

POLICY FOR ACQUISITION OF BUSINESS EVENTS

1. Objectives

The purpose of the funding programme is to support event organisers in implementing business events and thus to acquire further events with relevant added value for Hamburg as a business location. The Hamburg Convention Bureau (HCB), which has relevant expertise regarding the processes and requirements for holding events in Hamburg and which serves as a point of contact for the event industry, shall be entrusted with the administering of the funds that are made available by the Hamburg Ministry of Economic Affairs and Innovation.

2. Prerequisites for funding

To be eligible for receiving funds, it is mandatory that the event location has not been decided on in favour of Hamburg yet and that Hamburg competes with other destinations as a potential host for the respective event. Applicants must confirm this by means of a written declaration. Moreover, when implementing an event, organisers are required to comply with sustainability criteria (see Section 6.1).

3. Legal basis

The Free and Hanseatic City of Hamburg shall grant the Hamburg Convention Bureau (hereinafter referred to as "HCB"), as a department of Hamburg Tourismus GmbH, financial resources for the purpose of funding the acquisition of and implementing business events in Hamburg in accordance with this Policy and on the basis of Section 46 of the State Budget Code (Landeshaushaltsordnung, LHO) as well as the applicable versions of the relevant administrative regulations and the General Incidental Provisions on Grants for the Promotion of Projects (ANBest-P).

The HCB shall use the funding resources to support enterprises in application of the provisions on De-minimis aid. Allocated funds may not exceed the amount of EUR 300,000 within a period of 3 fiscal years. Where appropriate, the subsidy amount may be reduced to such an extent that it does not exceed the sum of EUR 300,000 when combined with other De-minimis subsidies received by the applicant in the current and the two preceding fiscal years.

The HCB shall be responsible for administering this Policy and distributing the funding resources to eligible applicants on the basis of a private law contract.

The total amount of funding granted to applicants in accordance with this Policy depends on the financial resources made available to the HCB by the Free and Hanseatic City of Hamburg. Once the total budget available has been exhausted, no further events will be funded, irrespective of whether all eligibility criteria are met. This means that applicants are not legally entitled to receive funding even if all of the criteria are met. Each application for funding will be reviewed individually. Events will be funded in chronological order based on the date and time the application is received by the HCB.

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4. Object of funding

Funding is intended exclusively for business events that are directed at professional audiences.

Eligible events thus include the following:

- (association) conventions / association meetings;
- corporate events and conferences / corporate meetings.

The following events are not eligible:

- exhibitions and trade fairs (even if directed at professional audiences);
- cultural and sporting events;
- internal (corporate) events (such as galas, award ceremonies, Christmas parties, etc.);
- party-political events.

Only expenses incurred through the actual implementation of a business event are eligible for funding.

5. Eligible applicants

Pursuant to Section 4, organisers planning, holding, and bearing the financial risk for business events in Hamburg are eligible to apply. In addition, agencies are also eligible for funding, provided they can demonstrate that they have been commissioned to plan and implement the business event on behalf of the organiser.

The following are eligible to apply:

- legal entities under private and public law;
- partnerships with legal capacity;
- self-employed and freelance professionals;
- associations with legal capacity (federations/clubs).

The following are not eligible to apply:

- applicants who have ceased their business activities or payments;
- applicants with assets subject to registered or open insolvency proceedings. The same applies to applicants and, if the applicant is a legal entity, to the owner(s) of the legal entity, insofar as they have submitted or are obliged to submit an affidavit / a declaration of assets pursuant to Section 802c of the German Code of Civil Procedure (Zivilprozessordnung, ZPO) or Section 284 of the Fiscal Code (Abgabenordnung), respectively;
- enterprises in difficulty, taking into account Article 3(3)(d) of the ERDF Regulation (EU) 1301/2013;
- the Federal Government, federal states and municipalities as well as regional and local jurisdictions;

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- political parties or comparable national or international entities;
- any entities that do not have legal capacity.

