

GUIDELINES FOR APPLICANTS

Call for proposals EACEA 41/2016

Key Action 3: Support for policy reform - Initiatives for policy innovation

European Forward Looking Cooperation Projects

in the field of Education and Training

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. INTRODUCTION – BACKGROUND	4
1.1 Initiatives for policy innovation	4
1.2 Policy context	4
1.3 Forward-Looking Cooperation Projects	6
2. PRIORITIES	8
3. TIMETABLE	12
4. BUDGET AVAILABLE	13
5. ADMISSIBILITY REQUIREMENTS	13
6. ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA	14
6.1 Eligible applicants	14
6.2 Eligible activities and project duration	16
7. EXCLUSION CRITERIA	17
7.1 Exclusion from participation	17
7.2 Rejection from the award procedure	19
7.3 Supporting documents	20
8. SELECTION CRITERIA	20
8.1 Financial capacity	20
8.2 Operational capacity	21
9. AWARD CRITERIA	22
10. LEGAL COMMITMENT	24
11. FINANCIAL PROVISIONS	24
11.1 General Principles	24
11.2 Funding forms	26

11.3 Payment arrangements	30
11.4 Pre-financing guarantee	30
12. PUBLICITY	31
12.1 By the beneficiaries	31
12.2 By the Agency and/or the Commission	31
12.3 Dissemination and exploitation	31
13. DATA PROTECTION	32
14. PROCEDURE FOR THE SUBMISSION OF PROPOSALS	32
14.1 Publication	32
14.2 Registration in the Participant Portal	33
14.3 Submission of the grant application	33
14.4 Applicable rules	34
14.5 Contacts	34

1. INTRODUCTION – BACKGROUND

1.1 Initiatives for policy innovation

'Initiatives for policy innovation' are a strand of Erasmus+ Key Action 3 - Support for Policy Reform¹.

They support two different actions: European Policy Experimentations² and **Forward-Looking Cooperation Projects**³ (FLCPs), which aim to support reforms and innovation in education, training and youth through trans-national cooperation projects.

The 2017 Annual Work Programme for the implementation of Erasmus+ provides funding for Forward Looking Cooperation Projects under section 5.2.2.a (budget table index reference 3.21)⁴.

The management of this call is delegated by the European Commission to the Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency⁵, hereinafter referred to as "the Agency".

1.2 Policy context

At a time when European societies need to address major challenges such as unacceptably high unemployment, especially among young people, increasing diversity and the need to foster excellence and competitiveness, education and training systems need to better focus on promoting skills and innovation, employability, increasing equity and social mobility, while helping to lay the foundations for upholding democratic values and active citizenship.

While addressing these objectives, education and training systems are confronted with major challenges: 70 million Europeans lack adequate reading and writing skills, and even more have poor numeracy and digital skills. 4.5 million young people still leave school without upper secondary qualifications, risking unemployment, poverty and social exclusion. More than half of the 12 million long-term unemployed are considered as low-skilled. Higher education institutions do not sufficiently equip graduates with relevant and up-to-date skills.

Many people hold jobs that do not match their talents, while 40% of European employers struggle to find people with the skills they need to grow and innovate. Too few people have the entrepreneurial mindsets and skills needed to set up and develop their own business. The EU

¹The Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing 'Erasmus+': the Union Programme for Education, Training, Youth and Sport, in particular Articles 9 and 15 - Support for policy reform - constitutes the legal basis for the present call: <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32013R1288&qid=1476708595126&from=en>

² European Policy Experimentations: https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/erasmus-plus/actions/key-action-3-support-for-policy-reform/prospective-initiatives/european-policy-experimentations_en

³Forward Looking Cooperation projects: https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/erasmus-plus/actions/key-action-3-support-for-policy-reform/prospective-initiatives/forward-looking-cooperation-projects_en

⁴ 2017 Annual Work Programme, Section 5.2.2.a: http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/education_culture/more_info/awp/docs/c-2016-5571_en.pdf

⁵ Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency: <http://eacea.ec.europa.eu>

workforce is ageing and shrinking and women employment rate remains lower than men's; a more inclusive labour market integrating the low-skilled and the vulnerable groups is needed.

The quality of Europe's 6 million teachers is key for learners' attainment. Teachers, school leaders, and teacher educators are called on to play a key role in modernising education. Initial education and continuous professional development, and access to support throughout careers are essential for them. Furthermore, school systems in several European countries face, or will soon be facing, massive retirement waves and teacher shortages. The fact that teachers are among the top five skill shortage occupations across the EU calls for strategies to raise the attractiveness of the teaching profession.

Europe also needs to press on with the modernisation of higher education, and investment in higher education needs to be adequate and effective. The New Skills Agenda for Europe underlines the crucial role of higher education in driving productivity and innovation by providing high-level skills, but also in improving employment prospects and promoting upward social mobility. As the demand for higher education graduates is raising, higher education institutions need to be more innovative and relevant in an increasingly globalised, digitalised and knowledge-dependent labour market. In particular, they need to strengthen links and interaction with businesses and research institutions.

The Council conclusions of 12 May 2009 on a **strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training ('ET 2020')**⁶ set out the following four strategic objectives for pursuing work at EU level:

1. Making lifelong learning and mobility a reality;
2. Improving the quality and efficiency of education and training;
3. Promoting equity, social cohesion and active citizenship;
4. Enhancing creativity and innovation, including entrepreneurship, at all levels of education and training.

With the aim to help education and training systems ensure relevant and high-quality skills and competences for employability, innovation and active citizenship, the **2015 Joint Report of the Council and the Commission on the implementation of the strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training (ET 2020)**⁷ set out the following set of focussed medium-term priority areas for work at EU level:

1. Relevant and high-quality skills and competences for employability, innovation, active citizenship;
2. Inclusive education, equality, non-discrimination, civic competences;
3. Open and innovative education and training, including by fully embracing the digital era;
4. Strong support for educators;
5. Transparency and recognition of skills and qualifications; and
6. Sustainable investment, performance and efficiency of education and training systems.

These priority areas have been further translated into concrete issues which will be addressed through the ET 2020 set of policy cooperation and governance tools.

⁶ ET2020: <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=URISERV%3Aef0016>

⁷2015 Joint Report of the Council and the Commission on the implementation of the strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training (ET 2020): <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52015XG1215%2802%29&from=EN>

Proposals under this call should be consistent with the priority areas set out in the ET 2020 Joint Report of 2015.

The Council Resolution on **A New Skills Agenda for an Inclusive and Competitive Europe** of 21 November 2016, that draws on the **New Skills Agenda for Europe**⁸ adopted by the Commission on 10 June 2016, reflects a common vision of the role of skills for jobs, growth and competitiveness and seeks a shared commitment to reform in areas where Union action brings most added value.

Skills can help to secure jobs and enable people to fulfil their potential. They are key to social cohesion. In a fast-changing global economy, they determine competitiveness and the capacity to drive innovation. They support investment and are a catalyst in the virtuous circle of job creation and growth.

People need a broad set of skills to fulfil their potential both at work and in society. Acquiring skills is a lifelong process and starts very young. Formal education and training should equip everyone with a broad range of skills which opens doors to personal fulfilment and development, social inclusion, active citizenship and employment. Such competences include literacy, numeracy, science and foreign languages, as well as transversal skills such as digital competences, entrepreneurship, critical thinking, problem solving, learning to learn and financial literacy. Early acquisition of these skills is the foundation for developing higher, more complex skills which are needed to drive creativity and innovation. These skills need to be strengthened throughout life, and allow people to thrive in fast-evolving workplaces and society, and to cope with complexity and uncertainty.

EU Member States should improve skill acquisition and development, reduce skills mismatches, and embrace the digital transformation of the economy.

The differences in quality and relevance of education and training outcomes contribute to different socio-economic performances of Member States. At the same time people increasingly learn in settings outside formal education opening new perspectives.

