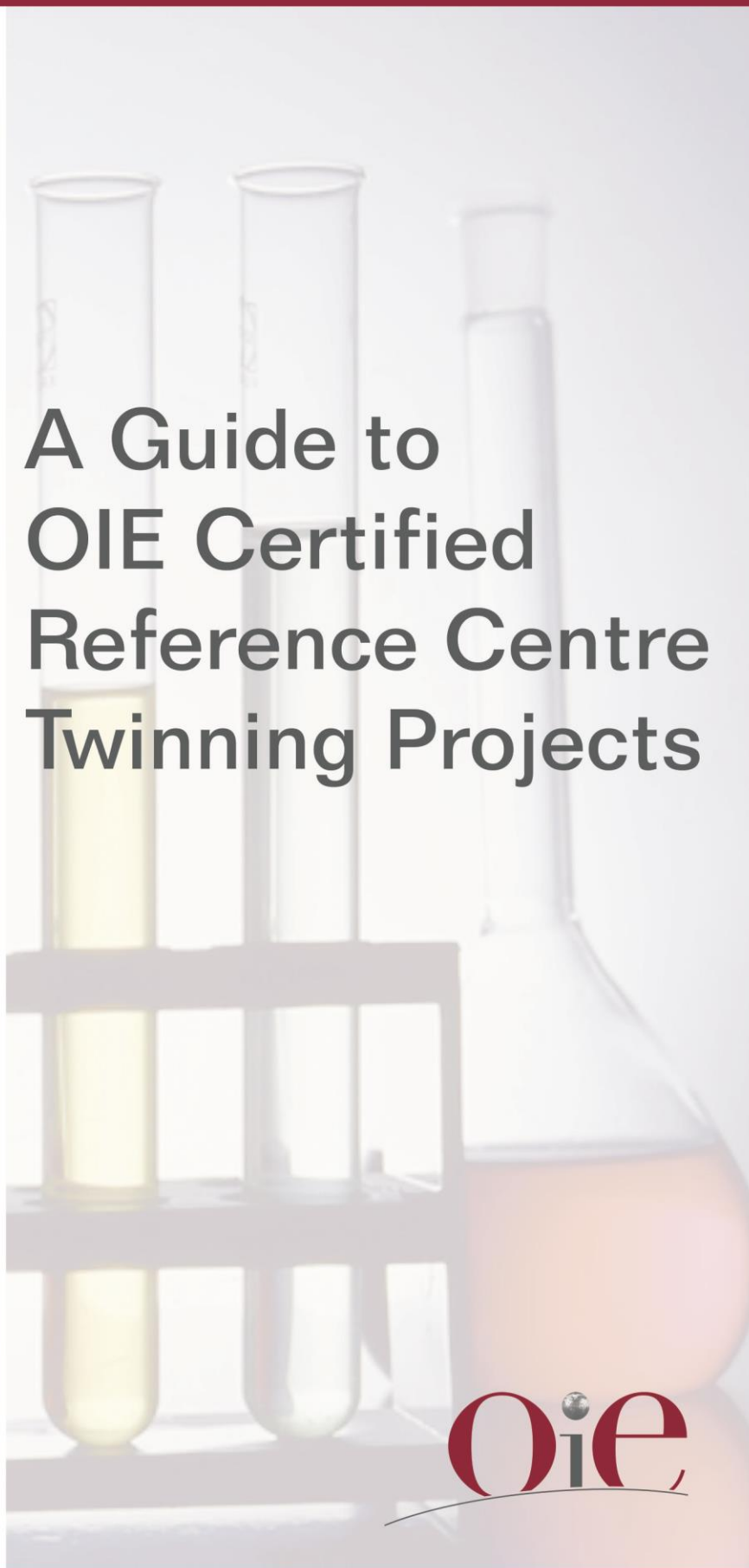




A Guide to
OIE Certified
Reference Centre
Twinning Projects



Contents

A. BACKGROUND	5
Centres of expertise	6
Creating Links	6
1. OIE Standards	8
2. Scope of OIE Twinning projects	8
<i>Twinning with the objective to become an OIE Reference Centre</i>	9
3. Roles	9
<i>The Parent OIE Reference Laboratory or Collaborating Centre (Parent Centre)</i>	9
<i>The Candidate Laboratory (Candidate Centre)</i>	10
<i>The OIE</i>	10
B. THE PROCESS	10
1. Principles for selecting Parent and Candidate Centres	10
<i>Multiple twinning projects in the same institute</i>	12
2. Submission of proposals for OIE-supported Twinning	12
<i>Initial approach and project brief</i>	12
<i>Project proposal</i>	12
<i>Evaluation of proposal</i>	13
<i>Feedback following evaluation</i>	13
<i>Signature of contract following project approval and project initiation</i>	14
3. Pre-project meetings	14
4. Project plan	14
5. Budget	15
6. Assessment of material needs	16
7. Funding for complementary needs that are not within the scope of twinning	17
8. OIE Twinning without OIE financial support	17
9. Financing arrangements and payments	17
10. Guidance for training	17
<i>Links between staff</i>	18
<i>Flexibility</i>	18
<i>Training trainers</i>	18
<i>Assessment</i>	18
<i>Secondments</i>	19
11. Communication	19
<i>Project risks</i>	19
12. Monitoring	20
<i>Monitoring performance</i>	20
<i>Monitoring expenditure</i>	20
13. Verification of expenditure	20
14. Reporting requirements	21
15. Unforeseen events	22
<i>Exception report</i>	22
<i>Change of experts</i>	22
<i>Premature termination or extension of the project</i>	22
16. Project closure	22
C. THE FUTURE	23

ANNEXES

Annex 1	Mandatory documents	24
Annex 2	Summary of steps during a Twinning project	25
Annex 3	The Project plan.....	26
Annex 4	Budget proposal for an OIE Laboratory Twinning	27
Annex 5	Checklist of potential risks for twinning projects	28
Annex 6	Performance indicators.....	30
Annex 7	The final project report	31
Annex 8	Template for financial reporting	32

A. Background

Infectious animal diseases, including zoonoses, continue to have a significant negative impact on animal health, economies, food security, food safety, and public health worldwide.

Today, threats from animal diseases remain as relevant as ever.

Global societies depend on international markets, and to meet the growing demands for food consumption there are greater and faster international movements of animals and animal products than ever before, increasing the risk of international animal disease spread.

The distribution of some animal diseases and disease vectors is changing in response to climatic and environmental changes. Human population growth means that livestock farming is extending into new areas providing greater opportunities for interaction between humans, domestic and wild animals, increasing the risk for the emergence of new diseases.

Threats also arise from animal pathogens stored and handled in laboratories. Because an increasing number of laboratories are handling dangerous pathogens under varying degrees of biosecurity and because advances in biotechnology mean that it is becoming easier to engineer pathogens, risks from their accidental or deliberate release should be taken very seriously. Owing to their high impact, low cost and ready availability, animal pathogens make attractive bioweapons and there is an on-going risk of them being used for bioterrorism. Knowledge and expertise are needed to fully understand the potential dual-use risks of biotechnologies and research outputs, and to conduct science in an ethical manner. Expertise forms a basis for responsible science, good communication, and sound decision making, important for assessing the value of research proposals and in communicating the findings.

National Veterinary Services are responsible for reducing threats from animal diseases and zoonoses. Many animal diseases show little respect for national boundaries so a failure to act in one corner of the world may threaten many other countries. Collectively, as Members of the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE), National Veterinary Services work together to reduce disease threats worldwide. Technical capacity and expertise are integral to effective functioning of Veterinary Services and form a basis for sound science-based decision making.

Accurate and rapid diagnostics are needed to ensure that important infectious diseases are detected early and that outbreaks are reported to the international community quickly. This will facilitate an effective and timely response to infectious disease events of international concern. Delays in detection lead to greater economic losses and potential for international spread of pathogens.

It is critical that disease reporting and the response is based on accurate information. Compliance with international standards for diagnostic testing and quality assurance will provide greater confidence in the results of diagnostic tests. Proper interpretation of test results and quality assurance are technically demanding tasks requiring the necessary expertise. If incorrect results (false positive or false negative) are reported the costs in terms of resources and lost credibility can be huge.

