



Guidelines for Applicants

Call for proposals EACEA 36/2018

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

European Forward-Looking Cooperation Projects

in the fields of Education and Training

Important: Please note that the standard Grant Agreements of the Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency (hereafter referred to as 'EACEA' or 'the Agency') are currently under revision due to the entry into force (on 2 August 2018) of the Financial Regulation 2018/1046 (see Section 14.4. below). For this reason, the draft Grant Agreements related to this call are sent as an example and, consequently, the Agency reserves the right to introduce changes or additional details subject to the new provisions of the Financial Regulation. In this case the Agency will announce the changes as soon as possible and, at the latest, before the signature of the grant agreements.

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	15
4. BUDGET AVAILABLE	15
5. ADMISSIBILITY REQUIREMENTS	15
6. ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA	16
6.1 Eligible applicants	16
6.2 Eligible activities and project duration	18
7. EXCLUSION CRITERIA	18
7.1 Exclusion from participation	18
7.2 Rejection from the award procedure	20
7.3 Supporting documents	21
8. SELECTION CRITERIA	22
8.1 Financial capacity	22
8.2 Operational capacity	23
9. AWARD CRITERIA	23
10. LEGAL COMMITMENT	25
11. FINANCIAL PROVISIONS	25
11.1 General Principles	25
11.2 Funding forms	27

11.3 Payment arrangements	31
11.4 Pre-financing guarantee	32
12. PUBLICITY	32
12.1 By the beneficiaries	32
12.2 By the Agency and/or the Commission	32
12.3 Dissemination and exploitation	33
13. DATA PROTECTION	33
14. PROCEDURE FOR THE SUBMISSION OF PROPOSALS	34
14.1 Publication	34
14.2 Registration in the Participant Portal	34
14.3 Submission of the grant application	35
14.4 Applicable rules	36
14.5 Contacts	36

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 2019 Annual Work Programme for the implementation of Erasmus+ provides funding for Forward Looking Cooperation Projects under section 5.2.2.b (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

European societies need to address major challenges such as new demographic trends, the increasing diversity of the population, technological transformations, growing digitalisation and environmentally sustainable growth. While unemployment is high, especially among young people, a high level of inequality in the society risk increasing social exclusion.

Education and training are key to help address these challenges, but also to harness the significant opportunities linked to the current and future transformations. There is a clear need for strong and targeted actions both at the EU and Member States level.

In the European Union, 70 million people lack adequate reading and writing skills, and even more have poor numeracy and digital skills. This situation has been deteriorating during the last few years. Furthermore, 4.5 million young people leave education without upper secondary qualifications. This trend is particularly worrying in some EU Member States, especially for youngsters with a migrant background. There is also evidence that too few people have the transversal skills to deal with the complexity of changes in society and the world of work, which require in particular new skills, competences and attitudes.

¹ The 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

³ Forward 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 2019 Annual Work Programme for the implementation of Erasmus+ - C(2018) 6572, Section 5.2.2.b: https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/sites/erasmusplus2/files/c-2018-6572_en.pdf

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

Education and training systems need to better focus on innovation, equity and inclusion in a lifelong learning perspective, providing skills and competences for employability and entrepreneurship. But they also need to help uphold EU common values and promote active citizenship.

They need to cater for effective teacher education and professional development, including on how to take advantage of technology, digitalisation and new media to improve teaching and learning.

In November 2017, at the Gothenburg Social Summit for Fair Growth and Jobs in Gothenburg President of the European Commission Jean-Claude Juncker stated that "*Education and culture are the key to the future – both for the individual as well as for our Union as a whole. It is how we turn circumstance into opportunity, how we turn mirrors into windows and how we give roots to what it means to be 'European', in all its diversity*".⁶

On the same occasion, the Commission President, together with the EU Heads of State and government and the President of the European Parliament, proclaimed the European Pillar of Social Rights⁷ which establishes as its first principle that "*everyone has the right to quality and inclusive education, training and life-long learning in order to maintain and acquire skills that enable them to participate fully in society and manage successfully transitions in the labour market*".

In December 2018, the European Council reiterated that education and culture are key to building inclusive and cohesive societies and to sustaining the EU's competitiveness. It called on Member States, the Council and the Commission, in line with their respective competences, to take the Gothenburg agenda forward.