These challenges require reforms in education and training, and the New Skills Agenda defines three priorities for the purpose:

1. Improving the quality and relevance of skills formation;
2. Making skills and qualifications more visible and comparable;
3. Improving skills intelligence and information for better career choices.

1.3 Forward-Looking Cooperation Projects

Definition

Forward-Looking Cooperation Projects (FLCPs) are trans-national co-operation projects aiming to identify, test, develop or assess innovative policy approaches that have the potential of becoming mainstreamed and giving input for improving education and training systems.

They should provide in-depth knowledge on target group(s), learning, teaching or training

⁸ New Skills Agenda for Europe: <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1223&langId=en>

situations and effective methodologies and tools that help policies to develop, as well as conclusions relevant for policy makers in education and training at all levels.

Unlike European policy experimentations under Erasmus+ Key Action 3, which are led by high-level public authorities and as such follow a "top-down" approach, FLCPs aim at promoting innovation emerging from representative stakeholders in the field ("bottom-up approach").

FLCPs should therefore be led and implemented by key stakeholders with a proven record of excellence and state of the art knowledge, the capacity to innovate or reach a systemic impact through their activities and the potential to drive the policy agenda in the fields of education and training.

General Objectives

The general objectives of this call are:

- to **promote innovation** in education and training fields through European cooperation at both policy and practice levels;
- to **empower key stakeholders** in developing and mainstreaming policy innovation.

Developing and testing novel ideas beyond the state of the art, including by pursuing groundbreaking objectives with a clear potential to innovate policies and practices and viable implementation options, is key to generate genuine improvements in delivering learning outcomes, ensuring equity, cost-efficiency and learner satisfaction.

Innovation can drive policy improvement, either incrementally by advancing existing practices or more radically by introducing new practices.

Specific Objectives

The specific objectives of this call are:

- to kick-start longer-term changes and field-test innovative solutions to challenges in the education and training fields, which have the potential of becoming mainstreamed and to generate a sustainable and systemic impact on education and training systems;
- to support trans-national cooperation and mutual learning on forward-looking issues among key stakeholders;
- to facilitate the collection and analysis of evidence to substantiate innovative policies and practices.

Expected results

The projects proposed under the present call should lead to proven results in at least one of the following areas:

- (i) Development and/or improvement of innovative actions in the fields of education and training in line with the call priorities (see Section 2);

- (ii) Improved evidence and understanding on target group(s), learning and teaching situations and effective methodologies and tools that can inspire and stimulate innovation at system level ;
- (iii) Evidence of potential long-term impact on education and training systems through the mainstreaming of advanced and innovative policy approaches developed by the projects;
- (iv) European added-value through reinforced trans-national cooperation and mutual learning among major stakeholders.

2. PRIORITIES

Proposals submitted under the present call must address **one** of the priorities listed under this Section.

Proposals not addressing any of the 5 call priorities will not be considered.

Priority 1 – Acquisition of basic skills by low-skilled adults

The 2015 ET2020 Joint Report prioritises in the field of adult learning actions to increase the provision of literacy, numeracy and digital skills and improve educational attainment for those without EQF level 4 qualifications.

Within the context of the New Skills Agenda for Europe, the Commission submitted a proposal for a Council Recommendation⁹ establishing "Upskilling Pathways: New Opportunities for Adults". It is aimed to improve the overall life chances of low-skilled adults in Europe. Member States are called to put in place pathways for upskilling, established in co-operation with social partners, education and training providers and local, regional and national authorities.

Upskilling opportunities should be open to people both in work and out of work.

Low-skilled adults should be helped to improve their literacy, numeracy and digital skills and – where possible – develop a wider set of skills leading to an upper secondary education qualification or equivalent.

The Forward-looking cooperation projects should develop innovative approaches or services to address one or more of the following issues:

- reaching out to low-skilled adults through innovative outreach and guidance approaches in order to connect them with appropriate learning opportunities;
- identifying adults with low basic skills levels, assessing their specific learning needs in relation to literacy, numeracy and digital skills, and valorising their existing skills, through instruments such as screening tools, skills assessments, validation etc.;
- designing and delivering relevant training opportunities adapted to individual learning needs and the existing skills already identified;

⁹ Council Recommendation establishing "Upskilling Pathways: New Opportunities for Adults": <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=COM%3A2016%3A382%3AFIN>
<http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1224>

- monitoring the results and impact of literacy, numeracy and digital skills provision in order to ensure cost-efficiency and signal any room for improvement.

Priority 2 – Promoting performance based approaches in VET

Many efforts are undertaken in the EU to improve the quality and performance of VET programmes. One of the approaches to improve the quality consists of setting up systems to measure the performance of VET programmes and to put in place adequate incentives to improve this performance. These incentives can be financial, such as performance based funding or non-financial, such as quality labels, etc.

At EU level, the positive experience of some of the countries in the use of Performance Based Funding (PBF) was highlighted in the Commission Communication 'Rethinking education'¹⁰ of 2012. The Staff Working Document¹¹ on VET for better skills, growth and jobs linked to the Communication, also identifies this issue as one possible avenue to achieve excellence in VET.

Within the context of the New skills Agenda for Europe, the Commission calls for stronger actions to "make VET a first choice" by proposing a set of measures for VET modernisation aimed to enhance quality of VET and bring in the spotlight the excellence and wide career opportunities of vocational pathways. The issue of performance based approaches could play an important role in this context. The New Skills Agenda also calls for improved data availability on the outcomes of education and training provision, including through a forthcoming initiative on graduate tracking. Tracking helps VET providers to understand the impact of student centred study programmes, as well as their relevance for the labour market, and thus provides important information to the systematic improvement of teaching and training and the provision of labour market relevant qualifications, which underpins any effective PBF system.

The Forward-looking cooperation projects under this priority will be looking at developing and/or improving systems to measure the performance of VET provision (e.g. at the level of VET system, provider or teacher level) and/or instruments to provide incentives to improve the performance.

These projects should include elements that allow assessing the quality and performance of VET systems, VET providers and/or VET teachers, by for example devising and testing the use of key performance indicators, data collection and data analysis tools, use of financial and non-financial incentives etc. This can include exploring ways in which EQAVET¹² indicators and descriptors could be a basis for developing key performance indicators of VET provision, and in particular those elements that focus on tracking VET learner's progression after obtaining their qualification into work and further study (e.g. EQAVET indicators 5 and 6).

Priority 3 - Promoting innovative technology in the field of providing career guidance

Careers and career paths have been transformed by technology. New sectors and types of work have emerged with the advent of digitalisation and innovation in information technology and

¹⁰ Rethinking Education - Investing in skills for better socio-economic outcomes: <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52012DC0669&from=EN>

¹¹ Vocational education and training for better skills, growth and jobs: <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52012SC0375&from=EN>

¹² EQAVET: <http://www.eqavet.eu>

this has created new demands in the types of skills required of the workforce. Importantly, the very nature of work has also changed. New technology has created new perspectives and opportunities and job-seekers, employees, and young people need the necessary career management skills and access to information and support to navigate this new employment reality.

Career guidance services can respond to this transformation by embracing technology. Innovative use of technology can offer new forms of support, easier access to information and reach wider audiences thereby enhancing services offered.

The projects under this priority should reflect the goals of the New Skills Agenda for Europe and consider the actions proposed therein.

They should tackle:

1. Development of innovative career guidance services - to include one or a combination of the following:

- Training and professional development for guidance practitioners on the use of technology to deliver career guidance;
- Training and professional development for guidance practitioners on the role of technology in the labour market and career management;
- Online platforms/e-tools for delivery of guidance counselling and services to individuals;
- Tools to access and make use of labour market skills intelligence (LMSI);
- Collaborative projects between employment, education and guidance services to enhance or find new approaches to information and guidance services;
- Methods/case studies on the self-assessment by individuals of their skills and qualifications using innovative technology.

