

**FRA - Guidelines**

# **FRA – Staff Learning & Development Guidelines**

Human Resources & Planning

1/1/2012



**FRA**

EUROPEAN UNION AGENCY FOR FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS



## Table of Contents

<b>1. Introduction .....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>2. Access to staff learning and development activities .....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>3. Resources for staff learning and development activities .....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>4. Roles and responsibilities .....</b>	<b>7</b>
4.1. Director .....	7
4.2. Administration .....	7
4.3. Human Resources & Planning .....	7
4.4. Individual staff member .....	9
4.5. Head of Department .....	9
4.6. Staff Committee.....	10
<b>5. Priorities for staff learning and development.....</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>6. Staff learning and development programme .....</b>	<b>11</b>
6.1. In-house learning and development activities .....	11
6.1.1. <i>On-the-job learning</i> .....	11
6.1.2. <i>Induction training</i> .....	11
6.1.3. <i>General in-house training</i> .....	12
6.1.4. <i>In-house language training</i> .....	12
6.1.5. <i>Other (informal) in-house learning activities</i> .....	14
6.2. External learning and development activities.....	15
6.2.1. <i>Training courses offered by EC DG HR B3, DG BUDG, DG DIGIT, EAS</i> .....	16
6.2.2. <i>Training courses offered by other external providers</i> .....	16
6.2.3. <i>Participation in expert meetings, seminars, and conferences</i> .....	16
6.2.4. <i>Away days and team building events</i> .....	17
6.2.5. <i>External language training</i> .....	17
6.3. Self-paced learning .....	18
6.3.1. <i>Distance and e-learning</i> .....	18
6.3.2. <i>Learning &amp; development library</i> .....	18
6.4. Study support scheme .....	19
<b>7. Professional development and career .....</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>8. Learning and development application process .....</b>	<b>20</b>
8.1. Informal learning and development activities .....	20

8.2.	Formal learning and development activities .....	20
8.3.	Failure to attend a course after enrolment .....	23
8.4.	Pre-financing of learning/training activities by staff members .....	23
9.	Evaluation and impact assessment .....	24
10.	Equal Opportunities and Diversity .....	24
Annexes.....		25
	Annex 1 - FRA Guidelines for Away Days and Team Building Events .....	26
	Annex 2 – Training needs analysis .....	32
	Annex 3 – Director’s decision 2012/01.....	33
	Annex 4 – Learning evaluation and feedback forms .....	35

## **1. Introduction**

The present Staff Learning & Development Guidelines are based on the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights' (FRA) Staff Learning & Development Policy in force since 1 January 2012. The guidelines give concrete and detailed information on all matters related to staff learning and development at the FRA. This current version is dated 1 January 2012.

How can an organisation ensure that it can keep pace with development and change? Since it is people who have the capacity to learn and develop, the best way of adapting to change is to continuously seek to raise the in-house skills set and knowledge and in this way also the learning capacity of staff. The most effective way to develop people is to enable learning and personal development. Staff learning and development is an on-going process and an investment in people. In return, performance, efficiency, well being and motivation are improved, which should result in a better achievement of the Agency's goals and objectives. Evaluation and impact assessment are important parts of the process.

The FRA aims at facilitating learning. Staff learning and development is an integral part of the Agency's Human Resources Policy and shall serve both the Agency's as well as the individual interests and needs. This implies that learning and development is a shared responsibility. All actors involved have to act responsibly, meaning that staff has to communicate shortcoming in skills set and show readiness to learn by actively looking for ways of doing so, e.g. identification of training needs, readiness to invest both professional and possibly also private time (e.g. reading, searching the internet, e-learning, etc.). The Head of Department on the one hand has to motivate her/his staff to learn and help identifying training needs and on the other hand, she/he also has to bear in mind the limits of the Agency's resources (time, money, capacity, etc.). The Human Resources & Planning (HRP) department's role is to support both staff and managers in these functions, organise in-house

learning/training activities and make available external learning/training activities where appropriate.

The FRA's Staff Learning & Development Policy and Guidelines are designed to realise the following objectives within the scope of making full and best use of the Agency's potential:

- (a) Maintain and further develop a highly knowledgeable and skilled workforce;
- (b) Maintain and further develop a workforce with a high learning capacity and readiness to life-long learning, constant improvement of skills, as well as transfer of knowledge and skills to others;
- (c) Maintain and further develop a workforce whose attitudes reflect and promote the Agency's core values of dignity, equality, solidarity, justice, rights and freedoms as well as general values such as professionalism and service excellence;
- (d) Contribute to keeping a highly motivated workforce.

## **2. Access to staff learning and development activities**

Learning and development is both a right and a duty of all FRA staff members, i.e. temporary agents, contract agents, and seconded national experts. However, the right for learning and development for staff members on probation is limited to that, which is required, i.e. on-the-job learning, induction training, possibly German language training in case this is needed for better integration into the host country, and any other learning/training activity as identified by both the staff member and her/his Head of Department as being necessary in the interest of the service.

Subject to approval by both the Head of Department and the HRP department, interns and interim agents may participate in in-house learning activities under the conditions that (1) free places are available at (2) no additional cost and that (3) the learning activity is directly linked to the intern's or interim agent's tasks at the FRA.