The European Commission has responded to this mandate by adopting in 2018 a number of new initiatives to pave the way to the creation of a **European Education Area** by 2025⁸, notably:

- a proposal for a *Council Recommendation on Key Competences for Lifelong Learning*, which focuses on promoting entrepreneurial drive and innovation-oriented mindsets in order to unlock personal potential, creativity and self-initiative. It also recommends steps to foster competences in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) and motivate more young people to embark on a career in these fields;
- a proposal for a *Council Recommendation on common values, inclusive education and the European dimension of teaching*, outlining ways in which education can help young people understand the importance of and adhere to common values of the European Union. The proposal also aimed at helping Member States to promote quality education for all pupils and enable children to learn about Europe's common heritage and diversity and understand the functioning of the European Union.

Both proposals have been adopted by the Council in May 2018.

The Commission also presented a *Digital Education Action Plan*⁹ outlining how the EU can help

⁶ The European Commission's contribution to the Leaders' meeting in Gothenburg, 17 November 2017:

https://ec.europa.eu/commission/publications/eu-leaders-meeting-education-culture_en

⁷ European Pillar of Social Rights: <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1310&langId=en>

⁸ http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-18-102_en.htm

people, educational institutions and education systems to adapt to life and work in an age of rapid digital change, by making better use of digital technology for teaching and learning and developing the digital competences and skills.

Other Commission initiatives towards developing a European Education Area include ¹⁰:

- an overarching Communication on *Building a Stronger Europe: the role of youth, education and culture policies*¹¹,
- proposals for three Council Recommendations, respectively on *High Quality Early Childhood Education and Care Systems to lay the foundations for later success in life*¹², on the *Automatic Mutual Recognition of Diplomas and Learning Periods Abroad to facilitate learning mobility in Europe*¹³, and on *Improving the Teaching and Learning of Languages*¹⁴, to ensure that more young people become proficient other languages than their own;
- a *Youth Strategy*¹⁵ for the period 2019–2027 to empower Europe's youth and give them a stronger voice in EU policy-making, reflecting the importance the Commission attaches to investing in young people and their future.

1.3 Forward-Looking Cooperation Projects

Definition

Forward-Looking Cooperation Projects (FLCPs) are large-scale projects with the aim to identify, test, develop or assess innovative policy approaches that have the potential of becoming mainstreamed and improving education and training systems.

They should provide in-depth knowledge on target group(s), learning, teaching or training 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 high profile representative stakeholders with a proven record of excellence and state of the art knowledge, the capacity to innovate or generate systemic impact through their activities and the potential to drive the policy agenda in the fields of education and training.

⁹ Digital Education Action Plan: http://ec.europa.eu/education/education-in-the-eu/digital-education-action-plan_en

¹⁰ European Education Area: http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-18-3704_en.htm

¹¹ Building a Stronger Europe: the role of youth, education and culture policies: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52018DC0268>

¹² High Quality Early Childhood Education and Care Systems to lay the foundations for later success in life <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A52018DC0271>

¹³ Automatic Mutual Recognition of Diplomas and Learning Periods Abroad to facilitate learning mobility in Europe: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A52018SC0170>

¹⁴ Improving the Teaching and Learning of Languages. See: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=COM%3A2018%3A272%3AFIN> and <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=CELEX:52018SC0174&from=EN>

¹⁵ Youth Strategy 2019-2027: https://ec.europa.eu/youth/news/eu-youth-strategy-adopted_en

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 ground-breaking 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 6 call priorities will not be considered.

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

The Council Recommendation on Upskilling Pathways was adopted in December 2016. Member States committed to offering adults with a low level of skills, knowledge and competences (e.g. without an upper secondary qualification or equivalent) an opportunity to improve their basic skills (literacy, numeracy, digital skills) and/or progress towards higher qualifications at EQF level 3 or 4, in line with labour market needs.

Upskilling Pathways comprises three steps:

- i) skills assessment to enable adults to identify their existing skills and any needs for upskilling;
- ii) a tailored offer of learning to meet the needs identified by the skills assessment; and
- iii) validation and recognition of the skills acquired, possibly to acquire a qualification.

Delivering these Pathways requires enhancing access in such a way as to ensure wide availability to and take up by all potential learners. This includes effective outreach to target groups, guidance, and support measures such as funding mechanisms.

From the point of view of the learner, the Upskilling Pathway should be one continuous, coherent, comprehensive, easily accessible initiative.