2. Development of innovative tools for career management for individuals - to include one or a combination of the following:

- Tools for individuals such as online tools/databases to access information on career management;
- Tools/information on the self-assessment of skills and qualifications by individuals;
- Guidance for individuals on use of technology (e.g. online/e-portfolios) for managing and presenting personal information on skills and qualifications;
- Guidance on the use of labour market skills intelligence (LMSI) by individuals.

Priority 4 - Professionalisation of staff (school education, including early childhood education and care)

Teachers, educators and educational leaders are central to learners' success, and this is reflected in growing expectations on their role(s). At the same time, many education systems are struggling with the low status of these professions, a lack of interest among potential candidates and resulting shortages of qualified staff.

Setting high professional standards for the teaching professions and supporting the professionalisation of the workforce in such areas as entry requirements, professional

development and autonomy, can help break this vicious circle. In early childhood education and care, in particular, this will help raising the quality of services, for instance by creating pathways towards qualification for unqualified assistants, and by investing in continuous professional development.

This priority aims to support projects which aim to improve the quality and inclusiveness of school education through the professionalization of teachers, educators and leaders working in general school education, including early childhood education and care.

It covers activities supporting staff professionalisation in the following fields:

- Preparation/Initial Teacher Education, induction and professional development;
- Requirements and standards: competences, qualifications and accreditation (e.g. competence frameworks or profiles/professional standards; entry requirements);
- Professional self-regulation, association and communities;
- Professional autonomy and involvement in decision-making;
- Leadership;
- Professional body of knowledge;
- Professional identity, ethics and codes of conduct;
- Professional mobility (career paths and structures);
- Quality assurance, evaluation, feedback/appraisal.

Priority 5 - Achieving the aims of the renewed EU strategy for higher education

EU higher education policy supports the modernisation of higher education systems to make them more effective, innovative and inclusive. Further steps are needed to ensure higher education systems and institutions are properly configured to provide students with relevant knowledge and skills for rewarding careers and for life as active citizens. Universities need to be able to engage more with their local communities, and to play a leading role in meeting the economic and social challenges currently faced by Europe.

Three priority areas for reform emerged from the public consultation on the EU's modernisation agenda for higher education¹³:

- addressing the mismatch between the knowledge and skills graduates have, and current and future needs of society,
- breaking down the barriers between higher education and the 'outside world' in local communities,
- bringing closer the separate worlds in which teaching and research often operate within higher education institutions.

Finally, removing obstacles and increasing the cost effectiveness of student and staff mobility also remains critical for embedding internationalisation in institutions.

The projects under this priority should help meet the above-mentioned challenges, with an emphasis on testing and measuring approaches in the different fields. Relevant stakeholders

¹³ See "Results of the public consultation on the EU's modernisation agenda for higher education" (SWD(2016) 195 final): http://eur-lex.europa.eu/resource.html?uri=cellar:cd0fa1ca-2ee9-11e6-b497-01aa75ed71a1.0001.02/DOC_2&format=PDF

should propose new ways to address these gaps by developing innovative practices across higher education systems in Europe. The aim is to address at least one of the three priority areas for change identified in the public consultation on the EU's modernisation agenda.

Expected outcomes may include:

- Identifying the factors (e.g. course design and content, incentives and resources, learning approaches) that determine how effective HE programmes – such as inter-disciplinary courses and courses in the arts and humanities – are in providing students with relevant learning outcomes preparing them for rewarding careers and active citizenship;
- Examining the scope for and impact of modularisation of learning provision in higher education, in particular for development of short-cycle programmes, e-learning, Continued Professional Development (CPD) and flexible learning paths;
- Improving the recognition and measurement of performance in higher education teaching, research and innovation, including balanced reward mechanisms (e.g. career incentives) for high-quality and relevant teaching and research;
- Increasing and focusing structural cooperation by higher education institutions in their locality or region for social and economic innovation, civic engagement, and skills development, for example through work-based learning;
- Promoting and extending best practices in the recognition of non-formal or informal learning in line with the guidelines of the ECTS Users' Guide¹⁴, e.g. by promoting the awarding of ECTS credits for volunteering;
- Building synergies among existing local activities facilitating the integration of Erasmus+ and other incoming students in the receiving country's local community, such as engagement in social activities, to foster further cooperation and impact;
- Facilitating the continuous development of innovative ICT-based services to improve the cost effectiveness of learning mobility, allowing easy sharing, exchange or transfer of data, by further extending paperless approaches for digital student data portability to all Erasmus+ participants, building on the latest developments in this.

3. TIMETABLE

	Stages	Date and time or indicative period
1	Publication of the call	15 December 2016
2	Deadline for submitting applications	14 March 2017 - 12.00 noon CET
3	Evaluation period	End of March to June 2017
4	Information to applicants	July 2017
5	Signature of grant agreement	October 2017
6	Project start date	Between 1 November 2017 and 1 January 2018

¹⁴ See "ECTS Users' Guide 2015": http://ec.europa.eu/education/ects/users-guide/docs/ects-users-guide_en.pdf

4. BUDGET AVAILABLE

The total budget available for the co-financing of projects under the present call is **EUR 8.000.000**.

Financial contribution from the EU cannot exceed **75%** of the total eligible project costs.

The maximum grant per project is **EUR 500.000**.

The Agency reserves the right not to distribute all the funds available for this call.

5. ADMISSIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

Applications shall comply with the following requirements:

- they must be sent no later than the deadline for submitting applications referred to in Section 3 of the present guidelines;
- they must be submitted online (see Section 14 of the present guidelines), using the electronic application form and its compulsory annexes;
- they must be drafted in one of the EU official languages.

Please note that only typed applications will be considered.

The application form must be accompanied by a balanced budget and all the other documents referred to in the application form.

Failure to comply with those requirements will lead to the rejection of the application.

In order to submit an application, applicants must provide their Participant Identification Code (PIC) in the application form¹⁵. The PIC can be obtained by registering the organisation in the Unique Registration Facility (URF) hosted in the Education, Audiovisual, Culture, Citizenship and Volunteering Participant Portal. The Unique Registration Facility is a tool shared by other services of the European Commission. If an applicant or affiliated entity already has a PIC that has been used for other programmes (for example the Research programmes), the same PIC is valid for the present call for proposals.

The Participant Portal allows applicants and affiliated entities to upload or update the information related to their legal status and attach the requested legal and financial documents (see Section 14.2 for more information).

Only applications that comply with admissibility requirements will pass at evaluation stage.

¹⁵ Affiliated entities must also provide a PIC. This PIC has to be indicated in the 'Detailed Project Description' which is part of the Application Package.

6. ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

The proposals which comply with the below criteria will be the subject of a content evaluation. Only applications that fulfil the eligibility criteria will be considered for a grant. If an application is deemed ineligible, a letter indicating the reasons will be sent to the coordinator.

The eligibility criteria will be assessed on the basis of the information provided in the application form.

6.1 Eligible applicants

Eligible applicants are public and private organisations active in the field of education and training or other sectors such as non-formal learning, including a.o. youth, other socio-economic sectors, and/or organisations carrying out cross-sectoral activities.

Applicants considered eligible to respond to this call are:

- public authorities at national/regional/local level responsible for education and training policy;
- non-profit organisations (NGOs), private or public;
- research centres;
- schools or other educational institutions;
- higher education institutions;
- chambers of commerce;
- stakeholders networks;
- recognition centres;
- evaluation/quality assurance bodies;
- trade organisations and employers;
- trade unions and staff associations;
- career guidance services;
- civil society and cultural organisations;
- companies;
- international organisations.