The HRP department – in consultation of the Director and/or the Heads of Department – may identify compulsory general learning activities that staff members, interim agents, and interns (and possibly also others) working at the FRA are asked to follow, e.g. induction training, including health and safety at work, and awareness raising session of the prevention of harassment.

## **3. Resources for staff learning and development activities**

The human, financial, and time resources available for staff learning and development depend on the overall staff numbers of the FRA, the overall available budget, as well as the identified training needs and priorities. Thus, they are calculated by the HRP department in cooperation with the Director and the Heads of Department at the latest at the beginning of every year by means of an annual Strategic Learning & Development Framework.

Experience from former years is an additional basis for the determination of the necessary resources. In 2011, the FRA has devoted an average of 10 learning and development days to the staff and a budget of an average of 3,000 EUR per staff member.

#### **4. Roles and responsibilities**

Staff learning and development is a shared responsibility between all actors involved, i.e. the individual staff member, the Head of Department, the HRP and the Administration Departments, and the Director.

##### **4.1. Director**

The Director – as the FRA's Authorising and Appointing Authority – is responsible for the overall orientation of the Agency's Human Resources Policy, incl. the staff learning and development policy, as well as its formal adoption.

##### **4.2. Administration**

The Administration department is responsible for the support of in-house staff learning and development activities through the necessary facilities (e.g. training rooms incl. room reservation tools, training room equipment, incl. IT equipment, training room stationary, etc.) as well as ICT support (e.g. development of electronic tools for the administration of staff learning activities, maintenance of FRA Intranet, etc).

##### **4.3. Human Resources & Planning**

The HRP department is overall responsible for the realisation and organisation of staff learning and development mechanisms through various activities as follows:

- (a) It drafts all relevant staff learning and development policies, rules, guidelines, forms etc.;
- (b) It makes available the necessary human resources for the management and organisation of central staff learning and development activities (i.e. at least one person acting as the training co-ordinator);
- (c) It manages the available budget appropriations for professional learning and development of staff;
- (d) Depending on the budget appropriations available for professional learning and development, it sets annual average learning/training days and learning/training expenditure targets per staff member;
- (e) Ensure where possible overall coherence and respect by all staff of the staff learning and development policies, rules, guidelines, etc;
- (f) Identify and communicate (possibly annually) to all staff the FRA's strategic learning and development needs;
- (g) Communicate recommendations and instructions to all staff regarding the realisation of learning and development of the Agency. This can include for example the identification of learning profiles, compulsory training and good practice learning methods;
- (h) Give advice and consultancy to the Director and the Head of Departments in all matters related to staff learning and development, e.g. identification of learning needs and relevant activities;
- (i) Organise high quality in-house learning and development activities;
- (j) Provide access to high quality external learning and development activities where possible;
- (k) Identify needs for relevant (electronic) tools that help to manage and administer staff learning and development activities, assist in developing them where possible and take care of their implementation and communication to all relevant actors;
- (l) Identify needs for compulsory staff learning activities (e.g. induction training) for all and/or specific posts and functions as well as possible career moves;



- (m) Design and organise the evaluation of staff learning activities;
- (n) Assess the impact of staff learning activities;
- (o) Report regularly to the Director and the Heads of Department on development and results of staff learning and development at the Agency.

#### 4.4. Individual staff member

The individual staff member is asked to play an active role in identifying and communicating her/his learning and development needs to her/his Head of Department, as well as the HRP department. This is done at least once a year as part of the establishment of a Performance Appraisal Report, which includes a Training and Development Plan (list of identified training needs for the year in order of priority). Once a training need has been identified and agreed upon together by the individual staff member and the Head of Department, this need shall be communicated by the staff member as a formal application to the HRP department. Once approved by all relevant actors, the individual staff members shall make all practical arrangements (e.g. mission request for external learning/training activities) to allow her/his participation in the identified learning activity. The staff member shall participate timely, openly and actively. Further duties are to report back from the learning activity to the Head of Department and the HRP department by filling out fully all necessary compulsory evaluation forms. All learning shall be applied back at the workplace as far as useful and possible. Transfer of knowledge to other colleagues is desirable.

#### 4.5. Head of Department

The Head of Department shall within her/his area of responsibility:

- (a) Ensure effective implementation of the FRA's Staff Learning & Development Policy and related identified strategic learning and development needs;
- (b) Support the HRP department in the identification of the strategic learning and development needs of the Agency and its departments;

- (c) Once a year as part of the establishment of Performance Appraisal Report for every staff member, identify together with their staff the learning and development needs and communicate these to the Human Resources & Planning Department;
- (d) Ensure that action is taken by the individual staff member to meet the identified learning and developing needs and that all practical arrangements are taken such as to reserve time for individual staff members to participate in learning activities (e.g. organise a back-up during absence);
- (e) Contribute to the staff members' evaluation of learning activities with their own evaluation of the respective learning, results, and impact for the Agency;
- (f) Organise informal and on-the-job learning activities, such as coaching and mentoring for newcomers, and transfer of knowledge and skills between colleagues in her/his department.

