

General guidelines and terms and conditions applicable to the calls for proposals

www.iadb.org/rpg





I. CONCEPT AND KEY FEATURES

- 1.1 Concept: The Regional Public Goods Initiative (the "Initiative") of the Inter-American Development Bank ("IDB" or "the Bank") is based on the premise that the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean ("LAC") share numerous development challenges and opportunities that can be addressed more effectively and efficiently at a regional level through collective action and cooperation. The Initiative is also a response to the increasing importance of South-South cooperation ("SSC") in the development agenda of LAC countries and the IDB, who is committed to be an active partner in development through a South-South led learning and cooperation process.
- Definition of Regional Public Goods: The Initiative defines Regional Public Goods ("RPG") as goods, services or resources that are produced and consumed collectively by the public sector and, if appropriate, the private, non-profit sector in a minimum of three (3), and exceptionally two (2) borrowing member countries of the IDB. The public aspect of the "goods" is in the shared benefits. Benefits are shared to the extent that there is no competition among consumers for the consumption of benefits, so new consumers can be added continuously without prejudice to existing users (non-rivalry). A corollary is the non-excludability of benefits, in that public goods are available to all potential users at no cost. The Initiative focuses on RPGs that have the potential to generate significant shared benefits and positive spillover effects. Spillover effects can be expressed in terms of scope (benefits extend beyond the originally targeted sector in each country) and/or scale (benefits extend beyond the original group of countries).
- 1.3 Competitive allocation of funds: Each year, the Initiative provides non-reimbursable resources (grants) for proposals that have been selected as a result of a public call for proposals.
- 1.4 Demand-driven: The Initiative finances proposals that have been prepared or are endorsed by and benefit a minimum of three (3), and exceptionally two (2), borrowing member countries of the IDB.
- 1.5 Collective action: The RPG projects need to be produced collectively. This means that the partner countries and institutions decide together their goal, including their work plan, the agenda and their governance and regional cooperation. All participating countries need to have equal access to the products generated collectively and they need to be part of a Steering Committee of the project.
- 1.6 Thematic focus: The Initiative is open to the promotion of RPGs in any area, in which the Bank is active. However, alignment with the IDB's goals, objectives, and priorities is a selection criterion. Therefore, proposals submitted under the Call for Proposals must seek to collectively address one or more of the following four (4) priority areas:

- 1. Education and health to tackle poverty and inequality.
- 2. Food security, including access, production, and trade aspects.
- 3. **Climate change** mitigation and adaptation, and support to meeting LAC countries' Paris Agreement goals.
- 4. Regional integration in terms of sustainable physical and digital infrastructure to boost trade and productivity.

Proposals, that, in addition to aligning with one or more of the aforementioned priorities involve a gender and diversity focus will be positively valued.

II. ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

A. Regional dimension of the RPG

- 2.1 To comply with the regional criterion, a proposal must meet the following two conditions:
 - a. Number of countries: A minimum of three (3) borrowing member countries of the Bank are involved in the production of the RPG. The Initiative may exceptionally consider proposals to finance bi-national projects. These binational proposals will have to demonstrate that (i) the issue to be addressed is of strictly bi-national nature; (ii) the proposal fully justifies that the RPG to be produced has the potential for an exceptionally high development impact; and (iii) the RPG produced can be replicated in other contexts should similar circumstances arise. All other eligibility criteria of the Initiative will continue to apply.
 - b. Collective action: RPGs need to be promoted by means of collective action among all participating countries. This means that the institutions engaged in the promotion of the RPG decide collectively how to achieve that goal, including the agenda, mechanisms, and partners of their regional cooperation, as well as the regional commitments that they are willing to undertake. Please note that regional value-added is a selection criterion. Therefore, proposals need to make the case that collective action will produce benefits that countries cannot achieve individually or that can be achieved only at a higher cost.¹

The Initiative does not finance RPGs that consist exclusively of a unilateral transfer of capacity, experience, and knowledge from one country to another country or group of countries (a form of RPG production that is also known as "Best Shot"). This modality is not based on cooperation among all partners in the production of the good and thus is not eligible under the Initiative.

What types of projects does the Initiative seek to finance?