Furthermore, for the implementation of this call for proposals, National Agencies or other structures and networks of the Erasmus+ Programme, receiving a direct grant from the Commission in accordance with the legal basis of the Programme¹⁶ are not eligible to participate. Nevertheless, the legal entities hosting the Erasmus+ National Agencies or the

¹⁶ See footnote nr. 1

structures and networks mentioned above, as well as entities affiliated to these legal entities, are considered eligible applicants. However, they have to demonstrate, before being awarded a grant, that they are not in a conflict of interest either because precautionary measures are taken by them or because their internal organisation is such that there is a clear separation of interests.(e.g. a minimum separation of accounts, separation of reporting and decision making lines, measures to prevent access to privileged information). Furthermore, costs and revenues of each action or activity for which the EU funds are awarded must be identified.

Legal entities having a legal or capital link with a beneficiary, which is neither limited to the project nor established for the sole purpose of its implementation may take part in the project as affiliated entities, and may declare eligible costs as specified in Section 11.2.

For that purpose, applicants shall identify such affiliated entities in the 'Detailed Project Description' which is part of the Application Package and confirm this list at the stage of notification of project results. Supporting documents proving the affiliation (legal or capital link), as well as that they comply with the eligibility and non-exclusion criteria must be submitted.

Applicants should clearly demonstrate that the partnership includes partners that are **key actors active in the fields of education and training**; such as public authorities or European stakeholders' networks, being able to build partnerships bridging analysis, practice and policy making; possessing a state of the art knowledge and proven record of experience in the fields of education and training; having the capacity to provide results that have the potential to be transferred into policy making and influence the European policy agenda.

Only applications from legal entities established in the following **programme countries** are eligible:

- the 28 Member States of the European Union;
- the EFTA/EEA countries: Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway;
- EU candidate countries: the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Turkey.

The **minimum partnership composition requirement** for this call is **3 organisations** representing **3 programme countries**.

In order to assess the applicants' eligibility, the following supporting documents are requested:

- **for a private entity**: extract from the official journal, copy of articles of association, extract of trade or association register, certificate of liability to VAT (if, as in certain programme countries, the trade register number and VAT number are identical, only one of these documents is required);
- **for a public entity**: copy of the resolution or decision establishing the public company, or other official document establishing the public-law entity;
- entities without legal personality: documents providing evidence that their representative(s) have the capacity to undertake legal obligations on their behalf.

Role of applicants and partners:

Applicants: this term refers to all organisations and institutions participating in the application regardless of their role in the project. It therefore includes the coordinator and all the other applicants. When the grant is awarded and the Grant Agreement is signed, they will become the beneficiaries.

Coordinator: the legal entity that submits the project application on behalf of all the applicants. If the application is selected and the project receives a grant, the coordinator will sign a multi-beneficiary grant agreement on behalf of all the applicants.

Its coordinating role stands amongst others for the following duties:

- represents and acts on behalf of the applicants vis-à-vis the European Commission and the Agency;
- coordinates the project in cooperation with all other project partners.

The coordinator must submit the mandate letters from all applicants involved in the proposal confirming their participation as annex to the application form (see Section 14).

Other applicants/partners: they are the legal entities participating in the partnership. They contribute to the implementation of the project. Each applicant must sign a mandate letter authorising the coordinator to act on his behalf in compliance with the Grant Agreement.

Associate partners: Additionally, the project may benefit from the involvement of associated partners (optional). These organisations contribute to the implementation of specific tasks/activities and/or support the dissemination and sustainability of the projects. They will not benefit financially from the EU grant. Those associate partners can be established both in Programme or partner countries. The names of the associated partners have to be provided in the Project Description which is an annex of the application form.

6.2 Eligible activities and project duration

The activities to be financed under this call may include (not exhaustive list):

- Analyses, studies, mapping exercises;
- Research activities;
- Training activities;
- Drafting of reports, project conclusions, policy recommendations;
- Workshops;
- Conferences/seminars;
- Tests and assessments of innovative approaches at grass-root level;
- Awareness-raising and dissemination actions;
- Actions aiming at the creation and improvement of networks, exchange of good practice;
- Development of ICT tools (software, platforms, apps, etc.) or learning resources;
- Development of other intellectual outputs.

Only activities taking place in Programme countries (see Section 6.1) will be considered eligible for funding. Any costs relating to activities undertaken outside these countries or by

organisations that are not registered in the Programme countries are not eligible unless they are necessary for the completion of the project and duly explained and justified in the application form. Any Amendment to the activities that involves other countries than the Programme countries must have the prior specific authorization from the Executive Agency.

Activities must start on 1 November 2017, 1 December 2017 or 1 January 2018.

The project duration must be between 24 and 36 months. However, if after the signing of the agreement and the start of the project it becomes impossible for the beneficiaries, for fully justified reasons beyond their control, to complete the project within the scheduled period, an extension to the eligibility period may be granted. A maximum extension of 6 additional months will be granted, if requested before the deadline specified in the grant agreement.

7. EXCLUSION CRITERIA

7.1 Exclusion from participation

An applicant will be excluded from participating in calls for proposals procedure, if it is in any of the following situations:

a) it is bankrupt, subject to insolvency or winding up procedures, its assets are being administered by a liquidator or by a court, it is in an arrangement with creditors, its business activities are suspended or it is in any analogous situation arising from a similar procedure provided for under national legislation or regulations;

b) it has been established by a final judgement or a final administrative decision that the applicant is in breach of its obligations relating to the payment of taxes or social security contributions in accordance with the law of the country in which it is established, with those of the country in which the authorising officer is located or those of the country of the implementation of the grant;

c) it has been established by a final judgement or a final administrative decision that the applicant is guilty of grave professional misconduct by having violated applicable laws or regulations or ethical standards of the profession to which the applicant belongs, or by having engaged in any wrongful conduct which has an impact on its professional credibility where such conduct denotes wrongful intent or gross negligence, including, in particular, any of the following:

i. fraudulently or negligently misrepresenting information required for the verification of the absence of grounds for exclusion or the fulfilment of selection criteria or in the performance of a contract, a grant agreement or a grant decision;

ii. entering into agreement with other persons with the aim of distorting competition;

iii. violating intellectual property rights;

iv. attempting to influence the decision-making process of the Agency during the award procedure;

v. attempting to obtain confidential information that may confer upon it undue advantages in the award procedure;

d) it has been established by a final judgement that the applicant is guilty of any of the following:

i. fraud, within the meaning of Article 1 of the Convention on the protection of the European Communities' financial interests, drawn up by the Council Act of 26 July 1995;

- ii. corruption, as defined in Article 3 of the Convention on the fight against corruption involving officials of the European Communities or officials of EU Member States, drawn up by the Council Act of 26 May 1997, and in Article 2(1) of Council Framework Decision 2003/568/JHA, as well as corruption as defined in the legal provisions of the country where the authorising officer is located, the country in which the applicant is established or the country of the implementation of the grant;
 - iii. participation in a criminal organisation, as defined in Article 2 of Council Framework Decision 2008/841/JHA;
 - iv. money laundering or terrorist financing, as defined in Article 1 of Directive 2005/60/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council;
 - v. terrorist-related offences or offences linked to terrorist activities, as defined in Articles 1 and 3 of Council Framework Decision 2002/475/JHA, respectively, or inciting, aiding, abetting or attempting to commit such offences, as referred to in Article 4 of that Decision;
 - vi. child labour or other forms of trafficking in human beings as defined in Article 2 of Directive 2011/36/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council;
- e) it has shown significant deficiencies in complying with the main obligations in the performance of a contract, a grant agreement or a grant decision financed by the Union's budget, which has led to its early termination or to the application of liquidated damages or other contractual penalties, or which has been discovered following checks, audits or investigations by an Authorising Officer, OLAF or the Court of Auditors;
- f) it has been established by a final judgement or final administrative decision that the applicant has committed an irregularity within the meaning of Article 1(2) of Council Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 2988/95;
- g) in the absence of a final judgement or where applicable a final administrative decision, the applicant is in one of the cases provided in (c) to (f) above based in particular on :
- i. facts established in the context of audits or investigations carried out by the Court of Auditors, OLAF or internal audit, or any other check, audit or control performed under the responsibility of an authorising officer of an EU institution, of a European office or of an EU agency or body;
 - ii. non-final administrative decisions which may include disciplinary measures taken by the competent supervisory body responsible for the verification of the application of standards of professional ethics;
 - iii. decisions of the ECB, the EIB, the European Investment Fund or international organisations;
 - iv. decisions of the Commission relating to the infringement of the Union's competition rules or of a national competent authority relating to the infringement of Union or national competition law.
 - v. decisions of exclusion by an authorising officer of an EU institution, of a European office or of an EU agency or body.
- (h) where a person who is a member of the administrative, management or supervisory body of the applicant, or who has powers of representation, decision or control with regard to that applicant (this covers the company directors, members of the management or supervisory bodies, and cases where one person holds a majority of shares), is in one or more of the situations referred to in points (c) to (f) above.
- (i) where a natural or legal person that assumes unlimited liability for the debts of that applicant is in one or more of the situations referred to in point (a) or (b) above.

