days
4	Finalise agreement and submit for signing	Final agreement, signing package	Grants Team	2 working days
5	Obtain SPC authorised signatures	Signed agreement	Delegated Authority	5 working days
6	Share signed agreement for grantee signature	SPC-signed agreement	Granting Section	1 working day

GRANT POST-AWARD STAGE: GRANT MANAGEMENT

Grant post-award management encompasses all activities that occur following the execution of a grant agreement through to final acquittal and closure. This phase ensures the effective stewardship of SPC funds, compliance with grant conditions, and achievement of intended outcomes while maintaining accountability to SPC (and donor) requirements. The post-award process provides structured oversight, supporting grantees in successful project delivery while safeguarding SPC's fiduciary responsibilities and reputation.

9. GRANT MANAGEMENT, OVERSIGHT PROCESSES AND AMENDMENTS

9.1 Post-Award Orientation

The Grants Team conducts a pre-award orientation and onboarding session for successful grantees to ensure a clear understanding of the Grant Agreement and start-up requirements. The session covers the agreement's terms and conditions, reporting and compliance obligations, SPC's expectations for the responsible use of funds, and the nature of the partnership between SPC and the grantee during implementation. Orientation may include additional briefings or tailored workshops to address specific start-up needs and is adapted to the grantee's capacity—ranging from concise briefings for established organisations to more detailed onboarding and capacity support for newer or less experienced partners. Following orientation, the grantee is ready to begin project implementation.

9.2 Financial Management and Grant Disbursement Procedures

In collaboration with the SPC granting section and grantees, the Grants Team establishes payment schedules aligned with project milestones, absorption capacity as determined by the capacity assessment, deliverables, and reporting periods as specified in the grant agreement.

The first payment is generally an advance to be disbursed to the grantee within 30 days of full signature of the grant agreement.

All disbursement requests undergo verification to ensure milestone completion, appropriate use of funds, compliance with grant conditions, review and clearance of acquittal supporting documents.

Finance teams within SPC Divisions review supporting documentation and recommend payment approval to the delegated authority in accordance with established thresholds.

Fig. 10: Grants disbursement procedures

Step	Process	Key Documents	Responsible Party	Timeframe
1	Advance first disbursement	Signed Grant Agreement	Grantee, Granting Section, Finance	Within 30 days of signing the agreement.
2	Receive subsequent disbursement requests from grantee	Payment Request Form, milestone evidence, acquittal supporting documents	Grantee	Per milestone schedule
3	Verify milestone completion and documentation	Verification checklist, Required supporting evidence	Granting Section	
4	Conduct the acquittal process	Complete and approve acquittal report	Granting Section and Corporate Finance Team	
5	Review and approve payment recommendation	Payment approval form	Corporate Finance	
6	Process payment to grantee	Payment instruction, remittance advice	Corporate Finance	

9.3 Monitoring, Reporting and Compliance

9.3.1 Progress Monitoring and Reporting

Grantees are required to submit regular progress reports in accordance with the agreed reporting schedule contained in the grant agreement, typically quarterly or at key milestone points. Reports must demonstrate progress against objectives, expenditure against budget, and compliance with the terms of the grant agreement.

9.3.2 Standard Reports

Grantees are required to submit clear and accurate standard reports as part of ongoing monitoring and compliance under SPC's Grants Policy. In particular:

- **Financial reports** must detail actual expenditures in the grant currency and demonstrate alignment with approved budgets; and
- **Narrative reports** should track progress against agreed outcomes, outputs, and activities.
- Where required by the grant agreement, grantees must provide independent **audit reports**, confirming compliance and financial integrity in grant implementation.

Timely submission of all reports is expected, in formats specified by SPC and within scheduled reporting periods, to maintain transparency and fulfil grant obligations.

For clarity, narrative and financial reporting obligations are outlined in each grant agreement.

9.3.3 Supporting Documentation and Record Keeping

Grantees are required to retain all supporting documents that substantiate reported expenditures and activities, ensuring these records are adequate for acquittal, review, and future reference. Documentation must remain accessible to SPC and its auditors and be maintained for the full retention period stated in the grant agreement.

9.3.4 Eligible Expenditures

Expenses are eligible under a grant if they are:

1. incurred during the approved grant implementation period;
2. included in the approved grant budget;
3. necessary for project delivery;
4. identifiable, verifiable and supported by proper documentation; and
5. reasonable, justified, and consistent with sound financial management, as per SPC's grants policy and procedures. (See SPC Grants Policy paragraph 37.1.)