The RPG Initiative seeks to finance specific regional coordination products that can then be implemented at the national level by the participating countries and other interested countries that could not participate in the original project. This type of products can be, for example, regional regulatory frameworks, harmonized legislation and common agreements or standards among countries; regional sectoral strategies and action plans; diagnoses and studies in support of investment decisions or projects at the regional level; and methodologies and instruments of regional application.

Although knowledge networks and regional studies are valuable instruments for cooperation between countries, given the limited resources available for the RPG Initiative, it will not be able to finance projects that only support the creation of networks, regional or national academic studies carried out by public or private universities and/or capacity building events.

Notwithstanding the foregoing, the RPGs may include as part of their activities the formation of networks, the financing of specific studies and specific events related to the RPG, as long as these do not constitute the ultimate goal of the project.

B. Public Dimension of the RPG

- 2.2 In general terms, a regional good is considered public to the degree that its benefits are non-rival and non-excludable in consumption. Under this Initiative, in addition to consumption, the public dimension includes the production aspect of the good, i.e. it answers the question of who participates in its production. The RPGs to be promoted by the Initiative should be produced by all relevant stakeholders.
- 2.3 The Initiative concentrates on public policy-related RPGs, i.e. projects that facilitate regional coordination in public policy design, reform and execution, including the development of concrete regional solutions for issues such as regulatory upgrades and institutional strengthening.
- 2.4 Public policy-related RPGs need to demonstrate the involvement of those institutions in each participating country that are tasked with designing and implementing policy in the thematic area of the RPG. These are usually government agencies. Occasionally, governments delegate matters to semipublic or private (usually non-profit) institutions.
- 2.5 Symmetry of beneficiaries. In order to ensure a fluid dialogue between participating countries and efficient project execution, the proposals must maintain a symmetry in the actors involved, that is, the entities that participate in the project must correspond to the same level in the different countries, whether they are national or sub-national entities. For example, in the case of public sector projects, a project related to energy integration between a group of countries must accompany the letters of commitment from the Ministries of Energy of those countries. In the case of a project with a sub-national scope, the relevant actors will be the sub-national governments of the participating countries, and not a combination of these with national-level governmental

entities. Finally, if the project is proposed by public academic institutions, all letters of commitment must come from public academic institutions and not from a combination of these with entities of the national or sub-national level government.

2.6 Commitment Letters. Proposals must include a <u>letter of commitment</u> from the national entity responsible for the public policy associated with the RPG. The purpose of the letters of commitment are to: (i) demonstrate the interest that each country has in cooperating with others in the process of producing the RPG; (ii) verify the availability of financial and human resources to implement the activities as stated in the proposal; and (iii) guarantee the sustainability of the process of generating the RPG beyond the IDB's financial support.

Note on commitment letters:

Although the heading of the letters of commitment must be addressed to the IDB in accordance with the sample available on the Initiative's electronic portal, these letters must be attached to the online application form and must not be sent to the official mailbox of the RPG Initiative. Only letters received through the online application system will be considered. We would appreciate informing all participating countries in your proposals that the letters are to be compiled by the entity or person in charge

- 2.7 Letters of Non-Objection. Although letters of commitment demonstrate the interest of the requesting entities in a proposal, the financing of such proposal, once selected, is conditional on obtaining, through the corresponding IDB country offices, the letters of non-objection of official IDB liaisons in each participating country.
- 2.8 Non-profit private sector proposals. Exceptionally, the Initiative may consider innovative ideas for RPGs proposed by the private, non-profit sector that are not concerned with public policy and therefore do not require the participation of public policy-setting institutions. However, proponents interested in submitting a proposal under this window should bear in mind the following:
 - a. The RPG will always need to be promoted by means of collective action among the private, non-profit institutions of a minimum of three (3) borrowing member countries of the Bank.² Therefore, the RPG is necessarily a response to a concern or a missed opportunity that these institutions share and wish to resolve by means of cooperation. It is not the delivery of a good, service or resource to the public by a group of non-profit organizations from various countries. This is because if the proposal seeks to inform public policy, the agencies responsible for such public policy should be those presenting their commitment to the project.
 - b. Private non-profit institutions that apply for a project may not be part of the same entity with legal status in different countries. They must be different private non-profit entities.

² Exceptionally, the Initiative may consider bi-national proposals (see section 2.1).