If an applicant is in one of the situations of exclusion listed above, it should indicate the measures it has taken to remedy the exclusion situation, thus demonstrating its reliability. They may include e.g. technical, organisational and personnel measures to prevent further occurrence, compensation of damage or payment of fines. This does not apply for the situations referred in point (d) of this section.

In the cases provided in (c) to (f) above, in the absence of a final judgement or where applicable a final administrative decision, the Agency may exclude an applicant provisionally from participating in a call for proposals where their participation would constitute a serious and imminent threat to the Union's financial interests.

7.2 Rejection from the award procedure

An applicant will not be awarded a grant for this procedure if:

- (a) it is in an exclusion situation established in accordance with the above Section 7.1;
- (b) it has misrepresented the information required as a condition for participating in the procedure or has failed to supply that information;
- (c) it was previously involved in the preparation of a call for proposals where this entails a distortion of competition that cannot be remedied otherwise.

The same exclusion criteria apply to affiliated entities.

Rejection from this procedure and administrative sanctions (exclusion or financial penalty) may be imposed on applicants or affiliated entities where applicable, if any of the declarations or information provided as a condition for participating in this procedure prove to be false.

The applicants should be informed that the Agency may publish on its internet site the following information related to the exclusion and, where applicable, the financial penalty in the cases referred to in points (c), (d), (e) and (f) of the Section 7.1¹⁷:

- (a) the name of the applicant concerned;
- (b) the exclusion situation;
- (c) the duration of the exclusion and/or the amount of the financial penalty.

¹⁷ This information shall not be published in any of the following circumstances:

- (a) where it is necessary to preserve the confidentiality of an investigation or of national judicial proceedings;
- (b) where publication would cause disproportionate damage to the applicant concerned or would otherwise be disproportionate on the basis of the proportionality criteria and to the amount of the financial penalty;
- (c) where a natural person is concerned, unless the publication of personal data is exceptionally justified, inter alia, by the seriousness of the conduct or its impact on the Union's financial interests. In such cases, the decision to publish the information shall duly take into consideration the right to privacy and other rights provided for in Regulation (EC) No 45/2001.

In case of a preliminary classification in law (i.e. absence of a final judgement or a final administrative decision), the publication shall indicate that there is no final judgement or final administrative decision. In those cases, information about any appeals by the applicant, their status and their outcome, as well as any revised decision of the authorised officer, shall be published without delay. Where a financial penalty has been imposed, the publication shall also indicate whether that penalty has been paid.

The decision to publish the information is taken by the Agency either following the relevant final judgement, final administrative decision or preliminary classification in law, as the case may be. That decision shall take effect three months after its notification to the economic operator.

The information published shall be removed as soon as the exclusion has come to an end. In the case of a financial penalty, the publication shall be removed six months after payment of that penalty.

In accordance with Regulation (EC) No 45/2001, where personal data is concerned, the Agency shall inform the applicant of its rights under the applicable data protection rules and of the procedures available for exercising those rights.

7.3 Supporting documents

Applicants must sign a declaration on their honour certifying that they are not in one of the situations referred to in the above Sections 7.1. and 7.2, filling in the relevant form attached to the application form accompanying the call for proposals. If applicable, the relevant documentary evidence which appropriately illustrates any remedial measures taken should be provided in annex to this declaration.

This declaration is part of the Application Package (see Section 14.3).

8. SELECTION CRITERIA

Applicants must submit a declaration on their honour, completed and signed, attesting to their status as a legal person and to their financial and operational capacity to complete the proposed activities.

8.1 Financial capacity

Applicants must have stable and sufficient sources of funding to maintain their activity throughout the period during which the project is being carried out and to participate in its funding.

The applicants' financial capacity will be assessed on the basis of the following supporting documents:

1. Low value grants (equal or inferior to EUR 60.000):

- a declaration on their honour

2. Grants of more than EUR 60.000:

- a declaration on their honour;
- the financial statements (including the balance sheet, the profit and loss accounts and the annexes) of the coordinator, for the last two financial years for which the accounts have been closed;
- a completed financial capacity form, filled in with the relevant statutory accounting figures, in order to calculate the ratios as detailed in the form.

The documents required under points 1. and 2. shall be submitted only for the coordinator of the project.

The declaration on honour is submitted as an annex to the application form. The financial statements and the financial capacity form are required at a later stage of the selection process when the selection results are notified to the applicants.

The verification of financial capacity shall not apply to public bodies, or to international organisations.

For the purpose of this call, public bodies, as well as schools, higher education institutions and organisations in the fields of education, training, youth and sport that have received over 50 % of their annual revenue from public sources over the last two years shall be considered as having the necessary financial, professional and administrative capacity to carry out activities under the Call for proposals. They shall not be required to present further documentation to demonstrate that capacity. Such organisations are required to declare (at the stage of the notification of the selection results) that their organisation complies with the above-mentioned definition of public body. The Agency reserves the right to request documentation to prove the veracity of this declaration.

If, on the basis of the documents submitted, the Agency considers that financial capacity has not been proved or is not satisfactory, it may:

- request further information;
- propose a grant agreement without pre-financing;
- propose a grant agreement with a pre-financing paid in instalments (against an interim report);
- propose a grant agreement with a pre-financing covered by a bank guarantee (see Section 11.4 below);
- where applicable, require the joint and several financial liability of all the beneficiaries;
- reject the application.

8.2 Operational capacity

Applicants must have the professional competencies as well as appropriate qualifications necessary to complete the proposed project. In this respect, applicants have to submit a declaration on their honour, and, for those applying for a grant above EUR 60.000, must include in the Application Package:

- a description of the profile of the people primarily responsible for managing and implementing the operation (accompanied, where appropriate, by a list of relevant publications) within each partner institution showing all their relevant professional experience;

- an exhaustive list of past or current projects connected to the selected policy priority of the call implemented by the applicants in the three last years.

9. AWARD CRITERIA

Eligible proposals will be assessed on the basis of the following criteria:

Relevance of the project (30%)

- The objectives of the project are clear and pertinent to the call objectives and the selected call priority.
- The concept is sound and the proposed approach is credible.
- The project work is ambitious, has a clear innovation potential, and is beyond the state of the art (e.g. ground-breaking objectives, novel concepts and approaches).
- The proposal demonstrates the potential for transferring results to European policy development.
- Transnational cooperation allows achieving results that would not be achieved at country level alone, and there is potential for transferring results to other sectors or to countries not involved in the project or other sectors.

Quality of the project design and implementation (30%):

- The project design is clear, coherent, organized in different phases, with appropriate milestones and pertinent deliverables/outputs/results.
- The needs and target group(s) are defined and adequate results are described.
- The project management plan is sound with adequate resources allocated to different tasks, clear cooperation and decision-making processes. The monitoring strategy includes risk identification and a mitigating actions plan.
- There is a clear quality assurance plan which also covers project management adequately. The implementation refers concretely to how the evidence base built can be transferred into policy actions.
- The budget shows cost effectiveness and value for money. There is coherence between tasks, roles and financial resources allocated to partners. The financial management arrangements are clear and appropriate for the consortium and the design of the proposal.