SPC will not fund costs that do not meet eligibility criteria. (See SPC Grants Policy paragraph 37.2.) Grantees are responsible for repaying ineligible expenditures identified through reviews or audits, and any unused grant funds must be returned to SPC promptly. (See SPC standard Terms and Conditions for Grant Agreement)

While the temporal starting point of the approved grant implementation period and therefore eligible costs shall generally post-date the signature of the grant agreement, the SPC Grants Policy provides scope in singular situations for costs to be eligible from the date of submission of the grant application where the grant action or project has already begun. (See SPC Grants Policy paragraph 30.1.)

This flexibility was adopted during the latest reform of the SPC Grants Policy (1 February 2025) to address the considerable delays experienced in the implementation of SPC grants and ensure that SPC can safely and effectively carry out its mission. By way of example, the

flexibility is intended to address situations where SPC Members' internal administrative laws require for a grant agreement to undergo a rigorous internal process, e.g. receiving Cabinet approval, which may be a lengthy process and one that SPC must respect as it pertains to national sovereignty. This practice is also aligned with the granting policy of one of SPC's largest donors, namely the EU.

SPC practice is to apply, at minimum, the following safeguards in situations where the temporal starting point of eligible costs pre-dates the signature of the grant agreement:

- The grant action in question is considered by the Grants Committee;
- The Granting Section has demonstrated that there is a justified, operational need for eligible costs to pre-date the signature of the grant agreement;
- An SPC operational capacity assessment (Section F of the Grants Policy) has been carried out on the prospective grantee;
- The Declaration contained in Section 7, Part 3 of the Grant Application Form has been duly signed and dated by an authorised representative of the prospective grantee;
- The documents before the Grants Committee include a due diligence check through the "Sanction Scanner" tool of the prospective grantee and its signatory;
- The capacity assessment – and any risks and recommended mitigating measures flagged therein – informs the Grants Committee's decision to approve the approve proceeding (or not) with the grant and under what conditions; by way of example, costs can be considered eligible from the date of submission of the grant application or some later event, such as the Grants Committee meeting or implementation of any critical risk mitigation measures;
- The grant agreement states the temporal starting point of eligible costs (date of submission of the grant application of some later point);
- Once the grant agreement is signed, any costs incurred between the agreed temporal starting point and the signature of the agreement will be subject to SPC due diligence to ensure they are eligible costs under the terms of the grant agreement;
- If costs incurred between the agreed temporal starting point and the signature of the agreement are determined by SPC not to meet the terms of the agreement (i.e. are not eligible costs), SPC will not reimburse those costs (paragraphs 37.2 and 41.1 of the Grants Policy); and
- Should the grant agreement not be signed between SPC and the grant applicant, any expenditures will remain the responsibility of the grant applicant.

9.3.5 Compliance Review and Risk Management

The Granting Section conducts systematic compliance reviews of all submitted reports and documentation to identify potential risks, non-compliance issues, or areas requiring corrective action. The reports must be submitted in formats and templates (where available) agreed to in the Grant agreement. Regular risk assessments inform ongoing grant management strategies and early intervention measures.

Step	Process	Key Documents	Responsible Party
1	Submit progress reports per agreement schedule	Progress report, financial statement, deliverables	Grantee
2	Review reports for compliance and progress	Compliance checklist, review report	Granting Section
3	Communicate feedback and required actions	Feedback and corrective action email	Granting Section

9.4 Monitoring Responsibilities

Following grant award, the Granting Section leads the day-today oversight of implementation in line with the grant agreement, including obtaining and reviewing progress and financial reports.

The Finance team within the Granting Section supports this oversight, ncluding reviewing and recording acquittals, and ensuring compliance with SPC's financial controls.

The Grants Team provides independent compliance oversight through risk-based spot checks, and reports on portfolio performance.

Fig. 11: Table of monitoring responsibilities of the Granting Section and the Grants Team in grant post-award management