Disease detection is often the starting point for further investigations including identification and characterisation of the disease agent to determine its probable origin, pathogenicity, and likely impact on animal and human health. If countries have the necessary expertise and technical support to identify and characterise existing pathogens they also stand a much better chance of detecting new and emerging pathogens.

An importing country needs to be sure that by accepting animals and animal products from a trading partner it will not be importing animal diseases. Decisions relating to trade must be based on science, accounting for the animal disease situation in the exporting country, international standards for trade, and where necessary on science-based risk assessment. Policy makers in exporting and importing countries need veterinary expert advice to inform their decision making on such matters.

Freedom from certain animal diseases creates opportunities for trade, and access to international markets will bring significant economic benefits to a country's livestock sector. Trading countries must have full confidence in the evidence used to support claims of disease freedom and this can be demonstrated through compliance with international standards for disease surveillance. Expertise is needed to develop and adapt cost effective and comprehensive surveillance strategies to individual country settings.

Although a country's livestock population may be free from certain diseases, the disease agents may well be present in laboratories; this includes disease agents such as the smallpox virus and rinderpest virus which have been declared officially to be eradicated from the world. International standards cover the safe handling of dangerous pathogens in laboratories and safe shipment of biological material between countries. Proper application of biosafety and biosecurity is essential to minimise animal health and public health risks from accidental or deliberate release of pathogens.

International sanitary standards are adopted every year at the OIE General Session by the OIE World Assembly of Delegates. Each OIE Member Country has the opportunity to openly debate and comment on the standards. Because these standards are based on science, OIE Member Countries need to be well informed and have the necessary technical expertise to enter debate on an equal footing with other OIE Member Countries and actively contribute to the development of standards. This open and democratic process ensures that the international standards of the OIE remain universally relevant and are updated as and when new scientific evidence becomes available.

The above examples serve to illustrate the importance of maintaining technical capacity and expertise in Veterinary Services and show how these competencies relate to the formulation and implementation of international standards needed to guard against human and animal disease threats

Centres of expertise

The OIE is supported by a global network of expertise comprising more than 250 OIE Reference Laboratories and Collaborating Centres (collectively known as OIE Reference Centres); these are world leading institutes providing technical support to all OIE Members for disease prevention, surveillance, and control. This multidisciplinary network plays a critical role in safeguarding the world against the threat from animal diseases and zoonoses.

OIE Reference Laboratories are designated to pursue all the scientific and technical problems relating to surveillance and control of a named disease on the OIE list. The Expert, responsible to the OIE and its Member Countries for these issues, should be a respected and active scientist. The Reference Laboratory provides scientific and technical assistance, advice and training for OIE Member laboratories. They may also coordinate scientific and technical studies in collaboration with other laboratories or organisations (see 'Terms of Reference of OIE Reference Laboratories' and 'Criteria for selection' available on the OIE website).

<http://www.oie.int/en/our-scientific-expertise/reference-laboratories/introduction/>

OIE Collaborating Centres are centres of expertise for specific designated spheres of competence (examples include epidemiology, risk analysis, etc.). Their terms of reference are available on the OIE website.

<http://www.oie.int/en/our-scientific-expertise/collaborating-centres/introduction/>

Creating Links

The OIE Laboratory Twinning programme specifically aims to build much needed capacity and expertise in OIE Member Countries.

The current distribution of technical capacity and expertise – reflected in the geographic locations of OIE Reference Centres – favours developed countries in the northern hemisphere. Twinning aims to create a more even geographical distribution of expertise and to improve compliance with OIE Standards worldwide.

Capacity and expertise needs to be extended to developing and in-transition regions and countries so that they can become self-sufficient in expertise for effective surveillance, prevention, and control. This can be achieved through better networking between countries and laboratories.

The OIE Laboratory Twinning Programme establishes sustainable links between OIE Reference Centres and national laboratories in areas that are currently under-represented, leading to an exchange of knowledge, skills, and experience. This creates opportunities to develop technical capacity for disease prevention, surveillance and control based on the OIE International Standards.

The principal objectives are to improve compliance with OIE Standards; to create more OIE Reference Laboratories and Collaborating Centres in geographic areas that are currently under-represented; to strengthen global and regional scientific networks; and to achieve a better balance in the global distribution of high-level laboratory expertise.

Although an aim of Twinning is to create a more geographically balanced OIE Reference network, by designating new OIE Reference Centres in areas where they are needed, it is acknowledged that not all Candidate Centres will become OIE Reference Centres in the immediate future. In fact this will depend on the state of advancement of Candidate Centres and on their commitment to continue to develop their skills beyond the completion of a Twinning project. However in all cases, Twinning should improve the Candidate Centre's ability to comply with OIE Standards and provide it with a momentum to start playing a greater role regionally and worldwide.

Each Twinning project is a partnership between a particular OIE Reference Centre (which may be an OIE Reference Laboratory or an OIE Collaborating Centre) and a Candidate Centre. The OIE Reference Centre provides the Candidate Centre with technical support, guidance, and training. Both laboratories share ideas and experiences.

Objectives for each Twinning project are jointly agreed by the OIE and the two partner institutes. The guiding or 'Parent' OIE Reference Laboratory and its designated expert, or in the case of a Collaborating Centre an expert designated to be focal point for the twinning, will be the driving force, the Project Manager, ensuring the success of the project. A strong relationship will ensure a flow of expertise that will benefit both the Candidate and the Parent Centres. Links should be formed between staff at all levels.

Twinning projects should be mutually beneficial to the Parent and Candidate Centres and Twinning should provide opportunities for experts in both institutes to develop their skills, to work in new and exciting settings, and should create opportunities for joint research projects.

Many OIE Reference Laboratories are located in countries where the diseases of importance for the twinning are no longer present. Twinning provides opportunities for the Parent Centre to have access to diagnostic samples and to disease agents and to work jointly with the Candidate Centre to develop and validate better diagnostic tests.

The longer term possibility for joint research and test development means that twinning also has a role to play in advancing science.

Twinning should be flexible and adaptable to a range of situations from, as a first step, helping to report reliable diagnostic results to eventually achieving the level required to become an OIE Reference Centre. To increase the chances of success the project should focus on well defined, achievable and measurable outputs. Clear-set benefits are realised throughout the project allowing it to be divided into stages with set outputs from each stage. Progress can be monitored through achievement of these goals.

The benefits arising from the Twinning project should be sustainable, remain long after the project has closed and lead to the maintenance and further development of expertise in the region. The relationship established between the two institutes over the course of the twinning project should remain a long and lasting one.

The World Animal Health and Welfare Fund, managed by the OIE and supported by donors, provides financial support for Twinning projects. This is to support and sustain the link between the two participating institutes for the duration of an approved project and to ensure the effective transfer of expertise and capacity to the Candidate Centre. It is not an objective of Twinning to fund the purchase of laboratory hardware, such as laboratory equipment or construction material. However, the Twinning project may include an assessment of the needs for such hardware, so that other necessary resources – beyond those provided for the Twinning project – can be allocated appropriately.

There is the option for a Twinning project to be funded by the Candidate or Parent country, for instance when the Candidate Centre is located in a country with a high economic status or a bilateral agreement exists between the two countries. In such circumstances the Twinning project is managed by OIE as an OIE Twinning but funds are not provided by OIE to finance or pre-finance the project.

Twinning is part of the wider OIE initiative to improve the capacity of Veterinary Services in developing countries; it therefore has synergy with activities under the OIE PVS Pathway.



1. OIE Standards

OIE Standards are recognised by the World Trade Organization (WTO) as reference international sanitary rules and are laid down in four texts: the *Terrestrial Animal Health Code*, the *Manual of Diagnostic Tests and Vaccines for Terrestrial Animals*, the *Aquatic Animal Health Code* and the *Manual of Diagnostic Tests for Aquatic Animals*. The *Codes* relate to rules that OIE Member Countries can use to protect themselves from the introduction of diseases and pathogens through trade, without imposing unjustified sanitary barriers. The OIE standards for laboratory testing, biosafety and bio containment, and vaccination of terrestrial and aquatic animals are laid out in the *Manuals*. The OIE Quality Standard and Guidelines for Veterinary Laboratories is a specific interpretation of ISO 17025 for Veterinary Laboratories.