Quality of the partnership and cooperation arrangements (20%):

- The partnership is composed of organizations and institutions that are capable of ensuring full achievement of the objectives of the call with due regard to the priority selected by the applicants.
- The partnership is composite and ensures coverage of all necessary skills and expertise (bridging analysis, practice and policy making) with adequate allocation of time and input. Skills and competences of the partnership are complementary.
- The cooperation arrangements within the partnership are balanced. The roles attributed to each partner guarantee a good balance between analysis work and exploitable outputs for policy making.
- The partnership demonstrates its capacity to translate results into policy actions and transfer these to policy makers.

- The partnership should demonstrate the potential to influence the European policy Agenda.

Impact on policy development and dissemination (20%):

- There is a clearly defined potential impact at European level related to the priority addressed.
- There is a clear awareness-raising, dissemination and communication strategy that ensures reaching the relevant target group(s) as well as the relevant stakeholders and the general public during the lifetime of the project. This strategy includes plans for making any educational materials¹⁸ accessible through open licenses.
- The exploitation approach is clearly described and the proposed measures to exploit the project results are effective.
- The project outcomes are strengthening the educational landscape by developing innovations which meet the needs of the Education and Training field related to the chosen priority and where relevant by delivering such innovations to the practice.
- The project outcomes have the potential for long-term impact on improving, advancing or developing new policy action(s) in the related field.

Only proposals having reached the minimum quality thresholds:

- at least the threshold of 50% of each criterion (i.e minimum 15 points for respectively "Relevance of the project" and "Quality of the project design and implementation"; 10 points for respectively "Quality of the partnership and cooperation arrangements" and "Impact on policy development and dissemination"; and
- at least the threshold of 70% on the total score (i.e. aggregate score of the 4 award criteria)

will be considered for EU funding. Applications falling below those thresholds shall be rejected.

The final ranking of the proposals may be adjusted by the Evaluation Committee¹⁹ to ensure a more balanced number of projects per policy priority in the call. A proposal (above the quality threshold of 70%) with a lower score may be placed in a higher position in the ranking list if this ensures better coverage of all policy priorities and provided that the principles of equal treatment and non-discrimination are duly taken into account.

¹⁸ For this purpose, educational materials should be understood as any materials meant to provide support to teaching and learning processes, such as course syllabi, class notes, presentations, exercises, textbooks, interactive materials or other. Open licenses for these materials should guarantee, as a minimum, free access for any individual or organization. Applicants are allowed to include limitations in the open licenses as appropriate. In terms of open access policy, wherever relevant, the proposal will describe how the materials and documents will be made freely available and promoted through open licenses and do not contain misappropriate limitations.

¹⁹ The Evaluation Committee includes representatives from the Agency and from the relevant Directorates-Generals of the European Commission. The role of the Evaluation Committee is to supervise the overall assessment procedure, to guarantee the equal treatment of all applications through a fair and transparent application of the procedures and to make a grant award proposal to the Agency's Director in charge of taking the grant award decision.

10. LEGAL COMMITMENT

In the event of a grant awarded by the Agency, a grant agreement drawn up in euro and detailing the conditions and level of funding will be sent to the coordinator representing all project partners (other applicants) in view to formalize the obligations of the parties.

The two copies of the original agreement must be signed first by the legal representative of the coordinator and returned to the Agency immediately. The Agency will sign them last.

11. FINANCIAL PROVISIONS

11.1 General Principles

a) Non-cumulative award

A project may only receive one grant from the EU budget.

In no circumstances shall the same costs be financed twice by the Union budget. To ensure this, applicants shall indicate in the application form the sources and amounts of European Union funding received or applied for the same project or part of the project or for its functioning during the same financial year as well as any other funding received or applied for the same project.

b) Non-retroactivity

No grant may be awarded retrospectively for projects already completed. A grant may be awarded for a project which has already begun only where the applicant can demonstrate the need to start the project before the grant agreement is signed.

In such cases, costs eligible for financing may not have been incurred prior to the date of submission of the grant application.

c) Co-financing

Co-financing means that the resources which are necessary to carry out the project may not be entirely provided by the EU grant.

Co-financing of the project may take the form of:

- the beneficiary's own resources;
- income generated by the project;
- financial contributions from third parties.

d) Balanced budget

The estimated budget of the project is to be attached to the application form. It must have revenue and expenditure in balance.

The budget must be drawn up in euros.

Applicants which foresee that costs will not be incurred in euros shall use the exchange rate published on the Infor-euro website available at http://ec.europa.eu/budget/contracts_grants/info_contracts/inforeuro/inforeuro_en.cfm on the date of the publication of this call for proposals.

e) Implementation contracts/subcontracting

Where the implementation of the project requires the award of procurement contracts (implementation contracts), the beneficiary must award the contract to the bid offering best value for money or the lowest price (as appropriate), avoiding conflicts of interests and retain the documentation for the event of an audit.

In the event of procurement exceeding EUR 60 000, the beneficiaries must obtain competitive tenders from at least 5 potential contractors, unless national rules prescribe differently. In the latter case, national rules will apply provided that the contracting authority is able to demonstrate, if requested, the coherence between the procedure followed and the national rules applied.

Moreover the beneficiaries are expected to clearly document the tendering procedure and retain the documentation for the event of an audit.

If applicable and the beneficiary does not comply with the above rule (competitive tenders from at least 5 potential contractors), the whole amount of the contract declared will be deemed ineligible.

Entities acting in their capacity of contracting authorities in the meaning of Directive 2014/24/EU²⁰ or contracting entities in the meaning of Directive 2014/25/EU²¹ shall abide by the applicable national public procurement rules.

Sub-contracting, i.e. the externalisation of specific tasks or activities which form part of the project as described in the proposal and which cannot be performed by the beneficiary itself must satisfy the conditions applicable to any implementation contract (as specified here above in Section 11.1 e) and in addition to them the following conditions:

- it may only cover the implementation of a limited part of the action;

²⁰ Directive 2014/24/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 26 February 2014 on public procurement and repealing Directive 2004/18/EC on the coordination of procedures for the award of public work contracts, public supply contracts and public service contracts: <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/GA/TXT/?uri=celex:32014L0024>

²¹ Directive 2014/25/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 26 February 2014 on procurement by entities operating in the water, energy, transport and postal services sectors and repealing Directive 2004/17/EC coordinating the procurement procedures of entities operating in the water, energy, transport and postal services sectors : <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:32014L0025>

- it must be justified having regard to the nature of the action and what is necessary for its implementation;
- it must be clearly stated in the proposal or prior written authorisation from the Agency must be obtained.

f) Financial support to third parties

The applications may not envisage provision of financial support to third parties.

11.2 Funding forms

General provisions

The grants financed through reimbursement of eligible costs in combination with flat rate covering overheads are calculated on the basis of a detailed estimated budget, indicating clearly the costs that are eligible for EU funding.

Maximum amount requested

The maximum amount requested will be EUR 500.000.

The EU grant is limited to a maximum co-financing rate of 75% of eligible project costs taking into account the maximum grant amount. Consequently, part of the total eligible expenses entered in the estimated budget must be financed from sources other than the Union grant.

The grant amount awarded may neither exceed the total eligible costs nor the grant amount requested. Amounts are indicated in euros.

Acceptance of an application by the Agency does not constitute an undertaking to award a grant equal to the amount requested by the beneficiary.

