

# **Guidelines for the recognition of Financial Education initiatives (so-called Blue Handbook)**



**Comitato per la programmazione  
e il coordinamento delle attività  
di educazione finanziaria**

# **Guidelines for the recognition of Financial Education Initiatives (so-called Blue Handbook)**

**December 2025**

## **1. The recognition activity: motivation and description of the process**

Concerning recognition activities, the Committee has two main objectives: promoting knowledge and raising awareness. As a public entity, the Committee's implementation objectives include ensuring the quality and spreading of financial information. This involves, on the one hand, promoting the activity of the institutions that are part of the Committee (Members, shareholders) and, on the other hand, recognising the worthy initiatives of third parties – whether private or public – that are active in the economic, civil and social community (stakeholders).

Specifically, the synergies of the Committee's action at the service of shareholders and stakeholders result in its recognising initiatives aimed at effectively promoting banking, financial, insurance and social security knowledge.

There are four principles that have inspired the definition of the Guidelines for the recognition of an initiative: quality; complete absence of costs; full usability; complete transparency regarding any direct or indirect conflicts of interest involving the proponent.

The effectiveness of an initiative depends on its quality. On the one hand, shareholders, if they deem it appropriate, and subject to agreement with the Committee, may communicate to the public that one or more initiatives promoted by the shareholders themselves are recognised by the Committee. On the other hand, a stakeholder (hereinafter also the *proponent*) may ask the Committee to recognise one of their initiatives. The Committee will carry out its evaluation of the individual initiatives proposed through an objective analytical process, aimed at evaluating two profiles: first, the characteristics of the applicant, and then the quality of the proposal. The initiatives that are deemed suitable under both profiles will be published on the Committee's website.

The recognition process begins by compiling the appropriate form available on the Committee's website and is divided into three stages, described below. The duration of the process, as a rule, is thirty days from the moment the Committee's Secretariat informs the proponent that the proposal is complete in all its parts, including any additions subsequent to the first contact.

Any additional information requested by the Committee's Secretariat must be provided to it within thirty days of the request; otherwise, the proposal will be cancelled and will have to be submitted again.

**First stage: reliability.** A prerequisite for reliability is the proponent's compliance with the rules of conduct defined in this Handbook, as well as to the guidance by the Committee, including in the past. Having already taken part in initiatives promoted by the Committee – even on the basis of different rules - does not automatically constitute proof of reliability under this Handbook. Any breaches of the rules of conduct, when detected, will be communicated by the Committee to the applicant, who must take corrective action. Anyone may report alleged violations to the Committee's Secretariat.

**Second stage: suitability.** The suitability of the proposal is assessed on the basis of criteria set out in this Handbook, with particular attention paid to the management of conflicts of interest and to the characteristics of the initiative. Where the proponent is required, or wishes, to apply for the recognition of an initiative jointly with another entity, the agreement between them must be reached before submitting the application. As a rule, proposals cannot receive financial support from the Committee.

**Third stage: visibility.** If an initiative is deemed suitable, the Committee's objective is to promote it and raise awareness among the relevant target groups. Recognition gives the right to use the wording referred to in paragraph 5, exclusively in the context of the specific recognised proposed.

## **2. Proponents: nature and characteristics<sup>1</sup>**

The growing awareness of the importance of financial, insurance and social security education in recent years has gone hand in hand with the

---

<sup>1</sup> More detailed information on the proponents must be reported in section 1 of the "Application for Recognition of an Initiative" form, available on the Committee's website.

increasing involvement of multiple actors, including governments, public authorities, regulators, financial institutions and non-profit organisations.

On the one hand, this plurality ensures a diverse range of offerings and helps reach an increasingly broad audience; on the other hand, the participation of actors with potentially different objectives, interests and approaches makes close coordination essential to ensure effectiveness, quality and consistency across different initiatives.

This Blue Handbook is addressed to:

- a) **for-profit entities that offer financial, social security and/or insurance services and products:** for example, banks, insurance companies, stock markets, intermediaries authorised to provide financial or payment services;
- b) **for-profit non-financial entities, which carry out financial, social security and insurance education initiatives as a commercial activity:** for example, professional companies that carry out financial education activities on behalf of third parties, consulting firms, communication companies;
- c) **for-profit entities, not falling within the cases referred to in letters a) and b), with a wide ramification:** for example, large-scale distribution companies or companies that manage social channels and/or digital platforms;
- d) **public entities, connected or not connected to the financial sector:** for example, municipalities, provinces, regions, universities, educational institutions and other public bodies;
- e) **non-profit entities related to the financial sector:** for example, banking, financial and insurance associations, foundations, public and private social security and assistance institutions;
- f) **non-profit entities not related to the financial sector:** for example, third sector associations, NGOs, consumer associations, trade unions, research institutions.