For most OIE listed diseases clinical diagnosis alone is not sufficient to confirm infection in animals. Reliable laboratory diagnostics are therefore essential for disease surveillance, control and safe trade.

Assurances about the consistent quality and validity of laboratory results can be provided when laboratories comply with OIE Standards. These Standards ensure international harmonisation of laboratory diagnostic techniques and are upheld by OIE Reference Laboratories.

2. Scope of OIE Twinning projects

The scope of subjects covered by OIE Twinning projects is wide. Objectives of individual projects may range from improving capacity in a specific technical area to improving capacity for a group of diseases or a topic. For example, one laboratory may have a requirement for improving its capacity to undertake molecular diagnosis for various serotypes of FMD virus whilst another laboratory may wish to improve its capacity to provide support and training in epidemiology within a region. The project should always be relevant to the needs of the area or region in which the Candidate Centre is situated. OIE Twinning projects have a minimum duration of 1 year and a maximum duration of 3 years.

To maximise benefits of the project it is important to select realistic, achievable objectives where significant improvements can be made. Choosing objectives that are too ambitious will introduce a risk of failure and may further reduce the operational performance of a laboratory. It is important to focus on improving specific techniques or competence within the Candidate Centre. This will form a solid platform on which to build.

Candidate Centres may be already benefiting from other bilateral or multilateral projects aimed at increasing their capacity or expertise. In this case, a Twinning project should be designed to ensure coordination and synergy with other current and future projects. Dual funding for the same activities must be avoided; co-financing of complementary activities is encouraged.

Twinning with the objective to become an OIE Reference Centre

OIE Reference Centres are designated by the OIE on the basis of their ability to meet their mandate and to uphold OIE Standards. An essential task of an OIE Reference Centre is to provide technical support to other countries.

Although some Twinning projects will result in the Candidate Centre reaching OIE Reference Centre status, this may not be possible or appropriate in all cases.

However, all projects should aim to improve compliance with OIE International Standards and many Candidates will reach OIE Standards in specific areas of work, for example a selected range of diagnostic tests.

If it is the aim of the project to attain OIE Reference Centre status the Candidate must understand, from an early stage, the implications of this, including its obligations to meet the mandate of an OIE Reference Laboratory or Collaborating Centre; the aims of the Twinning Project should focus on meeting this mandate. The Candidate should work to engage with the international community, and if aiming for Reference Laboratory status, should be receiving diagnostic samples from beyond its national boundaries.

Before the Candidate could be considered for OIE Reference Centre status it may be necessary to define a transition period, from completion of the twinning project until submitting an OIE Reference Centre application, during which time the Candidate Centre is able to demonstrate its ability to meet the OIE criteria for selection.

3. Roles

The Parent OIE Reference Laboratory or Collaborating Centre (Parent Centre)

The Parent OIE Reference Laboratory or Collaborating Centre and the designated expert(s) from that centre are the driving force, ensuring the success of the Twinning project.

OIE Reference Laboratories are required to maintain a system of quality assurance (ISO 17025 or equivalent) and to apply appropriate biosafety and biosecurity measures to the pathogen(s) and laboratory procedures concerned. The Parent Centre should guide the Candidate Centre in establishing and maintaining of such systems. The expert at the Parent Centre is the official Twinning project manager under the authority of the Director of the institution. He/she may decide to nominate a project leader who in practice will be responsible for the activities of the Parent Centre. Depending on the administrative structure in the Parent Centre it may be helpful to nominate a named focal point for budget and administrative issues.

The Parent Centre finalises the project proposal and work plan with the Candidate and submits this to the OIE Headquarters in Paris. The Parent Centre is responsible for the implementation and use of the financial resources supporting the Twinning project. The Parent Centre is responsible for the preparation of technical and financial reports to the OIE and for keeping all original documents, especially accounting (actual cost incurred) and tax records (in hard paper copy or protected electronic files), for a period of at least five years starting from the date of payment of the balance (final payment).

The Candidate Laboratory (Candidate Centre)

The Candidate Centre should be fully committed to improving its capacity and expertise with the eventual aim of reaching OIE standards, in compliance with the *Terrestrial* or *Aquatic Manuals*. Although the Parent Centre is the driver of the project, the Candidate Centre, being the beneficiary, owns the end result that has been achieved through the partnership. The expert (or someone he/she nominates) at the Candidate Centre is the project leader responsible for the activities of the Candidate Centre under the authority of the Director of the institution.

The OIE

The OIE Headquarters provides support and coordination for the Twinning programme. The OIE ensures that technical and financial controls, outlined in the mutual agreement between the participating institutes, are applied and comply with the requirement of the donors involved.

The Scientific and Technical Department collates the project proposals for referral to the relevant OIE Specialist Commission or Working Group for technical advice.

The OIE Headquarters will ensure that staff members who participate in project evaluation processes have no conflicts of interest and respect general confidentiality rules of the OIE. Staff members and members of the relevant OIE Specialist Commissions or Working Groups will sign declaration of interest statements and confidentiality agreements.

B. The Process

1. Principles for selecting Parent and Candidate Centres

The success of a Twinning project depends on the selection of well-matched centres, relevant well defined achievable objectives, and the full commitment of all those involved.

Sustainability of the project itself and the longer term benefits rely on having the full support and governance of National Veterinary Services of the countries concerned. It is essential that the OIE Delegates overseeing the two centres involved and the respective laboratory Directors support and agree to the Twinning arrangement; they must also be committed to supporting the Candidate Centre in the longer term.

Twining aims to extend the OIE network of expertise to areas where there is a need. This need may be influenced by the disease situation, features of animal production systems in that area, or it may be based on a risk assessment. In terms of capacity and access to expertise, Twinning should provide regional benefits.

Selection of the disease or topic must be relevant to the regional needs and to the skill set in the Candidate and Parent Centres.

A Parent Centre must have the required level of expertise and capacity relevant to the Twinning project. **In particular a Parent Centre must be an OIE Reference Laboratory for the disease in question or an OIE Collaborating Centre with specialist expertise**; this ensures that Parent Centres have sufficient economic, technical and professional capacity. The Parent Centre (Reference Laboratory) is required to maintain a system of quality assurance, and biosafety and biosecurity measures appropriate to the pathogen and the laboratory procedures carried out in the laboratory.

A tried and tested relationship has a good chance of being sustainable and successful. Twinning between institutes that already have a good relationship is encouraged.

Pre-twinning meetings can help to reinforce an existing relationship or may help to identify whether the dynamics between Twinning partners are likely to be good when there is no pre-existing relationship. The partnership will require regular, effective, and reliable communication between the two centres and experts.

The selection process for Twinning laboratories is open and transparent. Details of approved and on-going Twinning projects are summarised on the OIE website.

If a Parent Centre or a Candidate Centre wishes to enter into a twinning project but has not identified a partner centre, OIE will assist with the process.

<http://www.oie.int/en/support-to-oie-members/laboratory-twinning/>

Candidate Centres should have the real potential to make significant improvements in terms of capacity and expertise. They will need adequate facilities and infrastructure, and be able to demonstrate that they have the commitment and resources to sustain improvements. The resources for administering the project and for training must be considered at both the Parent and Candidate Centre and by the National Veterinary Services supporting the Candidate. As described in an earlier section Candidate Centres wishing to reach OIE Reference Centre status must be aware of, and able to meet the principles laid down in the Mandate for OIE Reference Laboratories or OIE Collaborating Centres.