- c. The Initiative may not finance "mixed" proposals which involve the participation of non-profit private sector entities in some countries and public sector entities in others. Proposals must respect a symmetry in the actors involved, and these must be either all from the public sector or all from the non-profit private sector.
- d. Proposals submitted by the private non-profit sector will have to demonstrate that (i) the benefits to be generated by the RPG are expected to be exceptionally significant; and (ii) the RPG can be produced in a sustainable manner beyond the financing of the Initiative.³
- e. For proposals submitted by the non-profit private sector, the non-objection of the official government liaison with the IDB will not be required at the time of submitting the proposal, but it will be later requested through the corresponding IDB country offices, should the proposal be selected for financing selected. As in the case of the public sector proposals, the financing of the selected proposals is conditional to the no objection of the official IDB liaisons to the proposal.
- f. Non-profit private sector entities may present a maximum of one proposal within the framework of each Call for Proposals. Notwithstanding the foregoing, they may participate in other proposals that are presented by other non-profit entities.

III. SELECTION CRITERIA

3.1 Strategic relevance. The strategic relevance of an RPG proposal will be determined by its alignment with the IDB's goals, objectives, and priorities in a sector and/or country/subregion. In accordance with section 1.6 of these General Guidelines, the RPG Initiative will only finance proposals that address the cross-cutting challenges of the IDB's Institutional Strategy and must be framed in one or more of the following four (4) priority areas of the IDB Group: (i) education and health to tackle poverty and inequality; (ii) food insecurity, including access, production, and trade aspects; (iii) climate change mitigation and adaptation, and support to meeting LAC countries' Paris Agreement goals; and (iv) regional integration in sustainable physical and digital infrastructure to boost trade and productivity. Proposals, that, in addition to aligning with one or more of the aforementioned priorities involve a gender and diversity focus will be positively valued. If the alignment condition with these four (4) thematic areas is fulfilled, the assessment will further consider (i) a proposal's consistency with current regional challenges/opportunities; (ii) the consistency between challenge/opportunity and the response that is being proposed; and (iii) the needs and priorities of the beneficiary countries and stakeholder groups, as expressed in the letters of commitment that document the countries' willingness to work together on a topic.

³ Bi-national proposals submitted by the private, non-profit sector without the participation of public policy-setting institutions must also comply with the criteria associated with bi-national proposals that are listed in section 2.1.

- 3.2 Regional value-added. Proponents will need to rigorously spell out the value-added of a regional versus a national approach.
- 3.3 Sustainability. Proposals will be assessed against the prospects of sustaining or in some cases reaping the benefits of an RPG once the support of the program has ended. In many cases, the ultimate benefits of the RPG do not materialize until regional agreements are being implemented (mostly at the national level), which may require substantial investments. Therefore, proponents will be asked to articulate the possibilities and conditions of sustaining the project's results and fully realizing its benefits.

Financing of second phase proposals

Although the RPG Initiative is open to financing second-phase proposals (those projects that have already received financing from the RPG Initiative), such proposals must not exceed the amount of US\$250,000 and will need to provide a solid justification on why the provision of additional resources for the project are warranted. Please note that if a second phase proposal is selected for financing it will receive a maximum contribution of US\$250.000 from RPG Initiative resources.

IV. TERMS AND CONDITIONS

4.1 By submitting a proposal, the proposal's intended beneficiary entities submitting commitment letters with the application (hereinafter "Applicants"), accept the following terms and conditions, as amended from time to time, in addition to those described in the RPG Initiative website www.iadb.org/rpg (the "RPG Initiative Site").

A. Requirements

- 4.2 All proposals shall comply with the requirements set forth below:
 - a. Registration. Interested users must register on the date and time indicated in each Call for Proposals in order to submit a proposal through the online submission system. Only those users who have completed the registration within the indicated period may later submit proposals under each Call for Proposals within the indicated period. Please note that all users must register as new users, independently from whether they have participated in past Calls for Proposals. The system requires a new registration to participate in each Call for Proposals and does not store past registrations.