In line with the OECD/INFE Guidelines, the entities referred to in letters d), e) and f) may apply for recognition independently.

The **for-profit entities, referred to in letters a), b) and c)** may submit an application for recognition of their initiatives in two ways:

1. independently, provided that all three conditions described below are met, and that appropriate supporting documentation is attached to the recognition application;
2. in collaboration with a public entity referred to in letter d), or with a member of the Committee (shareholder), which shall ensure the continuous compliance of the initiative with this Handbook, with regard to its content, speakers, and teaching methods.

With regard to point 1), the autonomous proposal of an entity referred to in letters a), b) and c) is admissible, provided that **all** three of the following conditions are met (with evidence attached):

- there is a separate organisational structure within the entity dedicated to financial, insurance and/or social security education;
- the structure is placed directly under the top management or is in any case placed in a hierarchical line separate from commercial functions, with safeguards ensuring autonomy and independence;
- the structure can be publicly identified by its own name, logo or other distinctive sign, allowing clear attribution of its initiatives.

Any applications submitted autonomously by the entities referred to in letters a), b) and c) that do not meet all three of the above conditions will be rejected.

Where an initiative is promoted by an entity referred to in letters e) and f) in collaboration with for-profit entities referred to in letters a), b) and c), the application is admissible provided that all three of the above-mentioned conditions are met with respect to the for-profit entities.

**Individuals, sole practitioners and sole proprietorships cannot apply for recognition.**

### **3. The Initiatives**

Financial, social security and insurance education involves a range of knowledge, skills and attitudes and its goal is to guide behaviour towards informed and conscious choices.

Recognition will take into account relevant national and international guidelines that help structure financial, insurance and pension education for different target groups.

The criteria defined in this Handbook apply to **structured financial, insurance and social security education programmes** (also referred to as “initiatives”), with didactic and training content; they do not apply, however, to individual events and awareness campaigns<sup>2</sup>. In particular, these can be in-person or online initiatives, whose programme is divided into multiple meetings or editions. These initiatives should not focus on a single topic, but rather provide a comprehensive overview of core financial, insurance, and pension topics. They may include seminars, lectures, workshops or other formats<sup>3</sup>. Teaching may be supported by various materials such as presentations, handouts and books but also multimedia and/or innovative tools (e.g., videos, podcasts, games)<sup>4</sup>.

The plurality and variety of communication channels and the implementation of initiatives will be particularly appreciated, as will be the use of interactive methods and tools (such as quizzes, videos and other multimedia tools).

The Committee reserves the right to submit specific technical or methodological aspects of the proposed initiatives to its panels and/or external experts when in-depth assessment is required.

Applications must also include:

- plans for future developments of the initiative, such as, for example, the potential replicability in other municipalities or regions and towards different target groups;
- of tools for monitoring the satisfaction and learning level (e.g., ex-ante and ex-post questionnaires, surveys, indicators of interest in the topic and, for websites, number of visits or links, likes and comments, time spent on the web page, etc.). In particular organisational contexts, the Committee may assess the admissibility of “sample-based” monitoring tools;
- where relevant, analysis of potential conflicts of interest, as well as internal safeguards to ensure full compliance with the guidance set out in the Handbook (for example, a code of ethics)<sup>5</sup>.

---

<sup>2</sup> In the event that individual events are held as part of Financial Education Month or Global Money Week, the corresponding guidelines apply.

<sup>3</sup> More detailed information on the format of the initiatives should be included in the “Application for recognition of an initiative” form, under the heading “Type of initiative”.

<sup>4</sup> The materials may be described in more detail in the “Application for recognition of an initiative” form, under the heading “Content of the initiative”.

<sup>5</sup> More detailed information regarding the measures adopted to manage potential conflicts of interest may be provided in the “Application for the Recognition of an Initiative” form, under the section titled “Characteristics of the initiative.”

In any case, the initiatives must not:

- include activities involving the presentation, communication, promotion or consultancy activities with respect to a product or service offered, including professional services, and tailored to the needs of individuals; in particular, the initiatives may not focus exclusively or predominantly on investment activities directed at individuals;
- consist of professional or specialist training activities;
- provide for interventions by managing directors or other representatives who occupy top positions within the entities referred to in points a), b) and c) of the previous paragraph;
- refer, on the occasion and on the sidelines of the initiative, to the availability of a financial, insurance and/or social security advisor for presentation, communication, promotion or consultancy of a product or service offered;
- be aimed exclusively at the customers of the entities referred to in points a), b) and c) of the previous paragraph, or at the employees of the proposing entity.