6. Eligibility requirements and criteria

6.1 Eligibility requirements

To be eligible, it is mandatory that the event location has not been decided on in favour of Hamburg yet. Applicants must confirm this by means of a binding written declaration, naming the destination(s) included in the competition. As a further basic requirement, applicants must sign a declaration of commitment regarding sustainability (as per HCB guidelines).

6.2 Criteria for basic funding

To be eligible for basic funding, the event must take place at an event venue booked in Hamburg for which a rental fee is paid. In-house function rooms are not eligible.

The event must generate at least 100 overnight stays (i.e. room nights) in Hamburg-based hotels. A room night is defined as any night between the official opening and the official closing of the event for which funding has been requested.

6.3 Criteria for additional funding

If one or more of the following criteria are met and documented accordingly, the funding amount may be increased pursuant to Section 7.2 and under the following conditions:

- a) The event takes place in Hamburg during any of the following periods:
 - January, February
 - July, August or
 - December of a given year.
- b) The event is committed to Hamburg as an event location for several years. Funding shall then be granted for each event (i.e. annually) and for a maximum of 3 events.
- c) The event is an international business event. An international event is any event where more than 50% of participants are from countries other than Germany.

If, after the application has been made, a circumstance changes that is relevant to the funding amount (such as an anticipated reduction in the number of participants or duration of the conference, cancellation of follow-up events, or similar), the awarding authority must be informed immediately.

7. Nature, scope and amount of funding

7.1 Expenses eligible for funding

Only those expenses that are necessary for the implementation of the event are eligible for funding. Eligible expenses are expenses that are incurred, or have been incurred, directly in connection with the implementation of the event and are paid to third parties. Expenses incurred through the conclusion of a contract with an event agency for the purpose of designing, organising and implementing an event are not considered eligible expenses.

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Eligible expenses include the following:

- transfers (e.g. bus shuttles) and local public transport tickets;
- safety and hygiene measures;
- hospitality costs (catering);
- on-site registration / hostess services;
- rental charges / leases for technology, equipment, etc;
- artist fees;
- accommodation costs.

7.2 Funding amount

Funding takes the form of non-repayable grants. The funding amount corresponds to the actual expenses paid out by the event organiser but may not exceed the funding amount specified, which is determined on the basis of the application documents submitted. The application documents are a binding part of the funding agreement under private law.

The maximum funding amount to be provided depends on the number of room nights generated by the event participants. In addition to basic funding, the funding amount may be increased if one of the additional criteria listed under 6.3 is met.

Room nights	Maximum amount of basic funding in EUR	Additional funding in EUR	Maximum amount of total funding in EUR
100 to 249	3,500	875	4,375
250 to 499	6,750	1,875	8,625
500 to 999	12,000	3,750	15,750
1,000 to 1,999	21,000	7,500	28,500
2,000 to 2,999	30,000	12,500	42,500
3,000 to 4,999	36,000	20,000	56,000
5,000 to 7,499	37,500	31,250	68,750
7,500 to 12,499	40,000	50,000	90,000
12,500 or more	43,750	56,250	100,000

7.3 Limitation of funding amount

Should the sum of eligible expenses be exceeded by the sum of any further funds provided by third-party donors and the funding provided by the HCB, the funding provided by the HCB will be reduced by the amount exceeding the eligible expenses.

8. Application

Application for funding must be submitted online to the Hamburg Convention Bureau (HCB) at www.hamburg-convention.com/congress-fund.