An important challenge for Member States is the often insufficient level of coordination between the existing components (e.g. as they are provided by different organisations) as well as the low take up and access to such pathways for those that need them most.

The forward-looking cooperation project should develop innovative approaches that overcome obstacles to access and take up through coordination that enables the learner to access a single, coherent, comprehensive initiative, in which the learning pathway suits their specific needs. The innovation should include the involvement of outreach, guidance and other support services. Stakeholders responsible for providing the skills assessments, learning offer and validation arrangements, in line with the Upskilling Pathways Recommendation should be involved. The projects should also use the potential of new technologies and digitalisation as a means to improve access, take up and provision of upskilling opportunities (tailored to specific needs), as well as improving coordination.

Priority 2 – Designing and assessing the effectiveness of continuing training to meet current and future skill needs

The European Pillar of Social Rights confirms the importance of everyone continuing to learn and upskill throughout life, stating that: "*everyone has the right to quality and inclusive education, training and life-long learning in order to maintain and acquire skills that enable*

them to participate fully in society and manage successfully transitions in the labour market".¹⁶

In today's fast-changing labour market, continuing training is a necessity for all of the workforce in order to meet current and future skill needs, linked to trends such as automation, digitalisation and globalisation. As the workplace is where employees spend a large share of their time, it is an important environment in which to acquire not only job-related skills but also basic and transversal competences that can improve employability, and to make people more resilient to changes in their career and life. For older workers, learning in the workplace offers a practical alternative route to obtaining higher level, or more relevant, skills.

The Education and Training 2020 Working Group on Adult Learning have recently identified **policies that promote and support adult workplace learning**. Based on an inventory of national policies, the lessons learned from peer learning, and additional evidence from studies and reports, the Working Group has identified ten 'building blocks' that can be combined to construct effective policies for different contexts¹⁷.

Inspired by the findings, the forward-looking cooperation projects under this priority should bring together key stakeholders to develop, test or assess innovative policy approaches that are designed to result in a significant increase in the numbers of employees taking part in learning at the workplace.

As examples, this might involve policies that:

1. encourage employers to have a strategic approach to skills development and transform their organisation into learning workplaces;
2. develop mechanisms or support structures (or enhance existing support structures) to assist small and medium size companies with addressing the learning needs of their employees;
3. support partnerships between employers and VET/training providers to address the learning needs of employees;
4. test sustainable approaches to the co-funding of adult learning in the workplace;
5. develop means to match the learning needs of employees with relevant workplace learning opportunities;
6. develop coordination mechanisms to promote adult learning in the workplace;
7. set up effective monitoring and evaluation systems of adult workplace learning.

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

Jobs and careers have been transformed by the impact of technology. There is on-going debate and speculation about how we will work, learn and live in the future and certainty that the forms of work and skills required will constantly evolve.

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

¹⁶ European Pillar of Social Rights: https://ec.europa.eu/commission/priorities/deeper-and-fairer-economic-and-monetary-union/european-pillar-social-rights_en

¹⁷ The full report includes the 10 building blocks and provides many examples of how different Member States already implement these approaches:
<http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=738&langId=en&pubId=8112&furtherPubs=yes>.

reach wider audiences thereby enhancing services offered. Job vacancies describe the skills to be applied in performing tasks at work; education and training programmes can deliver many forms of knowledge, skills and attitudes in specific disciplines and professions. However, very often there is limited attention paid to the skills we need to cope with complexity and change and to understand our own needs and manage our careers (e.g communication, planning, self-assessment of skills, analysing information, decision-making).

The aim of this priority is to:

- support greater understanding of career management skills; and
- explore use of innovative technology to support development of career management skills.

1. Projects should develop a comprehensive catalogue of career management skills.

The catalogue of skills should be developed through a defined methodology and research basis, informed by changing practices in the labour market as well as anticipated shifts in the nature of work and how careers might evolve in the future. The catalogue of skills should be clearly described in terms of knowledge, skills and attitudes and each skill should be mapped to differing levels of proficiency. The catalogue should be an accessible reference point for career guidance practitioners and other intermediaries offering support to individuals. The project should develop an effective approach to support presentation, reuse and adaptation of the catalogue of skills. The project should consider communication, dissemination and support for use of the catalogue to guidance practitioners and stakeholders.