Teams	Key Responsibilities
Granting Section	• Lead day-to-day grant oversight in accordance with the Grant Agreement terms. Obtain and review progress and financial reports and acquittals. Verify expenditure and acquittals for financial compliance. • Conduct ongoing monitoring and evaluation (M&E) to assess progress, outputs, outcomes, and impact. Maintain and update the Grant Risk Register annually or sooner if required. Conduct onsite visits and project monitoring. Maintain regular communication with grantees. Manage grant audits during implementation. Report to the Grants Team on grant status and mid-term review outcomes.
Corporate Finance	• Support the Granting Section with financial administration of grants. Review and post acquittals received from the Granting Section into Navision. Process progressive tranche payment requests in accordance with SPC's financial policies. Monitor grantee account balances and report periodically to relevant sections. Ensure all financial processes comply with SPC's internal controls and donor requirements.
Grants Team	• Provide independent compliance oversight using risk-based spot checks. • Conduct joint site visits with Granting Section. • Monitor adherence to SPC Grants Policy and donor requirements. • Maintain the central SPC Grants Register. • Produce regular grant performance reports for the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) and divisions. • Carry out grant mid-term reviews and ad hoc checks as required. • Support resolution of implementation challenges reported by the Granting Section. • Contribute to grant related audits that include grant samples. • Develop and maintain grant management training and capacity building packages for SPC staff and grantees.

9.5 Grant Amendment Process

9.5.1 Amendment Request Requirements

All requests for amendments to grant agreements submitted to the Grants Team must include detailed justification, including the current grant implementation stage and specific reasons necessitating the proposed changes.

Amendments that increase the grant value by more than 20% of the original approved amount require additional Grants Committee review.

All grant agreement amendments, irrespective of value, require the approval of the Director General.

9.5.2 Amendment Documentation

Amendment requests must be supported by documentation to enable thorough assessment of proposed changes and their implications for project delivery, risk profile, and compliance requirements. All supporting documentation must be current and directly relevant to the proposed amendment(s).

Fig. 12: Table of required documentary support for grant amendment request

Document Type	Purpose	Responsible Party	Requirements
Amendment Request Memo	Formal request submission	Granting Section	Complete memo with all required fields. Division endorsement
Formal request by grantee with Justification Narrative	Detailed rationale for grantee	Grantee	Comprehensive explanation of need and impact
Updated Work Plan	Revised project timeline	Grantee	Required for No-Cost Extensions (NCE)
Updated Budget	Revised financial allocations	Grantee	Required when budget changes proposed

10. GRANT TERMINATION

SPC General Terms and Conditions for Grants provides standard terms for termination of a grant agreement, either without or with cause.

Furthermore, where SPC has determined that a grant recipient has failed to comply with its legal obligations under **any** SPC grant agreement, SPC reserves the right to terminate the grant agreement, and list the grant recipient on SPC's non-responsible vendor list, which will prevent the grant recipient from receiving further grants support from SPC.

10. 1 Termination without Cause

Under SPC General Terms and Conditions for Grants, SPC reserves the right to terminate without cause a grant agreement, at any time with 30 days' written notice to the grant recipient, in which case SPC shall reimburse the grantee for all reasonable costs incurred by them prior to receipt of the notice of termination. SPC will determine whether reimbursement

of any portion of the grant back to SPC is required and if so, the grantee will reimburse SPC accordingly.

10.2. Termination with Cause

Under SPC General Terms and Conditions for Grants, SPC or the grantee may terminate the grant agreement with cause at any time with 15 days' written notice to the other party.

GRANT CLOSURE STAGE

11. GRANT CLOSURE

This section sets out SPC's requirements and responsibilities for closing out grants. The process ensures that grant activities meet agreed objectives and SPC compliance requirements, and that lessons learned contribute to overall improved grant management.

11.1 Overview of close-out process

Grant close-out commences once the grant activity ends or the grant agreement reaches its expiration. The process involves confirmation of deliverables, verification of expenditure, compilation of key reports, and archiving of records for audit and future reference.

11.2 Key Responsibilities

The key responsibilities in grant closure lie with the following parties:

- **Granting Section**: Responsible for initiating and overseeing the grant close-out process, reviewing and approving final narrative and financial reports, ensuring deliverables are completed, managing asset disposition or transfer if applicable, and preparing the grant closure report. Regular liaison with the grantee and support on closure requirements is essential.
- **Grants Team**: Reviews closure documentation for completeness and compliance, issues formal closure confirmation within 30 days of documentation receipt and ensures all records are archived for audit and legal purposes.
- **Grantee**: Must submit all required final reports, supporting documentation, and evidence of assets disposition. Grantees ensure all project funds are acquitted, ineligible expenditure repaid, and unused funds returned to SPC.

11.3 Timeline

The general timeline of grants closure is as follows:

- Grantees must submit all final reports and supporting documentation by the date specified in the grant agreement, usually within three months of project completion.
- The Granting Section will review reports and documentation within 30 days of receipt.
- The Grants Team will issue closure confirmation no later than 30 days after all requirements are met.

