

DIRECTIVE GOVERNING THE FINANCING OF EXTERNAL TRAINING PROGRAMS BY THE STAFF TRAINING SERVICE

1 Purpose

The Staff Training Service (STS) offers staff members the possibility of taking training programs run by external organizations, provided that similar courses are not available internally.

The training programs are chosen based on:

- a skills gap analysis and/or the specific needs of a unit;
- related legal provisions, particularly those set out in Article 4 of the Act on Federal Staff Members.

Staff members are encouraged to take training programs that provide certification.

2 Roles and responsibilities

The responsibility to successfully complete a training course is shared by:

the staff member, who:

- is responsible for their mobility/employability;
- suggests a training program in agreement with their supervisor(s);
- commits to the training program and agrees to apply their newly acquired skills to their work;
- is responsible for submitting the request form, as set forth in this directive;
- is responsible for informing the STS immediately if they decide to withdraw from the training program or if the program is cancelled or postponed.

the supervisor, who:

- anticipates, defines and approves the individual and collective needs of their team, in close cooperation with Human Resources and the STS;
- determines how necessary each requested training program is and ensures that all members of the unit are treated equally in terms of their access to training opportunities;
- works with the staff member to identify the benefits and expected results of the training program together with the means and resources that will help the staff member develop their skills and apply them in their work.
- ensures that the staff member follows the training program and informs the STS if they withdraw from or fail the course.

Human Resources, which:

- advises and supports supervisors in their responsibility to manage staff members and support them in their skills development;
- helps identify and define individual and/or collective needs;
- reviews requests and coordinates requests received from all VP/P offices and schools.

the STS, which:

- serves as the link between the strategic priorities, EPFL's HR policy, the needs of the VP/P offices and schools, and the training programs;
- supports supervisors in the development of staff members' skills;
- manages the overall training system and the allocated budget;
- checks that the criteria for approving training requests are met;
- where possible, pools requests and organizes a tailored training course;
- if there is no difference in quality, the STS reserves the right to require a staff member to take a training program run by another training organization than the one proposed by the staff member;
- records the training in the staff member's confidential HR file;

- draws up a report on the training provided.

3 Submitting a request, and deadline

Any request for EPFL to cover the costs of a training program run by an external organization must:

- be submitted to the STS at least 30 days before the sign-up deadline, failing which the request will be rejected;
- include the reasons for wanting to take the course;
- include the “external training financial request form”;
- comply with the sign-up deadlines;
- include a description of the program or, where applicable, an offer with a detailed cost breakdown;
- have been approved by:
 - the staff member;
 - their supervisor;
 - the unit or school's HR manager;
 - the STS.

4 Approving/rejecting a request

4.1 Approved requests

If the request is approved, the STS will send the staff member the original copy of the sign-up form notifying them that the training costs will be covered. A copy will be sent to the HR manager.

The staff member is responsible for informing their supervisor.

The staff member must sign up with the training organization and send the SFP the original invoices as quickly as possible.

4.2 Rejected requests

Requests are, as a general rule, rejected when:

- the HR manager or the STS considers that the training does not relate to the staff member's area of work;
- the request is not submitted to the STS within the required deadline;
- a similar internal training program is available;
- the staff member is still in their trial period;
- the staff member is scheduled to leave their position within the 12 months following the end of the training program.

A staff member who signs up for a training program and/or covers the sign-up costs before the request is approved is responsible for paying any fees for the program if the request is rejected.

5 Training program categories

Each financing request for an external training program is analyzed in order to identify how important the program is for the unit and to allocate the financial resources managed by the STS as effectively as possible.

Training is categorized based on the priority given to the training program, and the category determines what costs are covered.

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| Category 1: | The staff member is legally required to complete the training in order to continue practicing their work. The training must be required by a directive, standard or other legal document stipulating that the program is compulsory. |
| Category 2: | The staff member must complete the training in order to satisfactorily fulfill the job requirements set by their supervisor (i.e., there is a direct link between the staff member's job requirements and the training program). |

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| Category 3: | The training is not essential but useful and linked to the staff member's work; the staff member's supervisor also recommends that the staff member complete the program for the benefit of the staff member, the unit and EPFL. |
| Category 4: | The training program offers a certification but is not directly linked to the staff member's work. It would allow the staff member to develop their professional skills by paving the way for possible promotion, enhancing their career plan or supporting their mobility. |

Training programs that award an advanced degree, such as a federal diploma, CAS, DAS, MAS, MPA, PMP, CEMAP or MBA, can be included in categories 3 or 4, but not 2. The training programs set out in Article 32 are not covered by the STS.