2. Projects should explore use of innovative technology in supporting development of career management skills

Projects should test, pilot or implement innovative ways to use the catalogue of career management skills to support individuals in their careers. The catalogue should be applied in a holistic way and appropriate technology developed that could identify skills needs, offer guidance, support testing or self-assessment, offer learning in different forms, and recognise skills development or progress – based on the catalogue. The innovative technology (apps, games, online tests) should ensure the catalogue is applied in a relevant way to meet end user needs but also to ensure wide dissemination and accessibility to user groups such as workers who may not have direct access to career guidance.

Priority 4 - Promoting innovative and cross-disciplinary approaches to STE(A)M teaching in education

A move from STEM education (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) where subjects are taught in silos with focus on scientific concepts to a STE(A)M approach in teaching and learning where concepts are investigated through interaction between STEM and non-STEM subjects and links to economic, environmental and social challenges is important to: i) increase young people's interest and motivation to study STEM subjects and to choose STEM careers and ii) produce a workforce that is capable of tackling complex challenges through creative and interdisciplinary approaches.

STEM initiatives and actions are in place in Member States. However, the approaches adopted are fragmented and the quality of provision is unevenly developed. As a result, current STEM initiatives on education lack outreach and impact. Therefore, the priority will address the need

for better coordination between stakeholders and for more strategic approaches to be developed.

The priority is in line with the Renewed EU Agenda for Higher Education¹⁸ to promote the modernisation and uptake of relevant STE(A)M subjects through more multi-disciplinary programmes. It is also in line with the Communication on School development and excellent teaching for a great start in life¹⁹ which called for Erasmus+ action to address gender gaps and stereotypes in STEM. Both Communications also stressed the need for better cooperation between different education sectors, research, business and public sectors. The teaching and learning of STEM is part of the key competences outlined in the Council Recommendation on Key Competences for Lifelong Learning²⁰.

The project should support the establishment of an EU level action to promote a STE(A)M approach to STEM education. The action will support Member States to reform their education systems with a lifelong learning approach to improve the quality of STEM education, to increase enrolment and academic success of students, address gender segregation and to produce a well-qualified and diverse workforce with the right STEM skills.

By developing frameworks and/or recommendations, the action will aim at:

- Developing and aligning local and regional initiatives to national strategies and objectives with special focus on producing well-qualified and diverse workforce;
- Reforming curricula for STEM with a STE(A)M approach including real-world applications, inquiry-based and ICT-enriched learning, collaborative practices, with a transdisciplinary focus and the use of extra-curricular activities in order to deliver the wider range of skills that drive innovation and creativity and nurture forward-looking skills, including entrepreneurship skills;
- Initial and continuous teacher training in innovative pedagogies with cross-disciplinary approaches that include exposure to industry.

To deliver on the above-mentioned objectives, the action will build on ongoing national and European initiatives, and work together with different education sectors, private and public sectors to facilitate the exchange of mutual learning, experiences and good practice.

Priority 5 - Promoting the use of self-reflection tools to support innovation and systemic change in education and training institutions

Innovation and systemic change in education can be slow to take root. Developing the innovative and entrepreneurial potential of education institutions, or successfully integrating digital technologies, requires a holistic approach. This means planning for innovation and change in, for example, pedagogies, infrastructure, organisational capacity, human resource management and institutional strategies.

¹⁸ Renewed EU Agenda for Higher Education: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=CELEX:52017DC0247&from=EN>

¹⁹ Communication on School development and excellent teaching for a great start in life: <http://ec.europa.eu/transparency/regdoc/rep/1/2017/EN/COM-2017-248-F1-EN-MAIN-PART-1.PDF>

²⁰ Council Recommendation on Key Competences for Lifelong Learning: <http://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-9009-2018-INIT/EN/pdf>

There is a considerable need to support and involve a broad set of stakeholders (eg educational leaders, educators, administrative staff, students and external stakeholders) so that each institution can respond to the need for institutional change and development in a meaningful, comprehensive and strategic way.

Improving and modernising education and training systems is a key priority for the EU. The Europe 2020 strategy acknowledges that a fundamental transformation of education and training is needed to provide the knowledge, skills and competences required for Europe to remain competitive.

Educational organisations such as schools and universities have to evolve and adapt in order to achieve their core mission: to educate students to be successful in a complex and interconnected world that faces rapid technological, cultural, economic and demographic change.

The use of self-reflection tools can be a way to support organisational change towards identifying goals of sustainable innovation, defining actions and achieving improved learning outcomes.