Eligible costs

Eligible costs are costs actually incurred by the beneficiary of a grant which meet the following criteria:

- they are incurred during the project duration as specified in the grant agreement, with the exception of costs relating to final reports and certificates.
The period of eligibility of costs will start as specified in the grant agreement. If a beneficiary can demonstrate the need to start the project before the agreement is signed, expenditure may be authorised before the grant is awarded. Under no circumstances can the eligibility period start before the date of submission of the grant application (see Section 11.1b).
- they are indicated in the estimated overall budget of the project;
- they are incurred in connection with the project which is the subject of the grant and are necessary for its implementation of the project;

- they are identifiable and verifiable, in particular being recorded in the accounting records of the beneficiary and determined according to the applicable accounting standards of the country where the beneficiary is established and according to the usual cost-accounting practices of the beneficiary;
- they comply with the requirements of applicable tax and social legislation;
- they are reasonable, justified, and comply with the requirements of sound financial management, in particular regarding economy and efficiency.

The beneficiary's internal accounting and auditing procedures must permit direct reconciliation of the costs and revenues declared in respect of the project with the corresponding accounting statements and supporting documents.

The same criteria apply to affiliated entities.

Eligible direct costs

The eligible direct costs for the project are those costs which, with due regard for the conditions of eligibility set out above, are identifiable as specific costs directly linked to the performance of the project and which can therefore be booked to it directly, such as:

- The cost of personnel working under an employment contract with the applicant or equivalent appointing act and assigned to the action/project, comprising actual salaries plus social security contributions and other statutory costs included in their remuneration, provided that these costs are in line with the applicant's usual policy on remuneration. **NB: this cost must be actual cost incurred by the beneficiaries and staff cost of other organisations is eligible only if it is paid directly or reimbursed by the beneficiary.** These costs may include additional remuneration, including payments on the basis of supplementary contracts regardless of their nature, provided that it is paid in a consistent manner whenever the same kind of work or expertise is required and independently from the source of funding used.
- The corresponding salary costs of personnel of national administrations are eligible to the extent that they relate to the cost of activities which the relevant public authority would not carry out if the project concerned was not undertaken;
- Subsistence allowances (for meetings, European conferences, etc.) provided that they are in line with the beneficiaries' usual practices on subsistence allowances;
- Travel allowances (for meetings, European conferences, etc.), provided that they are in line with the beneficiaries usual practices on travel allowances;
- Cost of equipment (new or second-hand), provided that it is written off in accordance with the tax and accounting rules applicable to the beneficiaries and generally accepted for items of the same kind. Only the portion of the equipment's depreciation corresponding to the duration of the project and the rate of actual use for the purposes of the project may be taken into account by the Agency, except where the nature and/or the context of its use justifies different treatment by the Agency;
- Costs of consumables and supplies, provided that they are identifiable and assigned to the project;

- Costs entailed by other contracts awarded by the beneficiaries for the purposes of carrying out the project, provided that the conditions laid down in the grant agreement are met;
- Costs arising directly from requirements linked to the performance of the project (dissemination of information, specific evaluation of the project, audits, translations, reproduction, etc.), including, where applicable, the costs of any financial services (especially the cost of financial guarantees);
- Non-deductible VAT unless it is related to activities of public authorities in the Member States;
- Costs relating to the external audits in support of the requests for payments.

Eligible indirect costs (administrative costs)

A flat-rate amount, up to 7% of the eligible direct costs of the project, is eligible under indirect costs, representing the beneficiaries' general administrative costs that can be regarded as chargeable to the project. Indirect costs may not include costs entered under another budget heading. Applicants' attention is drawn to the fact that in the case of organisations receiving an operating grant, indirect costs are no longer eligible under the present call for those organisations.

Ineligible costs

The following costs shall not be considered eligible:

- Return on capital;
- Debt and debt service charges;
- Provisions for losses or potential future liabilities;
- Interest owed;
- Costs of transfer from the Agency charged by the bank of the beneficiary;
- Doubtful debts;
- Exchange losses;
- Costs declared by the beneficiaries and covered by another project receiving a European Union grant. In particular, indirect costs shall not be eligible under a grant for a project awarded to the beneficiary who already receives an operating grant financed from the Union budget during the period in question;
- Contributions in kind;
- Excessive or reckless expenditure;
- Expenses for travel to or from countries outside Programme countries, unless explicit prior authorisation is granted by the Agency.

Calculation of the final grant amount – Supporting documents

The final amount of the grant to be awarded to the beneficiary is established after completion of the action, upon approval of the request for payment containing the following documents:

- A final report providing details of the implementation and results of the project;

- A financial statement of project costs actually incurred.

In case of grant for an action equal or inferior to EUR 60.000, the beneficiary is required to submit the following sample of supporting documents:

Budget item/heading	Sample to be annexed to the Final Financial Report
Staff	The three highest consolidated staff costs (i.e. staff member costs) for the whole eligibility period.
Subcontracting	The three highest value subcontracts
Travel and subsistence	25% of the highest costs declared under this budget item

Example of underlining documents to be submitted in support of the final payment:

1) Staff costs: employment contract (or equivalent document), payroll (or remuneration's receipts), proof of payments and the time sheets or equivalent documents showing the manpower's work effort (i.e. number of working days);

2) Subcontracting: quotes (if applicable), contracts, invoices and proofs of payments;

3) Travel and subsistence: copy of tickets and boarding passes, hotel invoices (and proof of payments).

In case of grant for an action more than EUR 60.000, the beneficiary is required to submit in support of the final payment, a "Report of factual findings on the Final Financial Report – Type I" produced by an approved auditor or in case of public bodies, by a competent and independent public officer.

The procedure and the format to be followed by an approved auditor or in case of public bodies, by a competent and independent public officer are detailed in the "Guidance Notes" available under the following link: https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/about-eacea/document-register_en. The use of the report format set by the 'Guidance Notes' is compulsory.

In the event of non-execution or clearly inadequate execution of an activity planned in the application attached to the grant agreement, the final grant will be reduced accordingly.

After analysis of the declared costs, if the eligible costs actually incurred by the beneficiary are lower than anticipated, the Agency will apply the rate of co-financing stated in the grant agreement to the expenditure actually incurred.

Non-profit rule:

EU grants may not have the purpose or effect of producing a profit within the framework of the project of the beneficiary. Profit shall be defined as a surplus of receipts over the eligible costs incurred by the beneficiary, when the request is made for payment of the balance. In this respect, where a profit is made, the Agency shall be entitled to recover a percentage of the profit corresponding to the Union contribution to the eligible costs actually incurred by the

beneficiary to carry out the project.

The verification of non-profit rule does not apply to a grant equal or inferior to EUR 60.000.

11.3 Payment arrangements

A pre-financing payment corresponding to 40% of the grant amount will be transferred to the coordinator within 30 days of the date when the last of the two parties signs the agreement, provided all requested guarantees have been received. Pre-financing is intended to provide the beneficiaries with a float.

A second pre-financing payment of 40% of the total grant amount will be made within 60 days after the Agency receives a request for payment accompanied by a progress report on the project's implementation, provided the Agency approves the report. This second pre-financing payment may not be made until at least 70% of the previous pre-financing payment has been used up. Where the consumption of the previous pre-financing is less than 70%, the amount of the new pre-financing payment shall be reduced by the unused amounts of the previous pre-financing.

The Agency will establish the amount of the final payment to be made to the coordinator on the basis of the calculation of the final grant amount.

If the total of earlier payments is higher than the final grant amount, the coordinator will be required to reimburse the amount paid in excess by the Agency through a recovery order.

11.4 Pre-financing guarantee

The Agency may require any organisation for which the financial capacity is not satisfactory to provide a guarantee for up to the same amount as the pre-financing in order to limit the financial risks linked to the pre-financing payment.

The purpose of this guarantee is to make a bank, a financial institution, or third party stand as irrevocable collateral security for, or first-call guarantor of, the grant beneficiaries' obligations. This financial guarantee, in euro, shall be provided by an approved bank or financial institution established in one of the Member State of the European Union.

The guarantee may be replaced by joint and several guarantees by a third party or by a joint guarantee of the beneficiaries of a project who are parties to the same grant agreement. The guarantee shall be released as the pre-financing is gradually cleared against interim payments or payments of balances to the beneficiary, in accordance with the conditions laid down in the grant agreement.