6 Costs covered by the STS and/or the staff member by category

| Categories 1 and 2 | |
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| Direct costs | These costs are fully covered by the STS up to a maximum of CHF 5,000. This includes the training costs and any sign-up or exam-related costs. |
| Indirect costs Training during work hours | If the training program takes place on vacation days, in the evenings or on weekends, that time can be counted as work time and can therefore, as a general rule, be recovered by the staff member. For part-time staff members, the same principle applies regardless of the staff member's work-time percentage: 8 hours of training = 8 hours of work time. |
| Expenses Meals, travel, accommodation | The STS does not cover any expenses. |
| Additional costs | Any costs relating to the purchase of additional training material (such as books) are covered by the staff member or their unit. |
| Financial agreement Terms and conditions | For category 2 training programs: a financial agreement is drawn up if the total amount to be borne by EPFL is CHF 5,000 or more and/or if the training will take more than 12 days per calendar year. |
| Category 3 | |
| Direct costs | The staff member must cover one quarter of the direct costs. Half of the remaining three quarters will be borne by the STS (up to a maximum of CHF 5,000) and the other half by the staff member's unit. If it so wishes, the unit may agree to cover the costs to be borne by the staff member. Direct costs include the costs of the training and any sign-up or exam-related costs. |
| Indirect costs Training during work hours | If the training takes place during work hours, the staff member will be released from their work duties. The number of days during which a staff member can be released during work hours for training purposes cannot exceed ten days per calendar year (number of days calculated on a pro-rata basis for part-time staff members). In order to attend training programs that exceed the ten-day limit, staff members, with their supervisor's consent, can organize their time as they see fit, by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ using their vacation days; ▪ making up the hours on an annualized basis (if the unit's work requirements allow for this kind of flexibility); ▪ reducing their work-time percentage for the duration of the training. <p>If the training program takes place in the evenings or on weekends, a quarter of that time can be counted as work time and can therefore be recovered by the staff member.</p> |

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| | Part-time staff members: The training day is recorded on a pro-rata basis: for staff members working 50%, 8 hours of training = 4 hours of work time. |
| Expenses Meals, travel, accommodation | The STS does not cover any expenses. |
| Additional costs | Any costs relating to the purchase of additional training material (such as books) are covered by the staff member. |
| Financial agreement Terms and conditions | A financial agreement is drawn up if the amount to be covered by EPFL is CHF 5,000 or more. |

| Category 4 | |
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| Direct costs | The STS covers half of the training costs, up to a maximum of CHF 5,000 per training program. Direct costs include the costs of the training and any sign-up or exam-related costs. |
| Indirect costs Training during work hours | If the training program takes place in the evenings or on weekends, that time cannot be counted as work time and therefore cannot be recovered by the staff member. Part-time staff members: Training days are recorded on a pro-rata basis. |
| Expenses Meals, travel, accommodation | The STS does not cover any expenses. |
| Additional costs | The STS will not cover any costs relating to the purchase of additional training material (such as books). |

7 Special provisions

7.1 Exams

If the staff member fails an exam, they are not required to reimburse the training costs. However, any further sign-up costs must be borne by the staff member.

7.2 Withdrawal from the training program

If a staff member decides to withdraw from a training program before completing it, they must reimburse all of the costs already covered or to be covered, unless they withdrew because of unforeseen circumstances (such as illness or the death of a family member). In that case, a certificate justifying their absence must be provided.

8 Costs covered

8.1 Direct costs

Within the limits of its allocated budget, the SFP will cover all of the direct costs of training programs that will enhance staff members' performance (e.g., by honing their professional skills or by allowing them to maintain their licenses, titles or accreditation), based on the conditions set for each category. The STS will cover the costs of one external training program per calendar year per staff member.