The location of the Candidate Centre is important. It should be located where transport links are reliable and where there are unlikely to be serious delays in transporting samples or reagents across national borders. It is important that diagnostic samples, reagents and equipment can be transported to and from the laboratory safely and effectively with minimal delay. Consideration must be given to the ability of Candidate Centres to receive diagnostic samples and reagents from other countries. There is little point in embarking on a twinning project if political, legal, financial, or geographical factors prevent the Candidate Centre from receiving diagnostic samples or reagents from other countries. Provision should be made before the project starts to ensure that exchanges of biological materials and reagents can take place safely and efficiently. It may be necessary to establish formal agreements between the two OIE Delegates of the participant countries to ensure that shipment is feasible.

The Twinning project is principally between the two institutes, and the formal agreement is between the OIE, the lead Parent Centre and the lead Candidate Centre. However, there is scope to involve additional institutes in some of the activities. For example, to broaden the scope of the Twinning project the Parent Centre may wish to partner with another Parent Centre for some of the capacity building activities in the Candidate Centre.

There may also be advantages to involving staff from more than one beneficiary laboratory in activities such as training. These additional staff may belong to institutes from within the Candidate Centre's country or region. The intention to do this should be clearly stated in the project plan and any additional budgetary needs should be clearly identified. In such cases the formal agreement will still remain between the OIE, the lead Parent Centre and the lead Candidate Centre.

Under certain circumstances there may also be benefits in inviting experts from public health institutes to workshops or activities in the Parent or Candidate Centre. This would include for generic training where the same skills apply to public and animal health e.g. for a certain technique or for cross cutting topics such as biosafety, biosecurity, and quality assurance; when

Twinning is addressing a zoonotic disease; or when the public health institute is involved in a similar capacity building initiative.

Experts may choose to engage other laboratories as a way of sharing resources for training; for strengthening links between more than two institutes; or for using a third country training centre to facilitate participation of experts when political, security or visa issues would otherwise make it problematic.

Multiple twinning projects in the same institute

So that resources are managed effectively and to maintain an even geographical balance of Twinning projects, it is not recommended that a Parent Centre is involved in more than two Twinning projects at the same time.

Many laboratories, organisations, or institutions house more than one OIE Reference Centre. Any restrictions on the total number of projects in one institution will be made on a case by case basis.

2. Submission of proposals for OIE-supported Twinning

Initial approach and project brief

A Candidate or Parent Centre or both may express interest in taking part in a Twinning project. The initial approach should be accompanied by a 'project brief', which may be in the form of an informal email or a letter to OIE Headquarters. This would include a brief description of the project, details of the institutes involved, the objectives, and the benefits that the project will provide. It should summarise the justification or mandate' for the project. This should also be sent or copied to the OIE Delegate(s) of the country(ies) in which the laboratory(ies) is/are located.

At any stage the OIE may advise on factors that make it unlikely for the application to be successful; this might include duplication with an existing or proposed Twinning project in the region or lack of available funds. A list of current and approved OIE Twinning projects is available on the OIE website. Potential applicants should use this list to assess whether their application is likely to lead to overlap with an existing project.

http://www.oie.int/fileadmin/Home/eng/Support_to_OIE_Members/docs/pdf/projects_completed_underway.pdf

In cases where a Parent Centre has not been identified by the Candidate Centre and the initial interest is supported, the OIE may suggest a suitable partner, depending on the specific request, location, and disease situation.

The OIE may also receive an expression of interest from a Parent Centre and propose a Candidate Centre to the Parent Centre.

Following receipt of the project brief, the OIE will advise on further action.

Project proposal

Any Candidate or Parent Centre that has the agreement of the OIE Delegate can submit a project proposal to the OIE. It is advisable to do this after having first submitted a project brief.

The project proposal must be completed on the **OIE template**, available on request and on the OIE twinning webpage. All fields should be completed.

In addition to the project proposal, the application must include:

- Official letter(s) signed by the OIE Delegates of both countries. This must indicate that the OIE Delegates of both countries support the Twinning Project. This letter can be received at any stage in the approval process but must reach OIE before funds can be transferred.
- Official letter(s) signed by the Directors of both institutes. This must indicate that the Directors of both institutes support the Twinning Project.
- Curriculum Vitae of the leading expert at the Parent and Candidate Centres involved with the Twinning project.

A hard copy and an electronic copy of the application dossier should be submitted to the Director General of the OIE in one of the official languages of the Organisation (English, Spanish, or French).

Consideration of selection criteria and a statement of clear, measurable and achievable objectives will improve the chances of a successful application. The budget proposal should be drafted in accordance with the template and guidance provided in this manual. There will not be scope for funding expenditure outside of the agreed final budget. A full list of required documents is summarised in Annex 1.

Evaluation of proposal

This programme is managed in the context of direct contract awards (not using a competitive call for proposals mechanism).

The OIE Headquarters will ensure that staff members who participate in project evaluation processes have no conflicts of interest and respect general confidentiality rules of the OIE. Advice on technical elements of the Twinning proposal will be provided by the relevant OIE Specialist Commission or Working Group. The final decision will be made by the Director General of the OIE.

It is a prerequisite that the Parent Laboratory is an OIE Reference Centre with relevant expertise.

The World Fund Coordination Unit will provide advice and guidance on budget proposals, including on what expenses are eligible for funding (eligibility principles: period of eligibility and nature of expenditure). All expenses charged to the project should be accurate and refer to specific activities outlined in the project work plan and implemented within the eligibility period of the project (only actual costs incurred after the date of signature of the contract are eligible and can be attributed to the project).

To cater for the variable nature of Twinning projects, the evaluation process will consider each application on a case-by-case basis.

Feedback following evaluation

The OIE will consider each proposal and respond by accepting the proposal, seeking further clarification or rejecting the proposal. In the case of the latter, the OIE will give a reason for the failed application.

Signature of contract following project approval and project initiation

Following technical review by the relevant Specialist Commission or Working Group a financial contract must be signed by the Director of the Parent Centre, and by the OIE. Annexed to this contract is the project plan, which should be signed by the Directors of the Candidate and Parent Centres each page should also be initialled by the signees.

The OIE will be responsible for sending the final version of the contract to the Parent and Candidate Centres for signature. The project should then be initiated without undue delay. Annex 2 summarises all of the steps in a Twinning project from expression of interest through to project closure.

Letters confirming the agreement of both OIE Delegates and both institute Directors must be received by OIE before funds can be transferred to the Parent Centre. This can be one letter signed by both Delegates or two single letters signed by each Delegate.

3. Pre-project meetings

There are often advantages to organising a preliminary meeting between experts from the Parent and Candidate Centres to decide on priorities for the project, to draft the proposal, or to carry out a needs assessment.

OIE may be able to fund such a meeting if:

- a) The Twinning project is subsequently approved and initiated
- b) The costs for the preliminary meeting are reasonable and in line with OIE twinning budget rules
- c) It is possible to provide corresponding justifications (invoices, flight tickets etc.)

Only actual costs incurred after the date of signature of the contract are eligible and can be attributed to Twinning Projects. Therefore, parties organising a pre-project meeting will need to pre-finance this meeting, and take the full cost of the meeting if the project is not approved.

4. Project plan

The project plan describes exactly what the objectives of the project are and how they will be met, at what cost, when and by whom. It lays out the details of the project and will be a reference point throughout the project.

The plan should emphasise key areas of work which will have a significant impact in supporting the overall objectives of the project.

There should be a long term commitment to improving capacity and expertise in the Candidate Laboratory and the project plan should describe how the benefits of the project can be sustained once the project has been completed.

The project should be divided into stages with defined measurable outputs from each stage. Examples may include the completion of a workshop or the attainment of a certain level of competence in a laboratory procedure. At the end of each stage it is important to hold a review to assess project progress and address any outstanding issues. This would include checking that targets have been met, assessing budgetary expenditure, considering project risks and planning for the next stage. Any lessons that have been learned should be used to improve the next stages

of the project. For future reference, it is important to summarise the review in a brief written report.

In some cases changes will need to be made to the plan as priorities shift or as project issues arise. Examples may include the validation of a new technology or procedure (e.g. a better laboratory test) not accounted for in the project plan, developments in the disease situation, or changes to the political, commercial or legislative environment.

The project plan is a dynamic document and needs to be updated when necessary. Any changes to the project plan should not take expenditure outside the project budget. Amendments or changes to the project plan should be highlighted in the interim and annual reports.