#### 4.6. Staff Committee

The Staff Committee is invited to analyse, evaluate, comment and communicate to the relevant internal actors, where they consider relevant in order to observe the application of equal opportunities and diversity as well as other policies and rules in the interest of the staff in relation to staff learning and development within the Agency.

### 5. Priorities for staff learning and development

Where limited resources do not allow all identified learning and development needs to be met within a given timeframe, priorities shall be assigned as follows:

- (a) First priority shall be given to meeting needs, which are in the overall strategic interest of the Agency (see annual FRA Strategic Learning & Development Framework);
- (b) Second priority shall be given to meeting needs, which are primarily in the interest of the Agency's departments;

- (c) Third priority shall be given to meeting needs, which are primarily stemming from personal interests in the wider organisational context; however, they must always also be in the shared interest of the Agency.

## **6. Staff learning and development programme**

The FRA offers the following learning and development activities to its staff.

### **6.1. In-house learning and development activities**

#### **6.1.1. *On-the-job learning***

On-the-job learning is provided to newcomers to familiarise them with the Agency's work and their tasks in the department, but also to other staff if necessary as a consequence of restructuring and task redistribution in order to update their skills and build new competencies. The Head of Departments are responsible for on-the-job learning for all staff under their supervision. Internships are considered as on-the-job learning.

#### **6.1.2. *Induction training***

Induction training at the FRA is organised at least once a year with a view to familiarise new entrants with the Agency's work, departments, and other important specificities. The participation in induction training is compulsory for all newcomers at the FRA, i.e. staff members as well as interim agents and interns, etc. It is organised in-house by in-house experts in certain areas. The different modules are as follows (not exclusive): the FRA mandate, introduction of the Confidential Counsellors, introduction of the departments, planning, finance and procurement, health and safety at work, ICTF, human resources issues such as rights and obligations, teleworking, flexitime, missions, learning and development, career development, etc. The overall

organisation is in the hands of the HRP department; however, the experts on the different modules organise their sessions and presentations themselves.

#### *6.1.3. General in-house training*

The HRP department will offer to staff at the latest at the beginning of every year a detailed list and schedule of in-house training courses and learning activities (for the year and updated during the year) mainly drawing on the priority areas identified in the annual Strategic Learning & Development Framework. In-house learning activities will aim for a tailor-made approach. Provider of in-house training can be any provider; however providers with who the FRA has an existing service level agreement (e.g. EC DG HR incl. DG BUDG, the European Administrative School EAS), framework contract, or memorandum of understanding (e.g. EC DG DIGIT) will be favoured.

#### *6.1.4. In-house language training*

As in former years, the FRA continues to offer to staff members (through established framework contracts) German, English, French, Spanish and Italian language courses at all CEF levels taking place at the FRA premises.

The average annual target for language learning is a maximum of 50% of the overall average annual target for learning as determined in the annual Strategic Learning & Development Framework. Language training can be taken in form of standard or tailor-made (e.g. specific language such as research terminology, expatriates integration courses, etc.) training courses as well as intensive language courses.

The individual language training needs are to be identified by the staff member together with the respective Head of Department who approves or rejects in consideration of the interest of the service.

German language training may be required by expatriate non-German speaking staff members, given that German is the language spoken in the host country.

Since language training is not a priority learning activity for the FRA, staff members are asked to show their personal commitment by avoiding to follow language training courses during core working hours (i.e. Mo-Th 09:30 – 13:00 and 14:30 – 16:00, Fr 09:30 – 13:00 and 14:00 – 15:00).

Given the limited number of meeting rooms in-house, staff members with an office of their own shall have language training in their office. Staff members who share their office with others, shall reserve room 1.101 for their language training course whenever available. The room can be reserved through the room booking tool on intraFRA and is equipped with two PC workstations (incl. loudspeakers and internet access), a flipchart, two magnetic whiteboards, and a moderation case. In case that room 1.101 is not available, another meeting room may be reserved.

Given that German is the language spoken in the host country, language training for staff members' partners/spouses may be approved directly by the HRP department further to a specific request made by a staff member and depending on the available budget appropriations for this purpose. A specific application form needs to be used for this purpose. This and further details are determined in the Director's decision 2012/01 as annexed to these guidelines (see annex 3).

As a general rule, participants in in-house language training shall be grouped in groups of 2-4 people depending on their common CEF level in the trained language. Exceptions from this rule, i.e. individual language courses, are only possible under the following conditions:

- a) The staff member is the only participant on a certain CEF level in the trained language;
- b) The staff member is the only participant who was approved a language training course tailor-made to a specific need (e.g. research terminology, etc.);
- c) The staff member is the only participant who was approved an intensive language course in the trained language (intensive courses are understood as courses that go over a short period of time, i.e. 1-6 weeks);
- d) The staff member has professional obligations during the period of time over which she/he was approved language training, which prevent her/him from fixing regular course lessons (e.g. she/he is frequently on mission or alike). Such an exception has to be duly justified by the staff member in writing and must be confirmed by the respective Head of Department. On this basis, the Head of Human Resources & Planning will decide on whether or not to approve the request for an individual course.