Projects under this priority should focus on how self-reflection tools can be used by educational institutions as a vehicle for organisational change and innovation. Projects will highlight good practice in using and, in particular, following-up results from the two self-reflection tools developed by the European Commission, namely [HEInnovate](#)²¹ for higher education institutions and [SELFIE](#)²² for schools.

Projects will look at how institutions can be supported in using these tools to understand the current position of the organisation and build on the results to define and implement suitable action plans.

Projects can include (indicative list): exchange of good practice; peer-to-peer support; developing communities of practice; toolkits and support materials; training activities; workshops; conferences/seminars; support for the design and implementation of action plans and their follow-up as well as external evaluation and accreditation. A further focus could be on extending the tools to new sectors of education (eg non-formal learning, adult education, VET), exploring synergies between HEInnovate and SELFIE or interconnecting the tool with similar programmes or initiatives at regional, national or international level.

Priority 6 - Higher education – achieving the aims of the Digital Education Action Plan, including Open Science, and assessing learning outcomes for the purpose of benchmarking among higher education institutions

This priority aims to contribute to the objectives of the Renewed EU Agenda for Higher Education²³ and the Digital Education Action Plan²⁴. Both of these communications aim to

²¹ HEInnovate: <https://heinnovate.eu/en>

²² SELFIE: <https://ec.europa.eu/education/schools-go-digital>

²³ See footnote nr. 18

promote forward-looking skills in an era of technological and demographic changes to organise new ways in which teaching and learning are structured and delivered. Projects submitted under this priority should address one of the following topics: Open Science Skills, Artificial Intelligence in Education, assessing learning outcomes in Higher Education.

- **Open Science skills**

Open Science skills form part of the wider range of digital skills that are crucial for students to engage and harness the potential of digital technologies to co-design and co-create innovative solutions. It covers a broad span: from data management to legal aspects, including technical skills such as data stewardship, data protection, scholarly communication and dissemination. It also includes Citizen Science i.e. digitally informed and skilled citizens and end-users who can co-design and co-create knowledge to tackle societal and technological challenges.

Forward-Looking Cooperation Projects should develop open access curricula and training courses for undergraduates and master level students, researchers and educators, as well as demonstrate proof of concept and initial impact of training on one or a combination of the following:

- analysis/use/reuse of open data, open access, open and FAIR²⁵ management, publishing and dissemination of knowledge and scientific output;
- use of openly available tools, platforms;
- citizen science, including design, development processes, collection, analysis and communication of co-created knowledge, including scientific data.

The courses, learning material and training guides will be open educational resources (OER), therefore being openly licensed. This will ensure that they can be reused, adapted and remixed by third parties, thus scaling up their use and reach. They will also be made available in platforms that comply with interoperability standards, respecting open formats for easier reuse of the content. The training courses and curricula developed for undergraduates and master level students should not only provide a foundation for further training at PhD level and beyond, but also prepare students who do not pursue academic career to understand and use scientific information in their professional and personal life. For educators in higher education at all career levels, “Train the trainer” continuous professional development courses will be developed.

- **Artificial Intelligence in Education**

The exponential growth in computing power, availability of data and progress in algorithms is turning Artificial Intelligence (AI) into one of the most important technologies of the 21st century²⁶. AI refers to digital systems that display intelligent behaviour by analysing their environment and taking actions - with some degree of autonomy - to achieve specific goals.

The use of AI in education is still at its infancy, with AI mainly being used to generate teacher interfaces for allowing monitoring students and learning (e.g. learning analytics). It is important for educational stakeholders to understand AI in the broader context of digital transformation

²⁴ Digital Education Action Plan: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=CELEX:52017DC0247&from=EN>

²⁵ Findability, Accessibility, Interoperability, and Reusability; The FAIR Guiding Principles for scientific data management and stewardship, Sci Data, 2016: 3: 160018: <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4792175/>

²⁶ Artificial Intelligence for Europe: <https://ec.europa.eu/digital-single-market/en/news/communication-artificial-intelligence-europe>

(which goes beyond monitoring learning progression) and think about ways in which AI can be used to harness teaching and learning everyday practices.

Forward-Looking Cooperation Projects should identify, test, develop or assess the use of AI to support students' learning needs and targeted practices and feedback, to improve learning outcomes and to foster effective personalised learning environments.