- b. Documentation. All proposals need to be submitted via the online submission form, which includes: (i) questions regarding the proposal, including an indicative results framework for the proposal, and (ii) the required number of letters of commitment to be issued by the agencies responsible for the public policy associated with the RPG (or by the private non-profit sector entities if the proposal does not impact public policy) and by the proposed executing agency. Letters from strategic partners, if any, are not mandatory. Please note that proposals that request IDB execution must expressly request it in all letters of commitment from participant countries. The IDB will only be able to consider proposals that include all abovementioned documentation and that have been submitted through the RPG Initiative Site⁴. No exceptions will be granted in relation to the proposal presentation format or the submission of commitment letters outside the online submission system.
- c. Language. Proposals may be submitted in Spanish or English.
- 4.3 Proposals which, in the IDB's sole determination, do any of the following will be automatically disqualified and will not be subject to financing:
 - a. Do not comply with the requirements, eligibility and selection criteria described in these General Guidelines and these Terms and Conditions;
 - Adversely affect the reputation of the IDB Group or any of its officials or member countries;
 - c. Are illegal under the applicable laws;
 - d. Depict hatred, defame, abuse, harass, stalk, and/or threaten a specific person or community in the society or can incite violence and/or conflict, and/or otherwise violate the legal rights (such as rights of privacy and publicity) of others;
 - e. Contain any infringing, obscene, indecent, or unlawful material or information; and/or,
 - f. Promote any political and/or religious proselytism; illustrate vulgar behaviors or expressions or whose content is considered indecent or obscene; use content that can be considered defamatory, slanderous, or injurious; or use content that promotes intolerance, racism, hatred or harm against any group or individual, or discrimination based on race, sex, religion, nationality, disability, sexual orientation or age.
- 4.4 Proposals may not be modified after being submitted.

The online proposal submission system will shut down promptly at the date and time indicated for each Call for Proposals (U.S. Eastern Standard Time). To avoid any technical difficulties, we recommend that you do not wait until the last moment to submit the proposal.

- 4.5 Once submitted to the IDB, a proposal will be treated as confidential by the IDB Group.
- 4.6 The IDB reserves the right to cancel the Call for Proposals at any time, in accordance with IDB's policies and procedures.
- 4.7 The IDB is not responsible for and does not warrant that the RPG Initiative Site or services will function without interruption or errors. For example, the operation of the RPG Initiative Site and the services may be interrupted due to maintenance, updates, or system or network failures. The IDB disclaims any and all liability for damages caused by any such interruption or errors in functioning.

B. Entities Eligible to Submit and Execute Proposals

- 4.8 Executing Agencies. The executing agency of an RPG project is the entity responsible for carrying out or implementing the activities provided under that project and for the management and administration of the Bank's financial contribution. It is strongly advised that the executing agency should have prior experience in implementing multinational or cooperation projects or in the administration of grants, as this will be part of the evaluation for each proposal. This entity commits itself to carrying out the activities of the project in accordance with the provisions set forth in the corresponding nonreimbursable technical cooperation agreement to be entered into between the executing agency and the Bank. The executing agency also commits itself, through a commitment letter to be included as part of the proposal documentation, to covering part of the project's direct and indirect costs by providing cash and/or in-kind contributions, whose amount and type will be determined during the process of project preparation (see also section 4.12). RPG project resources cannot be used to cover overhead costs of the executing agency. Each project can have only one (1) executing agency.
- 4.9 Non-eligible entities to execute a proposal. International or hemispheric organizations, foundations and cooperation agencies outside the region cannot present proposals or be the executing agency of RPG projects. However, they may be invited to serve as advisors to the process and/or co-finance the production of the RPG. Please note that an agency with a regional focus with participation from countries such as Spain or Portugal, or the USA or Canada is considered global or hemispheric. Please note that if a proposal is submitted with an ineligible executing agency, the proposal will not be considered, therefore it is highly recommended to inquire to the RPG helpdesk (BPR@iadb.org) in case of doubt regarding the eligibility of executing agencies.
- 4.10 Strategic partners. Strategic partners of a proposal can contribute resources in cash or in kind and be part of an Advisory Committee of the project, however, they will not be able to benefit from IDB resources nor can they be hired to provide consulting services to the project to avoid any conflict of interest. The entities that wish to provide consulting services must be selected by the project beneficiaries and the IDB as consulting firms, and in this capacity, they may not be part of the project's Advisory Committee.

- 4.11 Applicants of selected proposals will be contacted at a later stage to provide proof of the executing agency's legal registration in one of the <u>IDB's borrowing</u> member countries.
- 4.12 The following table provides an overview of the entities that are eligible to submit and/or execute RPG projects and those that are not.

