

EMPIR FAQ Coronavirus (COVID-19)



Document: P-PRG-GUI-079
Approved: Programme Manager

Version: 1.0
2020-03-25

EURAMET recognises the ongoing challenges affecting EMPIR projects and our metrology community, as a consequence of the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak.

The purpose of this FAQ information page is to provide advice for project coordinators and partners, with regards to potential project delays, current project negotiations, the Call 2020 schedule, and other concerns.

Regarding matters beyond reporting on contractual issues, EURAMET cannot offer advice other than to follow the official guidance from your local authorities, employers and national health agencies.

It is intended that this document will be updated as further information becomes available. As such please consider the following guidance as current, but subject to change. Furthermore, this page does not attempt to fully answer every question but acts as a starting point. Should you have a question that is not addressed below, the most appropriate and expedient form of communication with MSU is by email at empir.msu@euramet.org.

Version 1.0. Issued: 25/03/2020

Completion of work on our project is being delayed due to the coronavirus outbreak. Can we have a contract extension?

If your project is finishing this year, there are a few options open to the consortium:

- I. A project **extension** (via an amendment) can be made, initially up to six months but can be shorter or longer depending upon particular circumstances. Approval for extension will be made case by case.
- II. EURAMET can be notified of a project **suspension**, and later an expected date of resumption. This action would require an amendment after the project restarts. No project costs during the suspension period are eligible to be reimbursed.
- III. An **amendment to the workplan**, revising scope or reallocating resources may be considered if through this the project can achieve its objectives without the need for an extension or suspension.

In any case, contact empir.msu@euramet.org.

If you are already in the process of amending your contract with MSU for other reasons than the coronavirus outbreak, please indicate to the relevant MSU project officer now if you also require an extension. Regardless, before concluding any amendments in progress MSU will check with you whether there is need of an extension.

If your project is not finishing this year, these options may be available to you. However, EURAMET is prioritising those projects due to finish in 2020. We will contact all relevant Call 2017 and 2018 project coordinators in April to advise of next steps for your projects.

Activity on our project is being affected by the coronavirus outbreak. Do we need an amendment to our workplan?

If your project is finishing this year, an amendment to the workplan, revising scope or reallocating resources may be considered if through this change the project can achieve its objectives without the need for an extension or suspension. Contact empir.msu@euramet.org.

If your project is not finishing this year, an amendment option may be available to you. However, EURAMET is prioritising those projects due to finish in 2020. We will contact all relevant Call 2017 and 2018 project coordinators in April to advise of next steps for your projects.

We cannot complete our project reporting on time due to the coronavirus outbreak. How will this affect us?

You must indicate to EURAMET if there will be a delay in submitting your project reporting. EURAMET will not penalise projects that provide a clear justification for the delay along with a plan for submission.

I can submit our periodic project reporting by email but cannot post original signed finance statements to MSU. Will this prevent my reporting being accepted?

At Period 1, MSU is able to accept financial reporting by email based on the submission of the completed Microsoft Excel report (template 21). Payment will then be made to partners once all other technical reporting has been accepted. However, MSU still requires the original signed statements for Period 1, therefore financial reporting submitted at Period 2 will not be processed without the P1 statements having been received.

At Period 2 (final) financial reporting, MSU will review the submitted Microsoft Excel report (template 21) and will be pragmatic in working with the consortium to seek evidence of the necessary authorisation at a partner level.

Is the Call 2019 project negotiation phase with MSU delayed or affected by the coronavirus outbreak?

The European Commission deadline has not changed. Therefore, current projects undergoing contract negotiation should still anticipate completing the negotiation process with their MSU project officer and having the GA issued by the end of May. However, EURAMET understands this may not be possible in every case. If you believe that there may be a particular challenge in your consortium, with any of your partners, which will affect your ability to complete the negotiation process in the allotted time, please contact your Project Officer as soon as possible.

I need to delay the start of my Call 2019 project due to the coronavirus outbreak. What can I do?

Call 2019 projects may wish or need to delay their start date. Should this be the case EURAMET would recommend the latest start date as September 2020. Contact your MSU project officer as soon as possible to discuss revising the start date of your project.

I plan to submit a project proposal for Call 2020. Will this be possible?

EURAMET is aiming to have Call 2020 run as planned and as close to time as possible (PRTs/SRTs/Stage 2 open and close, Review Conference etc.), and the MSU is working hard to facilitate this. Any revision to deadlines or procedures for application will be communicated as and when necessary. We are also investigating ways that we can assist potential project consortia to meet each other in lieu of partnering meetings and will communicate these as soon as possible.

I have incurred costs for a project activity which has now been cancelled due to coronavirus. Can the cost be reimbursed?

Project beneficiaries should view the [Horizon 2020 Annotated Model Grant Agreement \(AGA\)](#) and its article on *force majeure*. As per AGA section 4, article 51, page 347, *force majeure* relates to an extraordinary event or situation that is beyond the party's control and that prevents it from fulfilling its obligations under the GA. If the reasoning for the cancellation of the action or activity fulfils the criteria of article 51 (and article 6) then costs incurred may be eligible to be reimbursed.