- All closure records and supporting documents must be securely archived and remain accessible for audit and legal requirements for a minimum of six years following the end of the grant agreement.

11.4 Key Documents

The key documents used in grants closure are the following:

- Final Narrative Report: Demonstrates project achievements, challenges, and lessons learned.
- Final Financial Report: Provides detailed reconciliation of funds against project budget, signed by authorised parties.
- Asset Transfer Report (where applicable): Details the handover or disposition of project assets.
- Acquittal Supporting Documents: Includes receipts, invoices, contracts, payslips, and any other financial evidence.
- SPC Grant Closure Checklist: Documents all closure activities, outstanding issues, and recommendations.
- Archiving Information: Specifies storage arrangements and retention period.

Fig. 13: Summary table of grants close-out process

Close-Out Step	Responsible Party	Key Documents / Outputs	Timeline / Deadline
1. Initiate close-out process after project completion or grant expiry	Granting Section	Notification to grantee of close-out requirements; Close-out checklist	Immediately after grant end date
2. Submission of required final reports and returns	Grantee	Final narrative report; Final financial report; Supporting documentation; Evidence of asset disposition; Return of unused funds	By date stated in Grant Agreement (typically within 3 months of completion)
3. Review of final financial report and acquittals	Granting Section	Reviewed & verified final financial report; Reconciliation statement	Within 30 days of receiving reports
4. Review of final narrative report and deliverables	Granting Section	Reviewed & approved final narrative report; Evidence of outputs/outcomes achieved	Within 30 days of receiving reports
5. Verification of asset disposition / transfer	Granting Section with Finance (if required)	Asset transfer or disposal report; Updated asset register	Before preparation of closure report
6. Preparation of Grant Closure Report	Granting Section	Closure report including final financial report, final narrative report, lessons learned, archiving information, Closure out letter to grantee;	Immediately after reviews are completed
7. Submission of Closure Report to Grants Team	Granting Section	Final signed closure report	Upon completion
8. Compliance review	Grants Team	Updated Grants Register	Issued within 30 days of receiving complete documentation
9. Record archiving for audit and retention	Grants Team	Archived files; Document retention register	Retained for minimum 6 years from grant end date

	(policy) / Granting Section (project files)		

36

10. Capture lessons learned for organisational improvement	Granting Section & Grants Team & SPL	Lessons learned log; Recommendations for future grants	Concurrent with closure report

37

Forms, Templates and Documentation

Pre-Award Phase:

- Direct Grant Application Form – external
- Direct Grant internal request form
- Operational Capacity Assessment Questionnaire
- Evaluation Guide

Award Phase:

- Grants Committee report template
- SPC Grant Agreement Template

Post-Award Phase:

- Supporting Documents List
- Grant Payment Request
- Narrative Report Template for grantees
- Financial Report Template for grantees
- Asset Management Template for grantees
- Payroll template for grantee
- Procurement Templates and Guidelines for grantees
- Staff Recruitment & Management Guidelines for grantees
- Timesheet Template for grantees
- Travel Guidelines for grantees
- Grant Payment Request

Closure Phase:

- Asset Disposition Form
- Grants Closure Checklist for SPC
- Grants Closure Checklist for grantees
- Closure Letter Template

SUPPORT RESOURCES AND TOOLS

Support Channels

Grants Helpdesk:

- Email: grantshelpdesk@spc.int
- Internal support for SPC staff

In-Person Support:

- **Suva Offices (Nabua and Mead Road Campuses):** Grants and Collaborations Manager, Team Leaders, Officers and Senior Assistants
- **Noumea Office:** Grants and Collaborations Officers and Senior Assistants

Information Ressources

SPC Intranet Grants Page:

- News & Updates
- Forms & Templates
- Grants Dashboard *SPC Website:*
- SPC Grants Policy
- Advertised CFPs and award notices
- Grant opportunities and guidelines

SharePoint:

- Grants register and document library
- Collaborations register and document library
- Collaborative workspace management
- Grantee database management

Learning, Training & Capacity Building

- Grants Webinar Series
- Capacity building for grantees
- Grantee support and on-site capacity assistance
- Training on grant management requirements
- Technical assistance for compliance

Navision:

- Grant activity tracking
- Financial monitoring and reporting

Annex 1 – Full grant process by grant type

Fig. 14: Table of full Direct Grant process

Step	Responsible Party	Timeline	Key Activities	Required Documentation
1. Application Preparation	Applicant & Granting Section	Day 0-20	Prepare detailed application, budget, strategic alignment evidence	Direct Grant Application Forms, Detailed Budget Template, Strategic Alignment Documentation
2. Capacity Assessment	Grants Team	Day 21-35	Complete capacity assessment for new/expired applicants	Direct Grant – Evaluation Guide Capacity Assessment Questionnaire, Grant Applications Forms, and Operational Capacity Supporting Documents
3. Grants Committee Review (if >EUR 45,000)	Grants Committee	Day 36-40	Attend the Grants Committee meetings and Provide award recommendations	Grants Committee Report Template
4. Legal Endorsement	Chief Legal Counsel	Day 41-42	Review and endorse Grants Committee Report	Grants Committee Report
5. DG Approval	Director-General	Day 43-44	Final decision on grant award and authorization for negotiation	Grants Committee Report
6. Grant Agreement	Grants Team	Day 45-55	Draft agreement, share with divisions and proposed grantees, finalize terms, obtain signatures	SPC Grant Agreement Template
7. Publication	Grants Team	By 30 June (following year)	Publish award details on SPC website	Award Publication Template

Fig. 15: Table of full Competitive Single-Stage Grant process

Step	Responsible Party	Key Activities	Required Documentation
1. Planning & CFP Advertising	Granting Section + Grants Team	Draft CFP documentation, evaluation criteria, budget templates. Publish CFP, disseminate through SPC website, info sessions and social networks, and respond to queries	CFP Template, Evaluation Grid, Budget Template
2. Application Receipt	Grants Team	Receive applications, issue receipts, maintain submission log	Application Receipt Form, Submission Register
3. Technical Evaluation	Evaluation Subcommittee	Score proposals against published criteria, rank applications and submission to the Grants Committee	Evaluation Score Sheets, Evaluation Report, Grants Committee Complete Package
4. Capacity Assessment	Grants Team	Assess operational capacity assessment	Evaluation Guideline, Capacity Assessment Report
5. Grants Committee (GC) Meeting and Reporting	Grants Committee Grants Team	Meet, Make Recommendations, and Grants team to finalise the GC meeting report	Final Grants Committee Report, Award Recommendations
6. Legal Endorsement	Chief Legal Counsel	Endorse committee recommendations (if >EUR 400,000)	Grants Committee Report
7. DG Approval	Director-General	Approve recommendations, authorize negotiations	Grants Committee Report
8 Grant Agreement	Grants Team	Draft agreement, share with divisions and proposed grantees, finalize terms, obtain signatures	SPC Grant Agreement Template
9. Publication	Grants Team	Publish the awards on the SPC website	Award Notifications

Fig. 16: Table of full Competitive Multi-Stage grant process

Step	Responsible Party	Key Activities	Required Documentation
1. Planning & CEOI Advertising	Granting Section + Grants Team	Draft CEOI documentation, evaluation criteria Publish CEOI, hold information sessions, receive expressions of interest	CEOI Template, Evaluation Grid,
2. EOIs Receipt	Grants Team	Receive EOIs, issue receipts, maintain submission log	Application Receipt Form, Submission Register
3. Shortlisting Full Proposal Stage	Grants Team	Screen EOIs for eligibility, create qualified applicant list (Shortlisting), Report Writing	EOI Screening Form, Eligibility Checklist, Report Template
4. Receiving and Screening Full proposals	Evaluation Subcommittee	Evaluate proposals, committee review and recommendations	Evaluation Score Sheets, Evaluation Report, Grants Committee Complete Package
5. Technical Evaluation (Tech)	Evaluation Subcommittee	Evaluate proposals, committee review and recommendations	Evaluation Score Sheets, Evaluation Report, Grants Committee Complete Package
6. Capacity Development	Granting Section Grants Team	Conduct workshops, provide individual support, build grant management capacity and submission of full proposals, detailed budgets and any other required documentation	Workshop Materials, Training Curriculum
7. Grants Committee (GC) meeting and Reporting	Grants Committee Grants Team	Meet, Make Recommendations, and Grants team to finalise the GC meeting report	Final Grants Committee Report, Award Recommendations
8. Legal Endorsement	Chief Legal Counsel	Endorse recommendations	Grants Committee Report

9. DG Approval & Publication	Director-General + Grants Team	Final approval, agreement negotiation, results publication	Grants Committee Report
10. Grant Agreement	Grants Team	Draft agreement, share with divisions and proposed grantees, finalize terms, obtain signatures	SPC Grant Agreement Template
11. Publication	Grants Team	Publish the awards on the SPC website	Award Notifications