- **Assessing learning outcomes for benchmarking among Higher Education Institutions**

Information on the performance and the level of skills of students and graduates at European level is so far limited. The availability of such data, as stated in the Council Recommendation on tracking graduates²⁷, is essential in order to both understand the causes and find solutions for skills shortages in particular regions, economic sectors and to raise the quality and relevance of particular higher education courses and institutions. Availability of comparable data on knowledge, skills and competences of graduates upon leaving education would allow EU countries to benchmark the quality of their higher education systems.

Forward-Looking Cooperation Projects should build on the 'Key Action 3-Support for Policy Reform' funded project on '*Measuring and Comparing Achievements of Learning Outcomes in Higher Education in Europe*' (CALOHEE)²⁸. Projects should increase the practical uptake of the available resources - Subject Area Qualifications Reference Frameworks; Assessment Reference Frameworks and Guidelines and Reference Points Brochures. Projects may include one or a combination of the following:

- **Test the fitness for purpose of the frameworks by piloting their practical application** in contexts for which they were intended, in particular in quality assurance and accreditation, internal quality assurance, curriculum development, qualification frameworks/standards and teaching improvement;
- **Extend the frameworks into new subject areas** not covered by this project, in particular the areas where biggest skills shortages are reported, e.g. STE(A)M and the digital occupations;
- **Prepare a blueprint of transnational skills tests** by identifying testable aspects of learning outcomes and grading schemes and overcoming the challenges of the cultural, disciplinary and educational specificities.

²⁷ Council Recommendation of 20 November 2017 on tracking graduates: [https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32017H1209\(01\)](https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32017H1209(01))

²⁸ www.calohee.eu

3. TIMETABLE

	Stages	Date and time or indicative period
1	Publication of the call	December 2018
2	Deadline for submitting applications	19 March 2019 - 12.00 noon CET
3	Evaluation period	End of March to June 2019
4	Information to applicants	July 2019
5	Signature of grant agreement	October 2019
6	Project start date	Between 1 November 2019 and 1 January 2020

4. BUDGET AVAILABLE

The total budget available for the co-financing of projects under the present call is **EUR 12.000.000.**

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 submitted 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 (using only the provided templates);
- 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 using the compulsory template.

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 form²⁹. 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 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 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.

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 by email 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 fields of education, training and youth or other socio-economic sectors, or organisations carrying out cross-sector activities (e.g. recognition centres, chambers of commerce, trade organisations, civil society and cultural organisations, stakeholders networks, NGOs, education ministries, training providers, etc.). Natural persons are not eligible.

National Agencies or other structures and networks of the Erasmus+ Programme (hereafter 'Programme'), receiving a direct grant from the Commission in accordance with the legal basis of the Programme³⁰ are not eligible to participate. Nevertheless, the legal entities hosting the Erasmus+ National Agencies or the 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

²⁹ 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.

³⁰ The 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>

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**³¹ 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, Turkey and Serbia³².

For British applicants: Please be aware that eligibility criteria must be complied with for the entire duration of the project. If the United Kingdom withdraws from the EU during the project period without concluding an agreement with the EU ensuring in particular that British applicants continue to be eligible, you will cease to receive EU funding (while continuing, where possible, to participate) or be required to leave the project on the basis of Article II.16.3.1 (a) of the Grant Agreement.

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 (via the Participant Portal):

- **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

³¹ See Annex I - Glossary

³² Serbia: The budgetary adaptations determined by Serbia's becoming a Programme Country of the Erasmus+ Programme shall apply from 1 January 2019 subject to the adoption of the Commission Decision approving the (amendment to the) Agreement between the European Union and the Republic of Serbia on the participation of the Republic of Serbia in "Erasmus+": the Union programme for education, training, youth and sport as of 1 January 2019.

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.

The coordinator must submit mandate letters with original signatures (attached to the eForm) from all partners involved in the proposal confirming their participation (see Section 14).

6.2 Eligible activities and project duration

Only activities taking place in Programme countries (see Section 6.1) will be considered eligible for funding. Any costs relating to activities undertaken in Partner Countries³³ 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 Partner Countries must have the prior specific authorization from the Executive Agency.

Activities must start on 1 November 2019, 1 December 2019 or 1 January 2020.