Any significant changes to the project plan, affecting the overall project or budget, should be referred to the OIE for approval before being adopted.

To ensure optimal benefits and avoid duplication, the project plan should account for the activities of any other on-going OIE Twinning projects in the Candidate Laboratory, and where possible, other laboratory capacity building initiatives.

An outline of what the project plan should include is shown in Annex 3.

5. Budget

A budget for the project is agreed between OIE and the Twinning participants.

An initial draft budget is jointly submitted by the Parent and Candidate Centres as part of the project proposal. The budget must reflect the subjects and activities outlined in the project plan and within the eligibility period (duration) of the project. The duration of the project can be extended by decision of the Director General of the OIE upon submission of an official request by the Parent Centre and supported by appropriate justification. All listed activities and associated costs should be necessary to achieve the outcome of the Twinning Project. Each budgeted item should be identified 'as necessary to carry out the activity. This means that the activity itself is necessary to achieved the desirable outcome of the Twinning Project

As a guide the budget should fit the template in Annex 4 and should be subdivided into **subjects** and **activities**.

A subject is a general item (e.g. training) whereas an activity is more specific (e.g. a specific workshop); each activity forms a budget line. An activity should be an isolated cost, i.e. separate and not linked to any other costs in the budget plan. For each activity the 'Unit amount' column should describe the cost of one item i.e. one flight and the 'Number' column should indicate the number of items i.e. number of flights and number of people travelling.

Justification for costs should be provided wherever possible. For example 'organisational costs' for meetings or workshops should be broken down into their elements to describe what the money will be spent on. The use of lump sums, flat –rate financing or use of a combination of both is not accepted in budget proposals. It is always advisable to use scale of unit costs (unit cost and how many times this is needed) when drafting a budget for Twinning Projects.

The budget should preferably be in Euros (EUR), or otherwise in US Dollars (USD). For Parent Centres in the UK, payments in Pound Sterling (GBP) can be considered on a case by case basis, if the request is accepted budgets can be prepared in GBP.

Following review of the draft budget by the OIE, it will be accepted, returned with comments or rejected. If the budget is accepted, the draft becomes the final version, annexed to the project plan and financial contract between OIE and the Parent Centre.

If it is returned with comments, the Parent Centre has the opportunity to consider and submit a revised version in consultation with the Candidate Centre.

A budget will only be allocated to activities for which financing is requested and where those activities are eligible for funding. As often as possible eligible costs must be based on real costs verifiable by supporting documents (except for subsistence costs which will be checked against flight itineraries).

The following are examples of direct eligible costs:

- Travel costs and per diem (daily allowance) for experts visiting the Parent or Candidate Centre to participate in activities directly related to the Twinning project. Travel costs, including per diem, must be in line with current OIE rules (contact OIE for clarification on guidance and current rates). OIE **only** reimburses the cost of economy class travel. Any travel expenses in business class will be rejected by the OIE and will not be reimbursed.
- The costs of laboratory reagents that are directly linked to the Twinning project. This includes reagents used for practical training activities, assessments, and ring trials.
- Shipment of diagnostic samples and reagents directly related to the Twinning project.
- Training activities and material such as stationery specifically for seminars, excluding certain items such as printers, Information Technology (IT) equipment, photocopiers, projectors, paper, ink for printers. Details of the training activity and specific costs must be submitted.
- Communication costs for telephone conferences (with sufficient justification). The use of cost effective communication means is encouraged (e.g. Internet-based phone calls).
- The use of external consultants, or inclusion of bench fees, shall be limited to certain restricted specific consultant activities, or trainings where external expertise is essential, such as preparation of a call for tender for equipment, or external training on a relevant specific topic. Justification must be provided and the outcome should be made available to the OIE. Approval of any consultancy fees will be decided on a case by case basis, and must be approved before the project has started; claims cannot be submitted without prior approval for these costs.
- Interpreters and translators for seminars or workshops.

Note: The total cost of laboratory consumables (including reagents) should not exceed 30% of the subtotal of the budget without these costs. For example if c =cost of laboratory consumables and t =total cost of project then $c/(t-c) \leq 0.3$. Spending in excess of this limit is not accepted and will not be reimbursed

Funding is not available for:

- General overheads, bench fees, salaries, administrative costs, and contingencies;
- Laboratory hardware (such as equipment, construction, clothing, personal protective equipment).

It is not an objective of twinning projects to directly provide funds to equip laboratories with hardware or building materials. However, a Twinning project may include an expert assessment of the laboratory's needs for additional hardware.

The OIE will provide guidance and advice for participants wishing to make an application for Twinning. However there will not be financial support for the preparation of the proposals.

6. Assessment of material needs

During the Twinning project, the Parent Centre may arrange, in the framework of the Twinning, for an assessment of the material needs of the Candidate Centre. This will take into account the expertise at the Candidate Centre, the level of expertise required to use the equipment and the capability and resources to maintain and run the equipment.

Funding for purchase of laboratory hardware will not be provided by the OIE Twinning budget. However, an assessment of material needs may help the Candidate Centre to source other external funding or use existing funds to maximum benefit.

7. Funding for complementary needs that are not within the scope of twinning

Resources for needs that are not within the scope of OIE Twinning and are available from other sources may complement or enhance the capacity building objectives of Twinning. This may include funds for laboratory hardware, reagents, or other activities, such as research or accreditation. When such funds are available, OIE may assist the Parent or Candidate Centre in accessing them.

In this situation the Parent and Candidate Centre should submit a joint one page proposal, separate to the Twinning project proposal, to the OIE summarising the approximate needs, with a short explanation of how this will complement the Twinning project. The OIE can use this document, on request, to assist the centre to obtain resources from specific donors.

8. OIE Twinning without OIE financial support

Some centres may wish to apply for OIE Twinning without making a request for financial support from the OIE; for example they may receive funds from their own country or from other donors. In such cases a budget does not need to be submitted. However the project should comply with all other aspects of OIE Twinning, in particular monitoring of outputs and performance. A specific project proposal template is available for OIE Twinning projects that are not supported financially by the OIE.

9. Financing arrangements and payments

Funds will be transferred to and managed by the Parent Centre; payments will be made when the project is initiated. The size of the payments, as a proportion of the total budget, will be calculated on a case-by-case basis. As a general rule a maximum of 50% of the total budget will be transferred to the Parent Laboratory upon signature of the Twinning project contract.

The remaining budget will be transferred to the Parent Laboratory over the course of the project, following receipt of interim, annual and final reports. If money remains unspent from the previous year annual payments / tranches will be adjusted accordingly (interim payments may be delayed by the OIE in case of significant underspending).

Any budget that remains unspent at the close of the project must be refunded to the OIE (or will be deducted from the final payment, as appropriate).

The OIE will ensure that only actual costs incurred after the date of signature of the contract are eligible in the context of the implementation of the project contracts. Eligibility of actual expenditures incurred will be monitored by the OIE

10. Guidance for training

Training is an inherent part of the Twinning project and must contribute to the overall objectives of the project. The nature of training activities may include day-to-day communication on specific issues, sharing of scientific information and protocols, comments on draft papers, short secondments between laboratories, participation in technical meetings and conferences, joint

seminars and structured workshops for staff from both laboratories. Training should focus on developing self-reliance in the Candidate Centre.

Training activities should be regularly evaluated to assess that the objectives are being met so that improvements can be made, when necessary.

When planning a workshop or seminar it is important that participants are chosen for their experience and expertise or are chosen from a specific related area of work. Learning material must be relevant. The objectives of the training activity should be clearly defined at the outset so that suitable participants can be selected. In deciding on suitability of participants, it may help to review applicants' CVs or brief biographies.

It is the responsibility of each laboratory to address insurance issues of staff travelling in the framework of a Twinning project. The OIE will not be held responsible for any illness or accident occurring whilst experts are on mission abroad.

It is recommended that trainers or visiting scientists are not provided with a lump sum of per diem at the beginning of their visit if the visit is longer than 5 days.