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8.1 Documents and information to be submitted

The following information and documents must be submitted with the application or completed in full using the online application form:

- a) title, date and duration of the event;
- b) binding declaration confirming that the event location has not yet been decided in favour of Hamburg;
- c) declaration of commitment regarding sustainability (as per HCB guidelines);
- d) scheduled number of participants to be on-site in Hamburg;
- e) estimated share of participants from abroad; on the basis of previously held events, if applicable;
- f) scheduled number of total overnight stays;
- g) complete financing plan including all income and expenses (gross) related to the event, showing the eligible costs as total values (cf. template for application documents);
- h) legally binding, signed declaration on VAT deduction entitlement;
- i) type of event and business sector;
- j) company address, contact details, VAT identification number, legal form, bank details;
- k) in the case of applications submitted by another entity: relevant powers of attorney / supporting documents;
- l) De-minimis declaration, i.e. a document in which the event organiser discloses the amount of all De-minimis subsidies applied for or granted in Germany in the current and the preceding two fiscal years and confirms this on behalf of the company. In the absence of a De-minimis declaration, the applicant must submit a confirmation stating that the De-minimis rule does not apply for reasons to be explained in the confirmation;
- m) applicant's consent to this Policy as well as consent to the processing of personal data;
- n) should the event fulfil additional criteria pursuant to Section 6, the applicant is required to provide relevant details and include supporting documentation;
- o) if the additional funding criteria are not met, the funds shall be recovered.

8.2 Deadline for applications

Application documents must be submitted at least 3 weeks prior to the start of the event. Applications that are submitted at a later stage as well as incomplete applications (see 8.1) will not be considered.

9. Procedure for concluding a funding contract

9.1 Formal review as well as basis for funding contract

Following the submission of the information and documents outlined under Section 8, the HCB shall draw up a private-law contract that specifies the amount of eligible expenditure and forms the basis for the contract between the HCB and the applicant. This Policy shall become part of such a private-law contract.

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9.2 Actual funding amount

The final funding amount to be paid depends on the actual number of room nights generated. The calculations are based on the proof of the number of participants, incl. statistics on the participants' country of origin. Participants resident in Hamburg are excluded from the calculations. In the case of hybrid events, only the participants who are physically present at the event shall be counted. If the actual number of room nights is lower than the number submitted as part of the application or if the criteria for applied additional funding are not met, the funding amount will be updated accordingly by means of an amendment agreement. This shall not affect the general eligibility of the event.

The proof to be submitted are lists on the participants from, for example, digital registration systems that can be used to check people's presence. A simple registration list is not sufficient. A standard form for proving the presence of participants is available for download from the HCB website.

10. Statement of expenditure / statement of account

The following documents must be submitted for the final proof of funding:

- event programme;
- invoice for the event location;
- documentation of the actual number of participants including country statistics of the participants
- invoice from the event organiser detailing the chargeable expenses incurred (see 7.1) for the event, at least to the amount of the funding sum.

The documents required for the statement of account must be submitted no later than 3 months after the end of the funded event.

11. Reference to funding body

Funding recipients are obliged to make reference to the funding of the event by the HCB in the following form.

- Naming the HCB as the funding body**
Funding recipients are obliged to make reference to the funding of the event by the HCB in their publications and promotional activities (websites, brochures, flyers, and so on). When designing posters, a funding reference must be included together with the general Hamburg logo. The funding reference can be "Funded by the Hamburg Convention Bureau".
- Printing the logo in the programme**
The HCB logo must be clearly and visibly printed in the event's official programme.
- Placement of promotional materials**
HCB promotional materials must be clearly and visibly positioned during the event. This will be randomly checked by the HCB during the event. The HCB logo can be downloaded here: [Hamburg Marketing Brand Portal](#)
- Inviting a representative from the HCB**
Based on the relevance and suitability of the event's theme, an HCB representative must be invited to the event so that they may, where required, make a welcoming speech.

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The funding recipient must retain any books, receipts and all other business documents for the duration of six years, unless a longer retention period is stipulated under tax law or other regulations. The retention period shall begin at the end of the calendar year in which the application for funding is submitted. For the purpose of data retention, revision-safe, digital archiving media may also be used.

12. Validity

This Policy will come into force on the day following its publication and shall be valid until 31 December 2026.

Questions and advice

The team of the Hamburg Convention Bureau will be happy to answer any questions you may have and provide you with advice regarding the funding of events by the HCB.

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