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

The authorising officer shall exclude an applicant from participating in call for proposals procedures where:

- (a) the applicant is bankrupt, subject to insolvency or winding-up procedures, where its assets are being administered by a liquidator or by a court, where it is in an arrangement with creditors, where its business activities are suspended, or where it is in any analogous situation arising from a similar procedure provided for under national laws or regulations;
- (b) it has been established by a final judgment or a final administrative decision that the applicant is in breach of its obligations relating to the payment of taxes or social security

³³ See Annex I - Glossary

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 performance of the contract;

(c) it has been established by a final judgment 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 applicants 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 judgment 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 Member States of the European Union, 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 law of the country where the contracting authority is located, the country in which the applicant is established or the country of the performance of the contract;
- (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) the applicant has shown significant deficiencies in complying with 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 judgment 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) for the situations of grave professional misconduct, fraud, corruption, other criminal offences, significant deficiencies in the performance of the contract or irregularity, the applicant is subject to:

- (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) 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) 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. The relevant documentary evidence which illustrates the remedial measures taken must be provided in annex to the declaration. 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

The authorising officer shall not award a grant to an applicant who:

- (a) is in an exclusion situation established in accordance with the above Section 7.1;
- (b) has misrepresented the information required as a condition for participating in the procedure or has failed to supply that information;
- (c) 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 7.1³⁴:

- (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.

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

The coordinator of a consortium must sign a declaration on their honour on behalf of all applicants and their affiliated entities 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

³⁴ 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.

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 that will be requested from selected applicants:

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 profit and loss account as well as the balance sheet for the last financial year for which the accounts were closed;
- for newly created entities: the business plan might replace the above documents.

Upon communication of the applicant's Participant Identification Code (PIC), the EU Validation Services (Research Executive Agency Validation Services) will contact the applicant (via the messaging system embedded in the Participant Register) and request the latter to provide the supporting documents necessary to prove the legal existence and status and the financial capacity of the organisation. All necessary details and instructions will be provided via this separate notification.

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 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 and training, 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 the financial capacity 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 co-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 partners show the potential to ensure full achievement of the objectives of the project, of the priority selected by the applicants and of the call.
- The roles of the partners in the project are comprehensive and complementary (bridging analysis, practice and policy making) and cover the main operational needs of the project.
- The allocation of time and input among partners is adequate and balanced.
- The planned coordination and communication mechanisms among partners and with the relevant stakeholders are effective.

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 materials³⁵ 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.

³⁵ 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 inappropriate limitations.

Only proposals having reached the minimum quality thresholds:

- at least the threshold of 50% of each of the 4 individual criteria (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 Committee³⁶ 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.

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) as well as the procedure 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 on behalf of the consortium and returned to the Agency immediately. The Agency will sign them last.

Please note that the award of a grant does not establish an entitlement for subsequent calls.

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

³⁶ 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.

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 project 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 InforEuro 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 beneficiary must abide by special rules as referred in the grant agreement annexed to the call.

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

Entities acting in their capacity of contracting authorities in the meaning of Directive 2014/24/EU³⁷ or contracting entities in the meaning of Directive 2014/25/EU³⁸ 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 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;
- 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;
- the beneficiary ensures that certain conditions applicable to beneficiaries, enumerated in the grant agreement (e.g. visibility, confidentiality, etc.), are also applicable to the subcontractors.

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 which can be requested will be EUR 500.000.

The EU grant is limited to a maximum co-financing rate of 75% of eligible 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.

³⁷ 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>

³⁸ 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>

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;
- 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 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 an actual cost incurred by the beneficiaries and staff costs of other organisations are eligible only if they are 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 they are 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 these costs are in line with the beneficiaries' usual practices on subsistence allowances;
- Costs of travel (for meetings, European conferences, etc.), provided that they are in line with the beneficiaries usual practices on travel;
- 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 a 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.);
- Costs relating to the external audits where required in support of the requests for payments;
- Costs relating to a pre-financing guarantee lodged by the beneficiary of the grant, where required;
- Non-deductible value added tax ("VAT") for all activities which are not activities of the public authorities in the Member States;
- Insurance costs for volunteers provided that they are in line with the beneficiary's usual practices;
- Volunteers per diems provided that they are in line with the beneficiary's usual practices.

Eligible indirect costs (overheads)

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 debts;
- Interest owed;
- Costs of transfer from the Agency charged by the bank of the beneficiary;
- Doubtful debts;
- Exchange losses;
- Costs declared by the beneficiary 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 project, 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 final financial statement of project costs actually incurred.