Type of Institution	Eligible to	
	Submit	Execute
Borrowing member countries, including national, sub-national and local institutions.	Yes	Yes
Private, non-profit entities that are legally established in one of the Bank's borrowing member countries.	Yes	Yes
Latin American and/or Caribbean regional or sub regional institutions.	Yes	Yes
Organizational units of the IDB.	Yes	Yes ⁵
International public organizations with a global or hemispheric role, as well as their specialized agencies.	No	No
Entities that are legally established in a non-borrowing member country of the IDB.	No	No
Private, for-profit entities from any country.	No	No

C. Eligible Expenses

- 4.13 The Initiative may finance the following expenses:
 - a. Consulting fees, understood as national or international individual ⁶ or firms;
 - b. Travel and per diem expenses for national and international consultants hired under the project, and staff of participating institutions to attend project-related meetings, workshops and training events;
 - c. Costs of organizing meetings, including simultaneous interpretation and related support services (technical support), secretarial services required to organize and/or conduct meetings; rental of equipment necessary and purchase of certain meeting-related supplies, etc.;
 - d. Publication/reproduction of documents and materials, including printing, editing, translation, distribution of documents and materials and the right to reproduce them (copyright), provided that this documentation results from, or is used in, project-related activities;
 - e. Project coordination expenses (project coordinator and part time administrative personnel) with a maximum amount of 15% of the project total: and
 - f. Project evaluation and audit (mandatory requirement for all projects).

⁵ An IDB organizational unit may execute and RPG Project if participating countries present a request in this regard, including a solid justification in their commitment letters.

⁶ Individual consultants are persons hired for a pre-determined period to produce well-defined deliverables, either professional or administrative. IDB resources shall not be used to hire individual consultants who presently (or in the six (6) months prior to the submittal of the proposal to the IDB) belong to the regular or temporary staff of the institution granted financing (executing agency), or to an institution that is the beneficiary of the services to be provided by the individual consultant.

- 4.14 The Initiative may not finance the following expenses:
 - a. Compensation or professional fees of beneficiary and counterpart institutions, including the executing agency and strategic partners;
 - b. Rental of premises, except in the case of specific events necessary for project activities financed with the Initiative's resources;
 - c. Social activities resulting from IDB-financed activities throughout the project;
 - d. Awards; and
 - e. The acquisition of equipment or other goods. Nevertheless, under exceptional circumstances, up to thirty percent (30%) of IDB resources may be used for the purchase or rental of equipment and supplies that are directly related to project activities if the project is executed by an external executing agency. Please note a justification on why these expenses cannot be covered by the executing agency or counterpart resources will have to be provided.
- 4.15 The expenses mentioned in section 4.12 may be part of the project, provided they are financed with counterpart resources from the countries or from the executing agency or strategic partners, if any.

D. Inquiries

4.16 Applicants may direct inquiries to the RPG team at BPR@iadb.org. Please note that the RPG team will only answer questions related to the present General Guidelines and Terms and Conditions. Such information represents the opinion of a member of the RPG team; it should not be interpreted as an official statement from the Eligibility Committee of the RPG Initiative, nor does it represent or entail a commitment of any kind from the RPG Initiative or the IDB to finance a proposal.

E. Evaluation and Selection of Proposals

- 4.17 The IDB, through a multidisciplinary Evaluation Committee, will review the proposals by means of the following three-step process: (i) determination of eligibility and quality of proposals, (ii) technical review of eligible proposals, and (iii) ranking of eligible proposals based on their compliance with the selection criteria. Please refer to the estimated timeline at the end of this section.
- 4.18 The IDB reserves the right to substitute or modify the Call for Proposals General Guidelines, Terms and Conditions, and timeline at its discretion.
- 4.19 All decisions made by the IDB with respect to the selected proposals will be final and are not subject to negotiations or appeal. Any determinations by the IDB in disqualifying any submission will be final and confidential.
- 4.20 IDB will announce the selected proposals via email to Applicants' registered email and via the RPG Initiative Site once the list of proposals selected for financing has been approved.
- 4.21 If after announcing the selected proposals, the IDB determines that any Applicants have misrepresented, misstated, or mischaracterized their

submission in any way, the submission shall be automatically disqualified, and any resources received shall be returned.