With regard to German language training for staff members' partners/spouses, the same general rule as above-mentioned applies; however, exceptions from this rule are only accepted under condition a).

#### 6.1.5. *Other (informal) in-house learning activities*

(a) "INFORM ME" learning sessions are a FRA knowledge development tool since 2009. The Communication & Awareness Raising department is in charge of organising monthly informal meetings for all FRA staff in order to inform colleagues about on-going FRA projects, ideally shortly before the report launch. INFORM ME sessions can be held by any project manager. The idea of INFORM ME is to trigger debate, to inform and to support communication and mutual learning.

- (b) *"ResT & Test"* learning sessions exist at the FRA since 2010. They are a semi-regular sit-in of people in the two Research departments (plus other interested people in the house, especially staff in the Communication & Awareness Raising department) where issues of substance are discussed in an informal, fruitful and informative way. These REsearchTalks provide staff with the possibility to test their thoughts, doubts and visions with their colleagues. These sessions are to take place over lunch break on Fridays.
- (c) In 2010/11, several internal research experts designed and held *"Fundamental Rights Crash Courses"* for all staff. Depending on the availability of research experts, these courses could be repeated or new courses be designed. Fundamental Rights Crash Courses are communicated by the HRP department in the in-house learning & development schedule.
- (d) *"Communities of practice"* at the FRA exist since 2011. They are groups of people who are professionally active in a given domain and desire to improve their practice through regular interaction. It is a place where ideas and practices can be shared, peer learning and consulting takes place, and professional practice and problem solving in a given domain can improve. Interactions within a community of practice take the form of face-to-face meetings, using participatory techniques, or online exchanges. Any FRA staff member can call a community of practice at any time.

Staff in all FRA departments is encouraged to create further internal informal learning activities for all staff and/or specific target groups.

## 6.2. External learning and development activities

With regard to the individual training needs as identified in the annual Performance Appraisal Report, on individual request and approved by the Head of Department, when fully justified and where resources allow, learning/training

activities offered by external providers may be approved by the HRP department. These training courses are linked with a mission request, subject to approval by the Head of Department.

#### *6.2.1. Training courses offered by EC DG HR B3, DG BUDG, DG DIGIT, EAS*

The FRA has signed service level agreements (or memoranda of understanding) with several European Commission DGs, i.e. DG HR B3 (incl. DG BUDG), DG DIGIT, and the European Administrative School (EAS). It gives a choice on general and IT training organised by the European Commission in Brussels and Luxembourg. Course catalogues are available on the Learning & Development site on the FRA Intranet.

#### *6.2.2. Training courses offered by other external providers*

If a training can neither be provided in-house (e.g. due to limited demand) nor through the existing service level agreements (or memoranda of understanding) with DG HR B3, DG BUDG, DG DIGIT, and the EAS nor through existing framework contracts with some providers, other providers may be contracted. The requesting staff member is asked to participate actively in the search by the HRP department for an adequate provider. The HRP department will take care of the necessary procurement and contracting (if necessary with the help of the Administration department).

#### *6.2.3. Participation in expert meetings, seminars, and conferences*

Often, staff members are invited to expert meetings, seminars, and conferences with a certain role, e.g. as a speaker. In this case, the FRA's mission guidelines have to be applied. Staff members may also wish to participate in such expert meetings as a learning exercise. In this case, the



staff member has to apply for it as a learning activity. The respective duration of the participation will be counted as learning days, and in case a participation fee is charged by the organiser, this cost is to be paid from the learning and development budget (i.e. BL 1420).

#### *6.2.4. Away days and team building events*

As in former years, the FRA will continue to support away days and team building exercises organised by staff. The purpose of this type of learning activity is to exchange knowledge, find solutions, improve coordination and working methods, strategic planning of activities, get to know each other better, and to enhance team work. The away days and/or team building exercises have to be organised by the respective department or team which they target, whereas the financial support comes from the learning and development budget, i.e. BL 1420. The support per staff member is limited to 2 days and 250 EUR per year. Therefore, the HRP department has to be informed and asked for former approval, and invited staff members have to introduce a training application. More detailed rules are annexed to these guidelines (see annex 1).

#### *6.2.5. External language training*

If the in-house offer for language training does not suit a staff member's needs (e.g. the required language is not covered by framework contracts or an intensive language course in the respective country is needed), she/he may apply for an external language training course. This request is subject to approval by the Head of Department and the Head of Human Resources & Planning in consideration of the interest of the service.

The individual staff member will have to pre-finance the granted external language training and will receive reimbursement of a respective course

further to the provision to the HRP department of a certificate proving attendance and achievement in the course and the proof of payment (original invoice and payment receipt).

### 6.3. Self-paced learning

The FRA encourages its staff to undertake self-paced learning activities.

#### 6.3.1. *Distance and e-learning*

E-learning modules are offered through the DG HR B3 training catalogue (general training courses) and the Microsoft catalogue (IT training courses), both available on the Learning & Development site of the FRA Intranet. Other distance and e-learning possibilities (e.g. distance and e-learning Human Rights courses by HREA – Human Rights Education Associates) may be approved by the HRP department upon individual request. Distance and e-learning is meant to support staff when undertaking more flexible and efficient self-paced learning activities. These courses have to be applied for by staff in the usual way, i.e. via the online training application tool.