- *Grant for a project equal or inferior to EUR 60.000*

In case of a grant for a project 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).

- *Grant for a project of more than EUR 60.000*

In case of a grant for a project of 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.

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.

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.

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.

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 (see Section 11.2).

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 Commission through a recovery order.

11.4 Pre-financing guarantee

The Agency may require from the applicant 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.

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. Amounts blocked in bank accounts shall not be accepted as financial guarantees.

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 inter-governmental 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.

In this respect, beneficiaries are required to give prominence to the name and emblem 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 text, the emblem and the disclaimer of the Programme, which is provided by the Agency under the following link: https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/about-eacea/visual-identity_en. 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 shall 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 2³⁹ level if he/she is domiciled within the EU or equivalent if domiciled outside the EU;
- the amount awarded;
- the nature and subject 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 applications 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.

³⁹ European Union Official Journal L39, of 10 February 2007: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=OJ:L:2007:039:TOC>

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: https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/sites/eacea-site/files/privacy_statement-eacea_grants.pdf

Applicants and, if they are legal entities, persons who are members of the administrative, management or supervisory body 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 2018/1046 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 July 2018 on the financial rules applicable to the general budget of the Union, amending Regulations (EU) No 1296/2013, (EU) No 1301/2013, (EU) No 1303/2013, (EU) No 1304/2013, (EU) No 1309/2013, (EU) No 1316/2013, (EU) No 223/2014, (EU) No 283/2014 and Decision No 541/2014/EU and repealing Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 966/2012 PE/13/2018/REV/1 (OJ L 193, 30.7.2018, p. 1–222).

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-cooperationprojects-2019_en

14.2 Registration in the Participant Portal

Before submitting an application, applicants 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-cooperationprojects-2019_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 and by the deadline set out under Section 3.

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-cooperationprojects-2019_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 on the correct application form (eForm), duly completed and containing all relevant and applicable annexes and supporting documents. Application forms sent by e-mail, by paper and/or fax will not be accepted.

Please take note of the technical requirements for the eForm as explained in the specific eForm User Guide that is aimed at providing guidance on the technical aspects of completing and submitting the eForm. It is available at:

http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/documents/eforms_en.

Should you be blocked by any technical issue described in the User Guide during submission, this will not be considered as a technical failure of the eForm. In consequence, if the submission of your eForm fails and you do not meet the deadline, your application will be rendered inadmissible.

Should you have technical problems with the online submission of your eForm, you must contact the helpdesk (eacea-helpdesk@ec.europa.eu) by email **before** the submission deadline, explaining your problem. If you are close to the deadline you have to include a screen shot of any error message together with a proof of time of occurrence and attach all documents forming part of the Application Package.

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, Euratom) 2018/1046 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 July 2018 on the financial rules applicable to the general budget of the Union, amending Regulations (EU) No 1296/2013, (EU) No 1301/2013, (EU) No 1303/2013, (EU) No 1304/2013, (EU) No 1309/2013, (EU) No 1316/2013, (EU) No 223/2014, (EU) No 283/2014, and Decision No 541/2014/EU and repealing Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 966/2012 PE/13/2018/REV/1 (OJ L 193, 30.7.2018, p. 1–222).
- 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 for the period 2014 to 2020.

14.5 Contacts

If you have any questions, please contact us at: EACEA-Policy-Support@ec.europa.eu

ANNEX I – GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Applicants: this term refers to all organisations and institutions participating in the application regardless of their role in the project except associate partners. 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.

Beneficiary/ies: if the project is selected, the applicant(s) become(s) beneficiary/ies of the grant. The beneficiary signs a grant agreement with the Executive Agency which has selected the project. The partners who signed the mandate letter become co-beneficiaries of the grant.

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.

Other applicants/partners: they are the legal entities participating in the partnership except the associate partners. 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 in case the project is selected for receiving a grant.

Associate partners: the project may benefit from the involvement of associate partners (optional). These organisations contribute to the implementation of specific tasks/activities and/or support the dissemination and sustainability of the project. 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 'Detailed Project Description' which is part of the Application.

Programme Countries: EU and non EU countries that participate fully in the Erasmus+ Programme and listed under Section 6.1 of the present Guidelines.

Partner Countries: countries which do not participate fully in the Erasmus+ Programme and are therefore not Programme Countries