In addition, for the purposes of recognition by the Committee, the initiative must comply with the following criteria:

- the initiatives must be clearly attributable to the proponents;
- the material used, distributed or published, as well as the contributions and interventions carried out during the initiative must: i) provide impartial and objective information; ii) not contain value judgements;  
iii) present multiple viewpoints, where useful; iv) give examples based on historical data. The language and content must be correct, accurate, well-argued and up-to-date, as well as appropriate to the target audience;
- of the speakers must have adequate subject-matter expertise and teaching skills; they may not be involved in the promotion, advisory, or sale of financial, insurance, and pension products and services;
- the proponents must define the criteria for selecting speakers, taking into account their education, personal qualifications, as well as their prior experience;

- initiatives can never be opportunities to advertise and promote specific products and services. In particular, it is not possible to mention specific paid products and/or financial, insurance and social security services on the posters and during the initiatives, nor to use or distribute information material – even at the end of the initiative – containing logos or other identifying symbols attributable to specific financial products or services. Names, logos and trademarks of the entities referred to in letters a), b) and c) of the previous paragraph must not have predominance over the contents;
- participation in the initiatives and related materials must be free of charge and freely accessible for participants; the payment of a fee, even of negligible value, is not allowed. If registration on the site is required to access the online materials or to participate in the initiative, it must not be used for commercial purposes (for example, to offer financial, insurance and social security products and services or other educational content for a fee)<sup>6</sup>.

It is understood that in the context of initiatives carried out in collaboration with the parties referred to in letters a), b) and c) referred to in the previous paragraph, the applicants referred to in letter d), as well as the shareholders, must monitor the quality of the content and ensure the correct management of the conflict of interest.

The Committee reserves the right to carry out evaluations - even on a sample basis - of the quality and satisfaction of the proposed initiatives, for example through the submission of questionnaires to participants and/or with other monitoring tools. Monitoring can also be exercised through participation in the event by the members of the Committee or their representatives: if the monitoring highlights inconsistencies or critical issues, in particular due to the presence of advertising, promotion and sales profiles, the initiative will be revoked and the applicant may also be excluded from future requests for recognition.

#### **4. The Application for Recognition**

Applicants must fill in the “Application for recognition of an initiative” form, available on the Committee’s website.

---

<sup>6</sup> This information must be entered in the “Application for recognition of the initiative” form, under the heading “How to access the initiative”.

The application must contain the following information:

- a description of the initiative and the reasons why it could be recognised by the Committee;
- the criteria used to select partners and speakers, with curricula where appropriate;
- any material to be published on the Committee's website in the section dedicated to the initiatives of private entities, including contact details and ways to access the initiatives, as well as a contact person in case the documentation produced is not sufficient for the evaluation;
- the programme of the initiative and the materials that will be used;
- the explicit confirmation of adherence to the conditions identified in this Blue Handbook;
- any other element useful for the evaluation of the initiative, on the basis of the characteristics described above and according to the principles set out in this Handbook.

**Applications may be submitted from 1 January to 31 January and from 1 April to 31 July of each year.**

## **5. The Evaluation**

A technical panel supports the Committee in evaluating initiatives according to this Handbook and assesses the applications for recognition.

Each application must indicate clearly, completely and truthfully whether they replicate educational formats already recognised by the Committee.

In the event of a positive evaluation, the Committee's Secretariat – after informing the applicant – publishes the initiative on the dedicated section of the Committee's website.

The initiatives may display the **Quality Mark** identifying the financial, insurance, and pension education programs recognised by the Committee.

The Quality Mark is normally **blue** in colour, but it may take on different colours in specific cases, depending on the content of the initiative, the target audience, and the promoters. In particular, it may be:

- **pink**, when the primary target audience of the initiative is women;
- **green**, when the initiative addresses issues related to environmental sustainability;
- **yellow**, when the proponent is a university or a scientific institution;
- **purple**, when the initiative predominantly covers topics related to technological and financial innovation.

The recognition has no fixed duration and remains valid for as long as the initiative is offered under the same conditions under which it was approved.

If the initiative is discontinued or significantly modified, the proponent must notify the Committee, so that the initiative may be removed from the portal and/or the published information may be updated.

If the violation of the rules of this Blue Handbook emerges, the Committee reserves the right to revoke the recognition of the initiative and remove it from the Committee's portal. The proponent may also be excluded from future applications.

Should the individuals entrusted with carrying out financial education activities be registered under EU rules and act in violation of the aforementioned provisions, their conduct may be reported by the Committee to the relevant supervisory authority.

The Blue Handbook will be constantly updated, to take into account the evolution of practices and the economic and social context. To this end, the Committee will also take into account any written communications that may be received from third parties who have obtained recognition of their initiatives.