#### 6.3.2. *Learning & development library*

The FRA library as well as the learning & development library provide an alternative solution for staff learning and development by offering literature and DVDs for self-training purposes. This offer is continuously increased. Please address the HRP department for information about books, DVDs and other devices available.

#### 6.4. Study support scheme

Upon yearly renewed request by an individual staff member by a note to the Director and using a pre-defined routing slip available on the Intranet, and only if the studies for which financial support is requested meet the following conditions:

1. found to be the interest of the service by the respective Head of Department;
2. provided the approval by the HRP department (after check if sufficient budgetary appropriations are available and if the individual learning and development days account still allows);
3. only if the studies aim at providing an officially recognised diploma, graduate or post graduate title,

the Director may decide to grant financial support and learning days to studies for a maximum of 50% of the total cost and in any case limited to an annual maximum ceiling of 50% of the overall annual financial and learning days target per staff member. No support will be made regarding the possible respective travel and/or accommodation to attend courses or exams.

The individual staff member will have to pre-finance the granted studies and will receive reimbursement of a respective course further to the provision to the HRP department of a certificate proving attendance and achievement in a respective study course and the proof of payment (original invoice and payment receipt).

### 7. Professional development and career

Continuous professional development is necessary to ensure that staff members keep up-to-date with the latest developments and techniques in their professional areas and activities. Learning will enable such development. Professional development can result in career advancement. The FRA has a specific policy in place regarding career advancement. The FRA's Staff Learning & Development Policy is linked to career development and advancement, to its end that the Performance

Appraisal Report contains a section on training (i.e. Training and Development Plan); however neither the policy nor the present guidelines interfere with the related specific policy and rules.

## **8. Learning and development application process**

### **8.1. Informal learning and development activities**

Regarding informal (at no cost) learning and development activities, the approval by the Head of Department has to be sought by the staff member concerned; however, the formal training application process does not apply in this case.

### **8.2. Formal learning and development activities**

Regarding formal learning and development activities, the following training application and evaluation procedure must be respected:

- (a) The individual staff member and her/his Head of Department agree on a Learning and Development Plan for the coming year as part of the Performance Appraisal Report. The Learning and Development Plan has to be in conformity with the staff members function (tasks and activities in the department) and potential, as well as with the FRA's overall activities, goals and objectives.
- (b) Once the Performance Appraisal Report is agreed and signed, the staff member – without further delay - must provide the HRP department with her/his Performance Appraisal Report as well as a copy of the Learning and Development Plan to the HRP training coordinator.
- (c) The individual staff member is responsible for her/his training application(s) with respect to the learning/training activities identified in her/his Performance Appraisal Report. The staff member is also responsible for the search for and identification of relevant specific learning activities or training

course. Here the HRP training coordinator can be asked to assist where needed. The training application is to be done online with the help of the online training application tool "TrainMa" at least one month prior to the requested learning/training activity (in case that the given learning/training activity is not covered by an existing service level agreement or framework contract but involves the organisation of a negotiated procurement and contract procedure, this period is extended to three months prior to the request). Here the staff member must fill in all compulsory fields. When necessary, relevant supporting documents have to be attached, e.g. course title and description including provider contact details, cost, etc. In case that the training requested is not in line with the Performance Appraisal Report, the staff member has to give a justification why this training is still necessary. When the staff member submits the training application, it is next delivered to her/his Head of Department for approval.

- (d) The Head of Department can agree or reject a staff member's training application in line with the discussions in the Performance Appraisal Report – if possible within 7 calendar days (delays can occur if a Head of Departments is on leave or mission); however when she/he rejects an application, a reason has to be given to the staff member in TrainMa. If the training application is not in line with the Performance Appraisal Report, the Head of Department has to take into consideration the justification given by the staff member. The staff member will be informed by TrainMa of the rejection of approval of her/his training application. When the Head of Department approves a training application, it is next delivered to the HRP training coordinator for the budgetary and learning and development days check.
- (e) The HRP training coordinator may request from the staff member and/or Head of Department a detailed training needs analysis (annex 2) at any time regarding any submitted training application. The training coordinator checks the availability of budget (overall availability of funds on BL 1420 and the annual average learning and development budget per staff member as defined in the annual Strategic Learning & Development Framework) and

learning and development days of the staff member as well as the conformity with staff member's Performance Appraisal Report. Subsequently, the training coordinator forwards the training application to the Head of Human Resources & Planning with her/his findings.