Links between staff

To maximise the benefits of Twinning and to avoid knowledge gaps, it is important that strong links are formed between staff of the Parent and Candidate Centre at every level. Whilst the experts are involved with high level expertise and management, other laboratory staff, researchers and technicians have hands-on, day-to-day experience in essential technical and practical activities. Knowledge will be shared more effectively through direct links between colleagues in the two institutes.

Flexibility

The approach to training and the training material should take into account factors such as the language spoken in the laboratory, cultural issues, technological capability, available equipment, and budget. Some of these will be limiting factors and will need to be considered in the early planning stages of the project.

Training of trainers

It is important that people are trained in a way that allows them to disseminate expertise to their colleagues and to stimulate debate in their own region. This involves selecting attendees for trainings with good communication skills who are in a position to pass on their knowledge.

The training activities should take this into consideration, when relevant, by incorporating teaching skills into the work programme and using training material that is suitable for wider dissemination.

Assessment

It is important to assess that training is meeting the expectations and needs of the participants. This may be achieved through a pre- and post-training evaluation questionnaire that allows suggestions to be made on how training could be improved. Feedback is more likely to be useful when questions are carefully considered and participants have the opportunity for anonymity, and are set a convenient time to complete the questionnaire. The questionnaire should be completed as close to the training as possible or during the training period itself.

To assess whether training is having the desired effect it may be helpful to evaluate the level of competence of those being trained. This assessment may be informal.

Secondments

During a secondment, a member of staff at either centre spends time at the other centre on detached duty. Examples of secondments include for 'hands on' training of the staff or for the assessment of material needs and working practices in the Candidate Centre. Secondments that are part of the Twinning project must provide direct benefits to the Twinning project.

Secondments should be well planned. Specific needs should be discussed in advance of the secondment period to allow a plan to be constructed and, if necessary, appropriate materials to be sourced. The maximum length of a secondment supported by OIE is usually 3 months, with the possibility to repeat this once.

11. Communication

Effective and regular communication underpins the success of a twinning project. Face to face meetings are an essential element of twinning, and other communication media including teleconferencing, email, Skype, internet chat rooms and blogs can play an important role. It is advantageous if Twinning partners develop a communication plan; this is an important section in the Twinning project proposal template. Although for the large part communication will be informal and ad hoc, the communication plan may include regular, weekly or monthly, teleconference conferences between the partners.

It is not a good sign if communication prior to the Twinning project is poor and either partner is unresponsive to emails or telephone calls. Communication problems may be linked to a heavy work load in either laboratory which may also jeopardise the success of the Twinning Project.

OIE encourages Twinning centres to promote outputs from twinning projects, including their communication material, through the OIE website. In some cases, the OIE will specify Donor's visibility rules (e.g. including the Donors name or logo on presentational material or documents) when donors (co-)funding the Twinning project require this. In such instances the Twinning Centres will be informed.

Experts in the Candidate Centre are encouraged to actively participate in international meetings and conferences and, where possible, to promote the outputs of twinning projects at such meetings through oral presentations and posters.

Project risks

It is important to be realistic and have an awareness of the factors that may hamper project progress and increase project costs. These risks may be present from the beginning of the project or arise once it has started.

Every Twinning project is likely to encounter project risks. An awareness of potential risks is the first step to avoiding them.

Before starting and during the project it is advisable to:

- Identify project risks;
- Consider the impact that they may have on the project if they occur;
- Consider how likely they are to occur;
- Consider what action can be taken to minimise their impact;
- Document tentative plans to be used should an identified risk occur.

Risks that need to be considered may include political risks (such as the frequent replacement of the Chief Veterinary Officer or Director of the laboratory concerned), technical risks (such as frequent power or equipment failure), or financial risks. A list of possible risk factors is included in Annex 5.

Many, but not all risks can be identified prior to starting the project. It is important to regularly monitor risks and evaluate them as they arise. A convenient time to do this is at the end of each defined stage of the project.

If a risk becomes an issue that may affect the whole project or budget then the OIE must be notified immediately (see Exception report on page 22).

12. Monitoring

Monitoring is essential to ensure that the project remains within its scope, meets its objectives and uses its financial resources effectively.

Monitoring performance

To ensure that the project achieves its objectives in the set period it is important to regularly monitor progress and take corrective action when necessary. Underperformance needs to be identified as early as possible. Performance should be monitored by the achievement of predefined set goals within the project timeframe.

To facilitate monitoring, the project plan can be divided into stages; at the end of each stage a result is delivered. Examples of a product or output may include completion of a workshop, publication of a training manual, or attainment of a certain level of competence in a diagnostic procedure. These should be set to a timetable.

At the end of each stage a review should take place led by the expert (or someone he/she nominates) at the Parent Centre; this can be brief and informal. The review provides the opportunity to 'take stock', summarise the achievements of the previous stage, and if targets have not been met, to understand why so that action can be taken. It is a good idea to document this and it is important to reflect any necessary changes in the project plan.

Performance indicators are useful for monitoring progress and for demonstrating the success of a twinning project. A list of possible performance indicators for Twinning projects is included in Annex 6. Performance indicators will vary from one project to another.

Monitoring expenditure

Actual spending should be documented regularly throughout the project (see 'verification of expenditure') and included in annual and final reports.

13. Verification of expenditure

It is important that financial expenditure complies with the project plan, budget and eligibility rules.

The OIE will ensure that only actual costs incurred after the date of signature of the contract are eligible in the context of the implementation of Twinning project contracts.

The OIE will monitor eligibility of actual expenditures through the interim, annual and final financial reports. This includes evaluating that costs are reasonable, justified, comply with the principle of sound financial management (in particular regarding economy and efficiency), are eligible), and spent on Twinning Project activities

Any changes to the Twinning project budget (Annex 1 to the Twinning project) must be requested (to the OIE) in advance of the proposed activity; any budget modifications not approved by the OIE may not be eligible.

In certain circumstances the OIE may require that an audit is carried out during or after the project. Therefore, all financial records and detailed accounts, including evidence of expenditure (receipts, etc.) must be kept available for at least 5 years after the project has closed.

The OIE may request verification of expenditure at any point during the project. It is very important that financial records are kept up to date and that receipts of expenditure are available for a random exceptional audit.

Any audit (exceptional or post-project) will be carried out by authorised OIE staff or an independent financial/technical expert appointed by the OIE or by a Donor in agreement with the OIE.

14. Reporting requirements

As a minimum the Parent Centre should, after agreement with the Candidate Centre, submit the following reports to the OIE Scientific and Technical Department at OIE Headquarters, Paris. These should be typed in one of the official languages of the OIE (English, French or Spanish). The reports should be concise and highlight the main achievements and any changes to the project plan. It is beneficial to use performance indicators and to comment on improvements in the capabilities in the Candidate Centre.

The following reports should be submitted:

- An **interim report**, within the first year, but at least 4 months after the project has started (date of transfer of funds to the Parent Centre) – a brief summary of project progress from initiation, including actual expenditure to date.
- **Annual reports**, within 1 month of the end of each year from the project start date.
- A **final report**, as soon as possible on completion of the project. The final reports should be jointly prepared by the Parent and Candidate Centres, co-signed and submitted to the OIE Central Bureau. The final report should include the items listed in Annex 7.

Annual and final reports must include details of actual expenditure and a summary of the technical activities carried out within the project (e.g. training courses or seminars (including dates, venue, and number of participants), preparation for an accreditation procedure etc.). Payments from OIE will be based on actual expenditure. Therefore if there is under spending of funds that have already been transferred to the Parent Centre, further payments will be delayed until additional funds are required i.e. when the money has been spent. In such instances Parent Centres should make a request to OIE once additional funds are required.

The OIE will provide guidance on eligibility rules (period of eligibility and nature of expenditure) and monitor actual costs incurred. Unspent funds are reimbursed to the OIE or deducted from the final payment.

A template to provide guidance with financial reporting is included at Annex 8. However the format for reporting to OIE can be flexible so long as all essential elements are accurately and concisely recorded. Copies of the original budget are not accepted as financial reports.