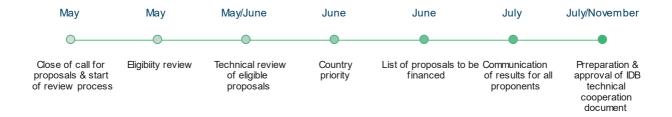
F. Preparation of a Technical Cooperation Project

- 4.22 The proposals selected for financing under the Initiative will be developed into and approved as IDB Technical Cooperation (TC) projects to be executed within a timeframe of three (3) years. Representatives from the applying institutions and Bank staff will together prepare the corresponding TC document.
- 4.23 Once the standard TC document approval process has been finalized, the IDB and the designated executing agency will sign an agreement to initiate the implementation of activities and the disbursement of resources.
- 4.24 The financing of selected proposals is conditional on obtaining, through the corresponding IDB country offices, the letters of non-objection of official IDB liaisons in each beneficiary country.

G. Evaluation

- 4.25 Final Evaluation and Audit. A final independent external evaluation is mandatory for each RPG-financed project. The proposal submission form already considers the costs of a final evaluation and external audit (the latter only applicable to proposals executed by agencies other than IDB).
- 4.26 Intermediate evaluation. The IDB reserves the right to, with its own resources, conduct intermediate evaluations on executing projects. Non-performing projects may be cancelled by IDB at any time.

Estimated timeline for calls for proposals



H. Intellectual Property

4.27 The proposal must be original; not contain confidential information, and be solely owned, jointly or separately, by Applicants who represent that no other party has any rights or interest, whether known or unknown, in the submission. If applicable, Applicants shall represent that they have obtained the license or permission to use materials owned by third parties, and that said third parties have granted the Applicants the right to use such third party or proprietary materials for the submission as well as the right to sublicense such materials.

- Additionally, Applicants represent that their submission does not violate the privacy rights of other parties.
- 4.28 The IDB disclaims any liability for infringements or other violations of intellectual property rights based on claims of ownership by Applicants by participating in the Call for Proposals, and Applicants agree to hold harmless and indemnify the IDB against third-party claims.
- 4.29 By submitting a proposal, Applicants grant the IDB a non-exclusive, royalty-free license, which can be sublicensed over the material contained in the submission and in relation to any of the proposal's ideas.
- 4.30 If Applicants' proposal is selected to receive IDB financing, Applicants agree to grant the IDB the full ownership of the intellectual property of the proposed project, and the IDB accepts to grant Applicants a non-exclusive, royalty-free license, which can be sublicensed.

I. Limitation of Liability

4.31 The IDB is not responsible for: (i) any false, incorrect, or inaccurate information caused by Applicants; (ii) unauthorized human intervention in any part of the submission process; or (iii) any injury or damage to persons or property which may be caused, directly or indirectly, in whole or in part, because of the financing of the Applicants' submission.

J. Treatment of Personal Data

- 4.32 Except for the registration information required to set-up an account to submit proposals, users must not provide any personal data through the RPG Initiative Site or the materials shared through the RPG Initiative Site.
- 4.33 Personal data submitted to the IDB will be treated as confidential, and the IDB will apply the appropriate security measures to protect it against accidental or unauthorized destruction, loss, alteration, disclosure of, or access to.

K. Publicity and use of logo

4.34 Applicants may not use a corporate identity of the IDB (logo, name, symbols, etc.) without the IDB's written authorization.

L. Submission Withdrawal

4.35 Applicants have the right to withdraw their submissions at any moment by sending an email to BPR@iadb.org stating the ID of proposal being withdrawn.

M. No Recourse to Judicial Procedures

4.36 In the event that Applicants disagree with any of the rules set forth herein or any decision made by the IDB, the only remedy available to Applicants is

withdrawal. To the extent permitted by law, the rights to litigate, to seek injunctive relief or to any other recourse to judicial procedure in case of disputes or claims resulting from or in connection with this Initiative are hereby excluded, and Applicants expressly waive any and all such rights.

4.37 By submitting a proposal, Applicants agree not to disparage the IDB Group in any dispute or controversy.

N. Preservation of Immunities

4.38 Nothing herein shall constitute or be considered to be a limitation upon or a waiver of the privileges and immunities of the IDB, which are specifically reserved.

The Spanish language version of these General Guidelines and Terms and Conditions shall prevail in case of any inconsistencies with versions in other languages.