- (f) The Head of Human Resources & Planning on the basis of the findings by the training coordinator approves or rejects the training application. In case of rejection, the Head of Human Resources & Planning has to give a reason in TrainMa. In both cases, the staff member will be informed by TrainMa.
- (g) When the staff member receives notification by TrainMa about the approval of a training application by the Head of Human Resources & Planning, the staff member shall participate in the learning/training activity and no hindrance shall be placed in her/his way to this end. This implies that the absence from the work place needs to be well planned, i.e. a back-up during the absence has to be nominated where required. In case that the staff member will be unable to attend the learning/training activity, please refer to point 8.3.
- (h) If the learning/training activity requires travel and accommodation, the staff member is responsible to submit a mission request in line with the FRA's mission guide.
- (i) After completion of the learning/training activity, the staff member must provide the HRP training coordinator with a certificate of attendance if available. If such certificate is not issued by the provider, the staff member must inform the HRP training coordinator by e-mail of the successful completion of the learning/training activity.
- (j) Further to the completion of a learning/training activity, the staff member will receive an automatic evaluation form by TrainMa after one day, after three months and after six months. The staff member is obliged to fill in these evaluation forms. In case of non-completion of evaluation forms, the staff member will be reminded hereof by TrainMa on a regular basis until the form(s) is (are) completed. If a staff member fails to complete a form within

a month, the HRP department may decide to reject any further training application by the same staff member.

- (k) The second and third evaluation form – once filled in – will be forwarded to the Head of Department for her/his comments.
- (l) TrainMa will automatically register a completed learning/training activity in the online Training Passport of a staff member. The Training Passport will be accessible only and treated in confidence by all related actors, i.e. the staff member, the Head of Department, the HRP training coordinator (and staff assisting in training matters), and the Head of HRP.

### 8.3. Failure to attend a course after enrolment

Once a staff member has received final approval of a training application, attendance to the course is mandatory. In case a staff member – after enrolment – is unable to attend, the Head of Department as well as the HRP department must be informed immediately. Failure to attend a course unjustified and/or without immediate information of the Head of Department and the HRP department may result in reimbursement by the staff member of the full course fee to the FRA and any other related cost occurred to the FRA (e.g. flight cost in case of a related mission).

### 8.4. Pre-financing of learning/training activities by staff members

Pre-financing of a learning/training activity by a staff member can be agreed between the staff member and the HRP department if this helps for example to speed up the registration process to be concluded by a given deadline. In case a learning/training activity is pre-financed by a staff member, this has to be noted in the training application. After approval of the training application, the staff member will have to register herself/himself and pay the course fee in full in due course. After completion of the course and upon receipt of the certificate of

attendance, the original invoice, and the payment receipt, HRP will reimburse the cost of the learning/training activity to the staff member.

## **9. Evaluation and impact assessment**

The impact assessment of learning/training activities is key to account for the investment of resources in staff training. To this end, the following elements of impact assessment of learning/training activities at the FRA were developed: The ex-post evaluation process was upgraded to 4 levels, i.e. level 1 and 2 immediate reactions and learning evaluation, level 3 behaviour evaluation, level 4 results evaluation (see learning evaluation and feedback forms – annex 4). Level 1 asks the application if the learning/training objectives have been met. Level 3 and 4 evaluations will be automatically forwarded to the Head of Department for her/his review. The achievement of the training objective(s) is considered to be the most important performance indicator. For this reason, it is compulsory for the applicant to define learning/training objectives when applying for a learning/training activity. The evaluation of her/his learning/training activities by a staff member is also compulsory. If a staff member fails to complete a form within a month, the HRP department may decide to reject any further training application by the same staff member. All completed and submitted online evaluation forms will be accessible only and treated in confidence by all related actors, i.e. the staff member, the Head of Department, the HRP training coordinator (and possibly other HRP staff but only when assisting in training matters), and the Head of HRP.

## **10. Equal Opportunities and Diversity**

The present Staff Learning & Development Guidelines are in line with the FRA's Equal Opportunities and Diversity Policy. In all measures undertaken by the FRA regarding the learning and development of staff, the Agency aims at providing equal opportunities (incl. equal opportunities between women and men, for persons with disabilities, as well as respect for diversity of people), equal treatment and access



as well as fairness and transparency in the process. Care should be taken in the provision of all learning/training activities that account is taken of the work/home life balance. Timing of learning/training activities should generally take place within the normal working hours of the Agency. Staff on parental leave or part-time arrangements should have access to learning and development activities, and timing should be arranged to their needs where possible.

## **Annexes**

- 1) Guidelines for away days;
- 2) Training needs analysis;
- 3) Director's decision on granting German language training to FRA staff members' partners/spouses;
- 4) Learning evaluation and feedback forms.

## Annex 1 - FRA Guidelines for Away Days and Team Building Events

*The purpose of this paper is to give detailed advice for the organisation of away days and team building events.*

### 1. Purpose

The overall purpose of away days and team building events is to support organisational development and to increase unity, cohesion and commitment among staff.



Here a short outline of the two types of events:

- 1) **Away days:** External activities (on purpose off-site from the usual working environment) that focus on discussion on strategic issues, developing and exchange of knowledge, skills or ideas, on improving coordination and working methods or on planning activities, work programme and others. An away day is considered as a way of getting staff together and to get to know each other better outside the daily workplace. The purpose of an away day is to allow the FRA staff to focus on the subjects being discussed without being distracted by everyday work demands. In its simplest form, an away day could take the form of a seminar or workshop leading to the development of policies and strategies or to a discussion of organisational issues. In other

situations, an away day can entail elements of team building, clarification and negotiation of scopes, goals, roles and working methods, as well as improvement of the relational dynamics.