In addition to these reports and when relevant it is recommended that end-stage reports are documented.

15. Unforeseen events

Exception report

If a serious 'exceptional' issue is encountered that affects the overall project or budget, the OIE should be notified immediately by way of a report or email. This should provide a full description of the problem and identify recommended actions.

Examples might include a dramatic increase in sample shipping costs, change of Laboratory Expert, structural damage.

The OIE will consider the report and communicate on further action.

Change of experts

During the course of project there may be changes to lead experts, contact persons, or to the nominated laboratory Directors in either the Parent or Candidate Institute. In such cases OIE should be notified of these changes by email or in writing.

Premature termination or extension of the project

In the unlikely event that the project needs to be terminated prematurely, the OIE, Candidate or Parent Centre may initiate this by providing 3 months' notice to the other parties, in writing.

In the event of premature termination, payments for costs actually incurred or indissolubly committed during the project, that have not yet been financed, will be reimbursed by the OIE. No payments other than these will be due to the Parent or Candidate Centre.

It is possible that external factors may lead to a delay in implementation of Twinning activities. This may require the overall project to be extended. If Twinning partners foresee that an extension to the project (at no extra cost) is required they should contact the OIE in writing at the earliest opportunity describing the reasons for the extension. OIE will manage each request on a case by case basis, accounting for the justification provided and on donor restrictions.

16. Project closure

The Parent Centre should immediately inform the OIE in writing that the project has closed. Within 1 month of this date, the Parent Centre should submit a final report jointly prepared with the Candidate Centre.

The final stages of the Twinning project are often marked with a closing workshop, where progress and achievements are reviewed and future actions are planned. The closing work shop provides an opportunity to network with regional partners and to strengthen regional scientific networks. For Candidate Laboratories at a level where they have the strong potential to become OIE Reference Laboratories it is an opportunity for them to network with their future customers. Joint future activities between the Parent and Candidate Laboratories may also be planned at this stage.

The final project report will be the most comprehensive of all reports submitted over the course of the project and should include all the information listed in Annex 4.

C. The future

OIE Laboratory Twinning will bring Candidate Centres closer to meeting the mandate of OIE Reference Centres and a good proportion of these institutes will engage with the international community to generate research outputs and to provide technical support to other OIE Member Countries. Some, but not all, Twinning Candidates will eventually make a successful application to become OIE Reference Centres in their own right.

In all cases of twinning it is hoped that the link between the two twinning partners will remain a functional one long after the project is over.

Post twinning activities play a critical role in further development of the Candidate Centre. The period after Twinning is a time to build on the achievements of the project, to engage with partners at a regional and international level and, for centres wanting to achieve OIE Reference Centre status, a time to build experience needed in the Reference Centre application.

It is recommended that Twinning partners carefully plan ahead for the post Twinning period. Post Twinning activities should extend beyond the Candidate Centre's national boundaries. On a case by case basis and depending on available funding OIE will fund some post-Twinning activities.

Mandatory documents

Project proposal dossier – including:

- Official letter signed by Directors of both institutes
- Details of the experts (including their CVs) and laboratories or Collaborating Centres.
- Project plan
- Budget proposal

Following project approval

- Official letter signed by Delegates of both OIE Member Countries (this can be submitted to the OIE at any time before funds are transferred to the Parent Centre)
- Signed financial contract between Parent Centre and OIE
- Project plan and budget signed by Parent and Candidate Centres (including initials on each page)

Project reports – as a minimum:

- An interim project report
- Annual project reports
- A final project report

Notification of project closure



Summary of steps during a Twinning project

1. Expression of interest by Candidate or Parent Centre; a letter or email with a brief description and justification for Twinning project.
2. Comments from the OIE.
3. Submission of formal application dossier to the OIE on required template. This should include signed letters from the Directors of the institutes indicating their support for the Twinning Project.
4. Approval procedures.
5. Following approval of the Project Plan and Budget, a financial contract is signed by the OIE and Parent Centre. The Project Plan is signed (and pages initialled) by the Parent and Candidate Centres.
6. Project initiation (date of transfer of funds from OIE to the Parent Centre).

Transfer of funds cannot take place before receipt of the agreement signed by both OIE Delegates from the countries or territories involved in the Twinning project.

7. Length of project up to an initial estimated period of 3 years.
8. Interim and annual project reports. The frequency of project reports will be described in the project plan. Ideally there will be a brief written report at the end of each project stage.
As a minimum there must be an **interim report** in the first year, at least 4 months after the project has been initiated, there should be an **annual reports**, a **final report**.
9. Project closure, immediate notification to OIE.
10. Final project report within 1 month of project closure.

The Project plan

Project plan, including:

- 1.1. The validated budget
- 1.2. The background to the project
- 1.3. A short and concise summary of the objectives
- 1.4. Description of how the objectives will be met
- 1.5. Reporting schedule (in accordance with the OIE *Twinning Manual*)
- 1.6. A work plan showing who is involved in which task, including administration and budget management
- 1.7. A training plan (if appropriate)
- 1.8. Details of Directors of the institutes for the two countries concerned
- 1.9. Details of the experts (including their CVs) and laboratories/collaborating centres
- 1.10. Timetables and measurable outputs (targets) for each stage
- 1.11. Any foreseeable risks to the project
- 1.12. A communication plan – including laboratory to laboratory or centre to centre and laboratory or centre to OIE, and frequency of project updates/end-stage reviews
- 1.13. A coordination plan (where relevant) – including a list of past and existing bilateral and multilateral projects involving the Candidate Laboratory (e.g. OIE Twinning) and ways to how to avoid duplication and ensure synergy .
- 1.14. Where relevant, provisions for shipment of samples in accordance with the requirements for postage and packaging of biological materials described in the relevant chapters and appendixes of the OIE *Terrestrial or Aquatic Code and Manual*.



Budget proposal for an OIE Laboratory Twinning

(This template is for guidance and may be adapted to suit the project)

• Recipient	<u>(laboratory A)</u>	Boxes to be filled in by the applicant
• Animal Disease	<u>(name of disease)</u>	
• Currency	<u>(preferably EUR, otherwise USD) ¹</u>	
• Application	<u>(name)</u>	
Prepared by	<u>(contact details)</u>	

Budget Proposal for an OIE Laboratory (or Collaborating Centre) Twinning between

<u>(name of Parent institute A)</u>	<u>(name of country A)</u>
and	
<u>(name of Candidate institute B)</u>	<u>(name of country B)</u>

<u>(Date)/(version)</u>			
	Unit Amount	Number	Sub-total
Expert 1 (name)			
Travel (From A to B or from B to A)			-
Daily Allowance (from day of arrival to day of departure)			-
Sub-total			-
Expert 2 (name)			
Travel (From A to B or from B to A)			-
Daily Allowance (from day of arrival to day of departure)			-
Sub-total			-
Meetings / Workshops			
Meeting 1			
Purpose		Place	
Number of invitees			
Organisation cost (provide details)			-
Travel (economy class)			-
Per diems			-
Sub-total			-
Meeting 2			
Purpose		Place	
Number of invitees			
Organisation cost (provide details)			-
Travel (economy class)			-
Per diems			-
Sub-total			-
Laboratory Material Needed for Training including reagents, antisera, etc.			-
Hardware equipment is NOT eligible			
Sub-total			-
Total			-

¹ For Parent Centres in the UK, payments in Pound Sterling (GBP) can be considered on a case by case basis, if the request is accepted budgets can be prepared in GBP.

Checklist of potential risks for twinning projects

Before embarking on a twinning project, experts in the Candidate and Parent Centres must think carefully about any obstacles or challenges that may have a negative impact on the twinning project and its ability to meet the objectives. For each challenge the experts should decide whether the risk of this impacting on the project can be mitigated and how. This is the responsibility of the experts and must be described in the 'risk' section of the twinning project proposal.

Some of these risks may seem obvious, some may seem likely to occur, and others may be unforeseen. However, for almost all risks corrective action can be taken to minimise their impact or the project plan can be adjusted to accommodate a particular issue.

