

Recommendations by Solidarity Fund Task Force to FIT Council (Baku, March 2015)

The members of the Solidarity Fund Task Force (SFTF) are:

Reiner Heard (Chair)
Changqi Huang
Silvana Marchetti

Since the last Council meeting the SFTF has received three applications:

1) EIZIE – Euskal Itzultzaile, Zuzentzaile eta Interpreteen Elkarte / Asociación Profesional de Traductores, Correctores e Intérpretes de Lengua Vasca

FIT member No. M024 – 185 members – see Annex 1

The dues payable are: CHF 521.70 for 2014 and CHF 545.75 for 2015 (total: CHF 1067.45). In accordance with the Solidarity Fund Bylaws, EIZIE has requested a reduction of its dues to the minimum level of dues for 2014 and 2015.

Recommendation: The association should pay the minimum level of dues for 2014 and 2015, the remaining amount being covered by the Solidarity Fund. In 2016, the association will have to find a way of paying its full FIT dues. Unfortunately, it is not in a sound financial position (strong reliance on government funding, which is constantly being reduced).

2) AITI – Association of Iranian Translators and Interpreters

FIT member No. M090 – 75 members

AITI sent an email to FIT requesting the same treatment as in previous years and giving an assurance that "all AITI dues will be paid as soon as the barriers are removed".

Recommendation: The amount of CHF 221.25 due for 2015 should be paid from the Solidarity Fund, as in previous years, since the association is not able to make any international payments because of the political situation and wishes to remain a member of FIT.

3) CPTU – Colegio de Traductores Públicos del Uruguay

FIT member No. M074 – 300 members – see Annex 2

Following an earlier request, the Solidarity Fund covered CPTU's dues for 2012 and 2013, leaving only a third, i.e. the dues for 2014 (USD 940), to be paid by CPTU. Now the association is indicating that it cannot pay the 2015 fees (CHF 885) and can only afford USD 250 per annum.

Recommendation: This association is in a very precarious financial situation. Its overheads (rent, part-time secretary, compulsory accountant) appear to be too high. FIT cannot subsidise CPTU's dues indefinitely despite the association's active involvement in FIT from time to time. Since there is no prospect of the situation improving, the SFTF is not able to make a recommendation based on the Solidarity Fund's resources.

General remarks

The Solidarity Fund bylaws and an application form are now on the FIT website in both English and French.

At present the Solidarity Fund has a total of CHF 20,356 at its disposal.

It should be considered whether it is advisable to impose a limit on the number of times an association can apply to the Solidarity Fund in succession. This would not include extraordinary circumstances, e.g. where an association is temporarily prevented by national regulations from transferring sums to an account outside its own country.

FIT should seriously consider the possibility of arranging a series of webinars on how to fund associations so that they are economically viable entities. Of course, the constraints existing in different countries have to be taken into account.

Annex 1 - EIZIE

Application to the FIT Solidarity Fund

Please read the Solidarity Fund Bylaws first. Your application should be emailed to secretariat@fit-ift.org. It will then be processed by the Solidarity Fund Task Force and passed on to the FIT Council for a decision.

Name of association: EIZIE - Euskal Itzultzaile, Zuzentzaile eta Interpreteen Elkartea / Asociación Profesional de Traductores, Correctores e Intérpretes de Lengua Vasca

FIT membership No.: M024

Financial assistance requested

Reduction of the dues to the minimum level of dues, for 2014 and 2015.

Please provide details of your association's financial situation (sources of income, types of expenditure etc.):

Sources of income: mostly government funding; also membership fees, and specific grants for specific projects.

Types of expenditure: other than the direct costs of our activities, our main problem nowadays is to face the "structural" expenses (staff, rent of our office, secretariat expenses, website hosting, travel expenditures of the Board and other collaborators, etc.).

Unfortunately, the government funding as well as the private funding is being reduced every year and we have not been able to adapt our organisation at the same level / rhythm. Therefore, we need to establish priorities on our fixed costs (we consider the FIT fee as such).

Does your association have any reserves / contingency funds?

Our association has a small reserve that we are using to cover the expenses we have to face for the ordinary activity. Last year, we had an unexpected expense of 8.000 euro (a fine for having published average translation rates on our webpage, as a result of a survey among our members, which the Government considered is against the law for free and fair competition).

Is your association's financial situation likely to improve in the near future?

We are afraid not. Not in the near future. And the reserve will not last forever.

Kindly provide any other information that you consider relevant to your application.

As we mentioned in our e-mail, it's a question of priorities. We are aware that there may be other associations around the world in a similar or worse situation than ours, but now we need to reduce costs. We hope we will be able to make other kind of arrangements so that we can keep being part of FIT.

Annex 2 – CPTU

I am writing in order to let FIT know the financial condition of our Colegio de Traductores Públicos del Uruguay (CTPU), in order to be considered to get a discount on our yearly fee.

As I told you in our meeting in Berlin (last August 2014) our association has less than 300 members (paying a monthly fee of 8 USD each). Unfortunately, we are a non-profit organization and we cannot raise funds (from sources other than our fees) and we cannot organize activities in order to solicit funds, since it may be seen as "income" for taxable purposes. We can only charge a fee to "survive" (we spend our monies paying the rent, wage of one administrative secretary, taxes and utility bills) as an association, otherwise Uruguayan authorities would charge us unaffordable fines and penalties.

Our association really wants to be part of FIT. It is important to highlight the active involvement of the CTPU in FIT Latam (former CRAL) since its very beginning: we were present in FIT Congress, 2002, in Vancouver where Latin American associations were convened to discuss about the creation of a regional center, and in Buenos Aires, 2003, to sign the foundation of such regional center. Since then, CTPU has had a representative in almost all the different periods of the Executive Committee of FIT Latam. Perhaps our payments have not been regular but we think our contribution to FIT has been important.

We cannot afford the membership fee you are currently charging. According to our savings, we can pay FIT a yearly fee of USD250, otherwise we will have to ask you to cancel our membership for this year at least.

Thank you so much for having taken your time to read this letter and I look forward to your reply.

I include as CC addressees our President, Pablo Mones, our Secretary, Hugo Luongo and our Vicepresident, Mirna Lorente, who is currently acting as a member of the Executive Committee of FIT Latam.

Denise Rugo
Treasurer of Colegio de Traductores Públicos del Uruguay