- 2) **Team building events:** In-house or external activities in which the focus is on the interaction among the members of a group with the aim of enhancing its ability to work together effectively and improve team performance. Team building is an important factor in any environment, its focus is to specialise in bringing out the best in a team to ensure self-development, positive communication, leadership skills and the ability to work closely together as a team to solve problems.

## 2. Target groups and participation

Away days and team building events are available for the following target groups:

- FRA all - proposed by the Director and/or HRP Department;
- Management Team - proposed by the Director and/or HRP Department;
- Departments - proposed by the Head of Department;
- Inter-departmental project teams - proposed by the Project Manager.

All members of the target group shall be included in such events. Where consultants are part of the team, their participation may need to be financed either from BL 1420 – professional training of staff or from a respective project budget.

Unless duly justified and approved, away days and team-building events may be organised once a year per target group.

As a general rule, participation in the programme outside working hours should be voluntary.

### **3. Costs**

The costs of these events for FRA staff will be covered from Title I - BL 1420 (professional training of staff). The cost could comprise the following: seminar room rent, travel and accommodation, external facilitation, lunches, dinners, etc. As a general rule, the total costs should not exceed 250. - EUR per participant unless duly justified and approved. If the away day(s) or team building event takes place out of the place of employment - Vienna, one mission application for the whole target group could be requested, whereby no daily subsistence allowance will be granted. If the team building event takes place at the FRA premises, it is considered as an event at no costs.

### **4. Overnight stay**

As a general rule away days and team building events should not last more than two days with a full programme. An overnight stay with accommodation is only accepted in duly justified cases - e.g. the scheduled programme continues the next day.

### **5. Planning and preparation**

Whatever the purpose and the format of the event, a concrete programme, including desired results shall be prepared. In the case of away days, at least half of the programme should be directly related to work - e.g. related to the planning of activities, development of working methods, strategies, organisational changes issues, etc. A proposal for an away day or team building event must be submitted to the HRP department (see Annex I).

Good preparation is important for the success of away days and team building events, and the staff member proposing the event should plan at least 6-8 weeks ahead, especially if an external facilitator is required. All requests for away days and team building events need to be approved by the Head of Department concerned

before any resources from the BL 1420 can be committed. The detailed programme must be enclosed to the proposal. The HRP training coordinator can be asked to assist in the planning and operational initiation of the event.

## **6. Steps for the organisation of away days and team building events**

- 6.1 Discuss first within your department/team and define the purpose, focus, date, needs, and number of participants, etc. Please inform the HRP training coordinator as early as possible about your intention to organise such event. No contact should be taken neither with external facilitators nor the venue without prior confirmation about budget availability from the HRP training coordinator.
- 6.2 The HRP training coordinator checks the budget availability.
- 6.3 The responsible person from the department fills in the proposal (see annex 1) and submits it to the HRP training coordinator, including a list of participants.
- 6.4 If requested, the HRP training coordinator can assist in identifying external venues and external facilitators.
- 6.5 The responsible person from the department should draft a programme for the event.
- 6.6 The HRP training coordinator can be asked to assist in the planning and operational initiation of the event, i.e. request for written financial proposal from the venue and/or external facilitator, creation of purchase order and commitment, etc.

## **7. Follow-up and evaluation**

All departments and teams interested in organising an away day or team building event are reminded that they should have a clear idea of the objectives to meet and the output and outcome of the event, as well as the follow up and evaluation (i.e. how the impact of the event will be measured. Both away days and team building

events are most useful parts of a process that starts with its preparation and should be followed by further action.

**Annex - PROPOSAL FOR AWAY DAY / TEAM BUILDING EVENT**

Overall purpose	
Specific aims	
Expected outcome	
Target audience	
Size of the group of participants	
Venue	
Date of the event	
Length of the event	
Logistics needed	
Working methods to be applied	
Ext. facilitator(s) required	
Lunch and/or Dinner included	
Plan for follow-up and evaluation	
Additional comments	

## Annex 2 Training needs analysis

Department:	Name:
<b>A. Understanding your request</b> Please describe the context of your demand and the type of training needed:	
<b>B. Identifying the objectives</b> <u>General / long term objectives:</u>  <u>Department's mission and strategy:</u>  <u>Specific pedagogical objectives</u> (what <u>competences</u> should be developed):  <u>Specific themes and contents to be covered:</u>  <u>Participants' level of knowledge</u> with regards to the training topics: beginner / strong basic knowledge / advanced level / expert/specialist	
<b>C. Understanding the target group</b> What functions do the participants exercise? What do their responsibilities consist of?  Potential development?  Are there any particularities concerning staff members that should be taken into account?	
<b>D. Identifying the constraints</b> Specific constraints regarding the training delivery (deadline):  Preferred format and duration of the training:	
<b>E. Understanding the context of the course</b> Does the training complete previous courses? If yes, please indicate which training had been requested in the past?	
<b>F. Additional remarks</b> Please indicate any additional information:	



## Annex 3 – Director's decision 2012/01

### DECISION OF THE DIRECTOR



HRP/001/2012

Register N.