Examples of some potential challenges include:

- Transfer of biologic materials and diagnostic reagents between Candidate and Parent Centre – it is an objective of twinning for Candidate Centres to provide support to other countries, it is therefore essential that Laboratories are able to receive and send biological material and reagents rapidly and safely from and to countries beyond their national borders. Reagents and biological material may also need to be transferred between twinning laboratories.
- Free movement of experts travelling between the Candidate and Parent Centre – political, logistical, cultural, visa, health, or security issues may hinder free movement of experts between the two laboratories.
- Change of expert in Candidate or Parent Centre – key experts may be lost due to illness, retirement, or career progression. Succession planning should always be considered.
- Effective communication – this may be hampered by language problems, over-commitment of either institute, and internet problems. Solutions include having interpreters at meetings, pre-translation of training material.
- Change of OIE Delegate or Laboratory Director – political and financial support to the Candidate Centre underpins the success of the project and mid-long term sustainability of capacity building.
- Outbreak of an exotic animal disease in either country – a major outbreak of animal diseases may impact on the Parent or Candidate Centre when human resources are diverted away from the Twinning project.
- Financial risks - rise in costs, exchange rate fluctuation after approval of budget, payments may be delayed, financial support for day to day running costs must be covered.
- Biocontainment/Biosafety level - there must be minimum biosafety and bio containment level to work with many animal pathogens. When laboratory facilities are upgraded to a higher containment level maintenance costs must be considered.
- Equipment/Laboratory hardware – the necessary laboratory equipment may be lacking, broken or in need of maintenance. When equipment is purchased, maintenance costs must be considered.
- Construction/buildings – building work in the Candidate or Parent Centre can lead to disruption and building work can often take considerably longer and cost more than estimated.

- Loss of interest in disease of topic – if the disease is no longer seen as important for trade it may become delisted.
- Calamity – natural or otherwise; weather, earthquakes, tsunamis etc. The location of some institutes may predispose them to risks from earthquakes or fires. Some calamities including hurricanes have a bias to certain seasons. Political instability may increase the security risk for some countries, making it more difficult for experts to visit.

Performance indicators

Performance indicators have a role to play in monitoring the progress of twinning projects and in reporting to OIE. The performance indicators that are selected will depend on the objectives of the project itself. How those measured performance indicators change over the course of a twinning project will demonstrate the success of the project.

Here are some suggested performance indicators for twinning projects (when relevant); the list is by no means exhaustive.

- Joint Parent-Candidate centre publications in peer reviewed journals
- Number of diagnostic samples tested by Candidate Centre (nationally/ from other countries) within a defined timeframe
- Technical advice or country missions by experts from the Candidate Centre to other countries
- Diagnostic samples received and tested by Candidate Centre from other countries (number of countries sending samples to the Candidate Centre/ number of samples tested)
- Provision of diagnostic reagents – by Candidate Centre – to other Centres
- Quality management system in place at Candidate Centres
- Maintain a system of quality assurance, biosafety and biosecurity measures relevant to the pathogen and the procedures carried out in the laboratory
- Accreditation in quality management to an international standard i.e. to ISO 17025
- Expert advice/ technical visits/ mission to other countries by Candidate Centres experts
- Number of international meetings attended by experts at Candidate Centre
- Presentations made by Candidate Centre experts at international meetings and conferences
- Performance in international proficiency testing
- Organising own proficiency testing for other laboratories
- Disbursement rate (actual eligible costs incurred)



The final project report

The final report must be submitted within 1 month of the project closing. It should be jointly prepared, and signed, by the Parent and Candidate Centres then submitted to the OIE Scientific and Technical Department by the Parent Centre.

The final project report should cover the following:

- Summary of the project aims and objectives set out at the start, including the justification for the project.
- Description of situation in Candidate Centre at the beginning of the project and the priority areas that were selected for improvement.
- Any changes that were made to the initial project plan, such as a change in direction or scope.
- Description of activities including training, secondments, workshops, joint research and publications, sharing of diagnostic material, assessments, project reviews.
- Situation in Candidate Centre at the end of the project including the ability to maintain and sustain the achieved objectives.
- A final report of actual expenditure.
- Lessons learned to improve future projects.
- Recommendations for future projects.

Mid to long term strategy for the Candidate Centre to maintain benefits, capacity, and a sustainable link with the Parent laboratory.

Template for financial reporting

Boxes to be filled in by the applicant

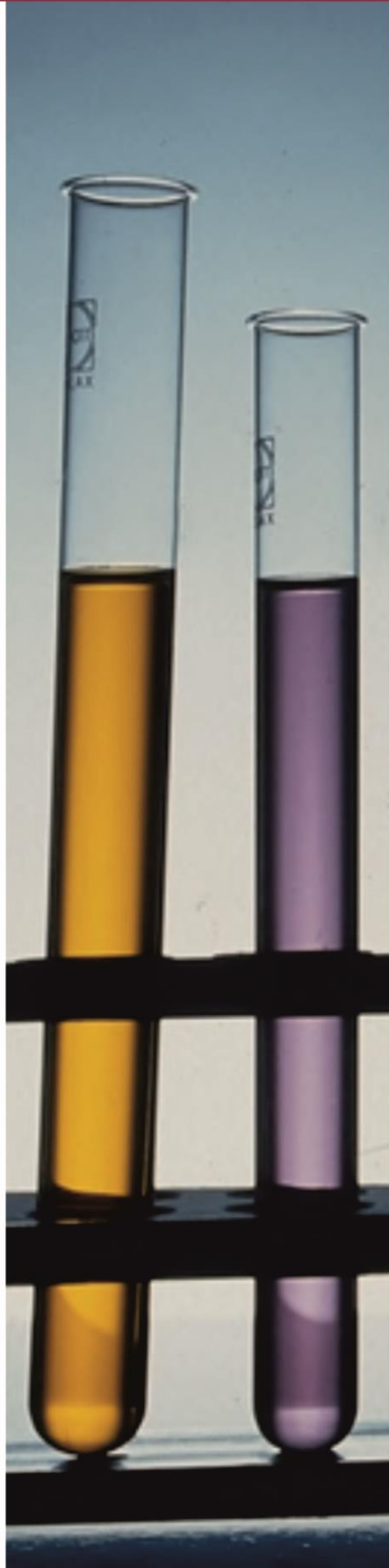
Financial report for (month/year) to (month/year):
 Parent Reference Laboratory/ Collaborating Centre:
 Candidate Laboratory/ Centre:
 Animal disease(s) or topic covered:
 Project dates (day/month/year) - (day/month/year):

Final budget approved:
 Currency:
 Revised budget (if applicable):
 Currency:

EXPENDITURE	Amount budgeted	Amount spent to date	Comments/Description
Travel - Laboratory visits (from Parent to Candidate lab)			
Total travel costs (flights, visa, etc.) - Laboratory visits			
Total per diem - Laboratory visits			
Travel - Laboratory visits (from Candidate to Parent lab)			
Total travel costs (flights, visa, etc.) - Laboratory visits			
Total per diem - Laboratory visits			
Meeting/ Workshop/ Training 1			
Organisation cost (venue, printed materials, etc.)			
Translation			
Total travel cost (flights, visas, etc.)			
Total per diem			
Meeting/ Workshop/ Training 2 (if applicable)			
Organisation cost (venue, printed materials, etc.)			
Translation			
Total travel cost (flights, visas, etc.)			
Total per diem			
Meeting/ Workshop/ Training 3 (if applicable)			
Organisation cost (venue, printed materials, etc.)			
Translation			
Total travel cost (flights, visas, etc.)			
Total per diem			
Laboratory materials and reagents			
Total cost - materials and reagents			
Shipping costs			
Shipments from parent lab to candidate lab			
Shipments from candidate lab to parent lab			
Other (please specify)			
TOTAL	- €	- €	
Remaining funds to date	- €		

INCOME (Payments from OIE)	Amount	Date received
First payment		
Second payment		
Third payment (if applicable)		
Final payment (if applicable)		
Total income to date	- €	

BALANCE	Amount
Total income	- €
Total expenditure	- €
Balance	- €



Oie

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