This requirement does not apply to public bodies and international organisations under public law established by intergovernmental agreements, specialised agencies created by such organisations, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) or the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies.

12. PUBLICITY

12.1 By the beneficiaries

Beneficiaries must clearly acknowledge the European Union's contribution in all publications or in conjunction with activities for which the grant is used.

Furthermore, beneficiaries are required to give prominence to the name and logo of the European Commission on all their publications, posters, programmes and other products realised under the co-financed project. To do this, they must use the format and the logo of the relevant programme, which is provided by the Agency at the following webpage: http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/about/eacea_logos_en.php. If this requirement is not fully complied with, the beneficiary's grant may be reduced in accordance with the provisions of the grant agreement.

12.2 By the Agency and/or the Commission

With the exception of scholarships paid to natural persons and other direct support paid to natural persons in most need, all information relating to grants awarded in the course of a financial year must be published on the Internet site of the European Union institutions no later than 30 June of the year following the financial year in which the grants were awarded.

The Agency and/or the European Commission will publish the following information:

- the name of the beneficiary;
- The locality of the beneficiary: address of the beneficiary when the latter is a legal person, region when the beneficiary is a natural person, as defined on NUTS 2 level if he/she is domiciled within the EU or equivalent if domiciled outside the EU;
- the amount awarded;
- the nature and purpose of the grant.

Upon a reasoned and duly substantiated request by the beneficiary, the publication shall be waived if such disclosure risks threatening the rights and freedoms of individuals concerned as protected by the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union or harm commercial interests of the beneficiaries.

12.3 Dissemination and exploitation

Activities serving the dissemination and exploitation of results are a way to showcase the work that has been done as part of the Erasmus+ project: sharing results, lessons learned, outcomes and findings beyond the participating organisations will enable a wider community to benefit from a work that has received EU funding, as well as to promote the organisation's efforts towards the objectives of Erasmus+, which attaches fundamental importance to the link between the Programme and policies.

For more information on dissemination and exploitation of project result requirements, please refer to the Erasmus+ Programme guide available under this link:

http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/resources_en

13. DATA PROTECTION

All personal data (such as names, addresses, CVs, etc.) will be processed in accordance with Regulation (EC) No 45/2001 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 December 2000 on the protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data by the European Community institutions and bodies and on the free movement of such data. Unless marked as optional, the applicant's replies to the questions in the application form are necessary to evaluate and further process the grant application in accordance with the specifications of the call for proposals. Personal data will be processed solely for that purpose by the department or Unit responsible for the Union grant programme concerned (entity acting as data controller). Personal data may be transferred on a need to know basis to third parties involved in the evaluation of proposals or in the grant management procedure, without prejudice of transfer to the bodies in charge of monitoring and inspection tasks in accordance with European Union law. In particular, for the purposes of safeguarding the financial interests of the Union, personal data may be transferred to internal audit services, to the European Court of Auditors, to the Financial Irregularities Panel or to the European Anti-Fraud Office and between authorising officers of the Commission and the executive agencies. The applicant has the right of access to, and to rectify, the data concerning him or her. For any question relating to these data, please contact the Controller. Applicants have the right of recourse to the European Data Protection Supervisor at any time. A detailed Privacy statement, including contact information, is available on EACEA's website: http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/about/documents/calls_gen_conditions/eacea_grants_privacy_statement.pdf

Applicants and, if they are legal entities, persons who are members of the administrative, management or supervisory board of that applicant or who have powers of representation, decision or control with regard to that applicant, or natural or legal persons that assume unlimited liability for the debts of that applicant, are informed that, their personal data (name, given name if natural person, address, legal form and name and given name of the persons with powers of representation, decision-making or control, if legal person) may be registered in the Early Detection and Exclusion System (EDES) by the Authorising Officer of the Agency, should they be in one of the situations mentioned in Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 966/2012 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 October 2012 on the financial rules applicable to the general budget of the Union and repealing Council Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 1605/2002 (OJ L 298 of 26.10.2012, p. 1) as amended by the Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2015/1929 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 28 October 2015 (OJ L 286, 30.10.2015, p. 1).

14. PROCEDURE FOR THE SUBMISSION OF PROPOSALS

14.1 Publication

The call for proposals is published in the Official Journal of the European Union and on the following website:

https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/erasmus-plus/funding/forward-looking-cooperation-projects-2017-eacea412016_en

14.2 Registration in the Participant Portal

Before submitting an application, applicants and affiliated entities will have to register their organisation in the Education, Audiovisual, Culture, Citizenship and Volunteering Participant Portal and receive a Participant Identification Code (PIC). The PIC will be requested in the application form for applicants and in the 'Detailed Project Description' for affiliated entities.

The Participant Portal is the tool through which all legal and financial information related to organisations will be managed. It is accessible via the Education, Audiovisual, Culture, Citizenship and Volunteering Participant Portal. Information on how to register can be found in the portal under the following address: <http://ec.europa.eu/education/participants/portal>

The tool also allows applicants to upload different documents related to their organisation. These documents have to be uploaded once and will not be requested again for subsequent applications by the same organisation.

The relevant documents to be uploaded for the purpose of this call for proposals are the following:

- Legal entity form: this document summarises the legal details of the coordinator. For public-law entities the legal resolution or decision established in respect of the public company, or other official document established for the public-law entity needs to be submitted with the legal entity form. For private-law bodies, the statutes and official registration of the company are requested.

More details on the supporting document that need to be uploaded in the portal can be found on the following website: https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/erasmus-plus/funding/forward-looking-cooperation-projects-2017-eacea412016_en

The Agency can propose an agreement only on the basis of acceptance of documents which make it possible to define the beneficiary's legal personality (public administration, private company, or non-profit organisation, etc.), and on the provision of financial identification/ bank details.

14.3 Submission of the grant application

Proposals must be submitted in accordance with the admissibility requirements set out under Section 5.

Applicants are requested to read carefully all information about the call for proposals, the submission procedure and to use the documents forming part of the application ('Application Package') at: https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/erasmus-plus/funding/forward-looking-cooperation-projects-2017-eacea412016_en

The application form is available on the Internet at the following address: <https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/PPMT/>.

The full Application Package must be submitted online by the deadline set out in Section 3 on the correct E-form, duly completed and containing all relevant and applicable annexes and

supporting documents. Application forms which do not include all the necessary information and which are not submitted online by the deadline will not be considered. Application forms sent by e-mail, by paper and/or fax will not be accepted.

No modifications to the application are allowed once the deadline for submission has elapsed. However, if there is a need to clarify certain aspects or for the correction of clerical mistakes, the Agency may contact the applicant for this purpose during the evaluation process.

All applicants will be informed in writing about the results of the selection process.

14.4 Applicable rules

- Regulation (EU) N° 1288/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 December 2013 establishing 'Erasmus+': the Union programme for education, training, youth and sport and repealing Decisions No 1719/2006/EC, No 1720/2006/EC and No 1298/2008/EC;
- Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 966/2012 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 October 2012 on the financial rules applicable to the general budget of the Union (OJ L 298, 26.10.2012, p.1) as amended by the Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2015/1929 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 28 October 2015 (OJ L 286, 30.10.2015, p. 1);
- Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) No 1268/2012 of 29 October 2012 on the rules of application of Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 966/2012 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 October 2012 on the financial rules applicable to the general budget of the Union (OJ L 362, 31.12.2012, p.1) as amended by the Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2015/2462 of 30 October 2015 amending Delegated Regulation (EU) No 1268/2012 on the rules of application of Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 966/2012 of the European Parliament and of the Council on the financial rules applicable to the general budget of the Union (OJ L 342, 29.12.2015, p. 7).

14.5 Contacts

If you have any questions, please contact:

EACEA-Policy-Support@ec.europa.eu