Granting of German language training to FRA staff members' partners/spouses

#### THE DIRECTOR OF THE EUROPEAN UNION AGENCY FOR FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS

(hereinafter referred to as "the Agency");

HAVING REGARD TO the Council Regulation (EC) No 168/2007 of 15 February 2007 establishing a European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights, and in particular Article 16 according to which all staff matters fall into the responsibility of the Director;

WHEREAS the Agency's seat is Vienna, Austria;

WHEREAS a majority of the Agency's staff members are expatriates with partners/spouses coming from a non-German speaking background;

WHEREAS it is in the interest of the service to well integrate expatriate staff members and their partners/spouses into the host country;

WHEREAS the staff member's partner is defined as the staff member's life partner similar to a spouse;

HAS DECIDED:

#### **Article 1 – Granting of language training courses to Agency staff members' partners/spouses**

The Agency may grant German language training courses to staff members' partners/spouses under the following conditions and limits:

1. The provision of German language training courses to staff members' partners/spouses is neither a right nor a duty of the staff member, the partner/spouse, nor the Agency;
2. The staff member's partner/spouse, for whom language training is requested, is living in the host country (i.e. Austria);
3. The staff member's partner/spouse, for whom language training is requested, does not have a sufficient language level of German to communicate well in the host country or to find an adequate employment in the host country;
4. The staff member applies for German language training for her/his partner/spouse with a view to allow better integration into the host country;
5. The Agency is having a valid framework contract with a German language training provider, which can be used for this purpose;
6. The staff member's partner/spouse, for whom language training is requested, can be grouped into German language courses of the Agency's staff members or other staff members' partners/spouses with a view to limiting the cost for language training. The granting of language training to a staff member's partner/spouse does not prejudice the staff member's rights to language training;
7. Where the grouping is not possible, individual German language training sessions can be organised;
8. The maximum number of German language training hours granted to one staff member's partner/spouse is of 40 units (=h)/year;
9. Sufficient budget appropriations are available under Title I budget line 1620 – other welfare expenditure.

**Article 2 – Allocation of budget for language training courses of staff members' partners/spouses**

Where German language training courses for staff members' partners/spouses are granted and costs occur, these costs shall be paid from the Agency's Title I budget line 1620 – other welfare expenditure, within the conditions and limits set under Article 1 of the present decision. The applications for German language training of staff members for their partners/spouses shall be handled by the Agency's Human Resources & Planning department and require approval by the Head of Human Resources & Planning.

**Article 3 – Scope and validity**


The present decision is only applicable to the Agency's staff members (i.e. Temporary Agents, Contract Agents, and Seconded National Experts) in active employment. The present decision comes into force on the date of signature with retroactive validity as of 1 January 2012.

Done in Vienna on: 15.02.12

The Director

Morten KJAERUM

## Annex 4 – Learning evaluation and feedback forms



FRA

FEDERAL RESERVE BANK OF AUSTRALIA

RESERVE BANK OF AUSTRALIA

	Excellent	Good	Average	Poor	Please explain in more detail
How did you find the training room and equipment provided ?	○	○	○	○	
How well would you rate the resources and material provided (handouts, books, etc) ?	○	○	○	○	
How did you find the trainer/facilitator in regard to his/her subject knowledge ?	○	○	○	○	
How would you describe the effectiveness of the training methodology used?	○	○	○	○	
How were participants engaged in the exercises during the training ?	○	○	○	○	
How well do you feel you will be able to adapt your new skills in the workplace ?	○	○	○	○	
Did your learning outcome meet your original expectations ?	○	○	○	○	Mandatory
Did the training/learning exercise meet your personal objectives ?	○	○	○	○	Mandatory
Please describe how you will apply the knowledge/skills gained? Draft a brief action plan.					Mandatory
Please list the knowledge you have acquired? (awareness or understanding gained through experience or education)					Mandatory
Please list the skills you have developed or enhanced? (techniques, methods, interpersonal skills, etc.)					Mandatory
Please list the attitudes you have changed? (predisposition or a tendency to respond positively or negatively towards a certain idea, object, person, or situation)					Mandatory
Please add any other comments you may have					

Please explain in more detail						Evaluation by the Head of Department
	a lot	some	a little	none		
Please describe what you have gained from the training/counselling exercise?					Mandatory	Mandatory
Did the information obtained during the training programme correspond to your professional needs?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Mandatory	Mandatory
Was there noticeable and measurable change in your performance in your everyday work?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Mandatory	Mandatory
Have you continuously applied your change in behaviour and/or new level of knowledge at your workplace?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>		Mandatory
Do you feel you are able to train your work colleagues regarding the new skills gained?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>		
Please add any other comments you may have						



		Evaluation by the Head of Department
What impact did the increase in your knowledge/skills/attitude have on your professional results/performance?	Mandatory	
What impact did the increase in your knowledge/skills/attitude have on your team's results/performance?	Mandatory	
What impact did the increase in your knowledge/skills/attitude have on the Agency's results/performance?	Mandatory	
Please add any other comments you may have		

Human Resources and Planning  
FRA – Staff Learning & Development  
Guidelines