

CAPACITY BUILDING IN THE FIELD OF HIGHER EDUCATION

This action which aims to support the modernisation, accessibility and internationalisation of higher education in the Partner Countries is to be carried out in the context of the priorities identified in the Communications “Increasing the impact of EU Development Policy: an Agenda for Change”¹¹² and “European Higher Education in the World”¹¹³.

It is implemented within the framework of the external policies of the EU, defined by the financial instruments of the European Union which support this action, namely the:

- European Neighbourhood Instrument (ENI)¹¹⁴
- Development Cooperation Instrument (DCI)¹¹⁵
- Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA)¹¹⁶
- European Development Fund

This action contributes to the development of sustainable and inclusive socio-economic growth in Partner Countries and should ensure development and EU external actions objectives and principles, including national ownership, social cohesion, equity, proper geographical balance and diversity. Special attention will be given to the least developed countries as well as to disadvantaged students from poor socio-economic backgrounds and to students with special needs.

The following section should be read in conjunction with Annex I of this present Guide (Specific rules and information relating to Capacity Building in the field of higher education)

WHAT IS A CAPACITY-BUILDING PROJECT?

Capacity-building Projects are transnational cooperation projects based on multilateral partnerships, primarily between higher education institutions (HEIs) from Programme and eligible Partner Countries financed through the above-mentioned instruments. They can also involve non-academic partners to strengthen the links with society and business and to reinforce the systemic impact of the projects. Through structured cooperation, exchange of experience and good practices and individual mobility, Capacity-building Projects aim to:

- support the modernisation, accessibility and internationalisation of higher education in the eligible Partner Countries;
- support eligible Partner Countries to address the challenges facing their higher education institutions and systems, including those of quality, relevance, equity of access, planning, delivery, management and governance;
- contribute to cooperation between the EU and the eligible Partner Countries (and amongst the eligible Partner Countries);
- promote voluntary convergence with EU developments in higher education;
- promote people-to-people contacts, intercultural awareness and understanding.

These objectives are pursued in the eligible Partner Countries, through actions that:

- improve the quality of higher education and enhance its relevance for the labour market and society;
- improve the level of competences and skills in HEIs by developing new and innovative education programmes;
- enhance the management, governance and innovation capacities, as well as the internationalisation of HEIs;
- increase the capacities of national authorities to modernise their higher education systems, by supporting to the definition, implementation and monitoring of reform policies
- foster regional integration and cooperation across different regions¹¹⁷ of the world through joint initiatives, sharing of good practices and cooperation.

¹¹² “Increasing the impact of EU Development Policy: an Agenda for Change”, Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions, Brussels, 13.10.2011, COM(2011) 637 final

¹¹³ “European Higher Education in the World”, Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions, Brussels, 11.07.2013 COM(2013) 499 final

¹¹⁴ REGULATION (EU) No 232/2014 OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL of 11 March 2014 establishing a European Neighbourhood Instrument

<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2014:077:0027:0043:EN:PDF>

¹¹⁵ REGULATION (EU) No 233/2014 OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL of 11 March 2014 establishing a financing instrument for development cooperation for the period 2014-2020

<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2014:077:0044:0076:EN:PDF>

¹¹⁶ REGULATION (EU) No 231/2014 OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL of 11 March 2014 establishing an Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA II)

<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2014:077:0011:0026:EN:PDF>

¹¹⁷ In the framework of this action, a region is defined as a grouping of countries belonging to a certain macro-geographic area. The classification of regions applied under Erasmus+ is in line with the categorisations made by the different EU external action instruments.



Two categories of Capacity-building projects are supported:

Joint Projects: aimed at producing outcomes that benefit principally and directly the organisations from eligible Partner Countries involved in the project. These projects typically focus on three different types of activities:

- curriculum development;
- modernisation of governance, management and functioning of HEIs;
- strengthening of relations between HEIs and the wider economic and social environment.

Structural Projects: aimed at producing an impact on higher education systems and promoting reforms at national and/or regional level in the eligible Partner Countries. These projects typically focus on two different categories of activities:

- modernisation of policies, governance and management of higher education systems;
- strengthening of relations between higher education systems and the wider economic and social environment.

Capacity-building projects can be implemented as:

- National projects, i.e. projects involving institutions from only one eligible Partner Country;
- Multi-country projects within one single region, involving at least two countries from this region;
- Multi-country projects involving more than one region, involving at least one country from each region concerned.

In the case of Capacity-building projects targeting the eligible Partner Countries from Regions 1, 2 and 3 (see section "Eligible Countries" in Part A of this Guide), both categories of projects (Joint Projects and Structural Projects) may include, in addition, a **Special Mobility Strand** for staff and students. This Mobility Strand will be evaluated as a separate component.

The Special Mobility Strand must be instrumental to the objectives of the project (integrated mobility) and implemented through inter-institutional agreements. However, it is important to note that this component of the project may be rejected (not funded) even if the project is selected; the non-selection of this component should not hamper the implementation of the other activities foreseen by the project. The Special Mobility Strand should be seen as additional support provided by the EU to reinforce the intervention logic of the project but cannot be a condition for the successful implementation of the core project objectives. The funding of a Special Mobility Strand within a selected project will depend on the results of the specific qualitative evaluation of the proposal and on the budget available. It is expected that no more than 40% of the Joint or Structural projects selected for funding for Regions 1, 2, 3 will benefit from such a grant.

WHICH ACTIVITIES ARE SUPPORTED UNDER THIS ACTION?

Erasmus+ offers a great deal of flexibility in terms of the activities that a Capacity-building Project can implement, as long as the proposal demonstrates that these activities are the most appropriate to reach the objectives defined for the project.

Joint Projects may typically carry out a wide range of activities, such as:

- development, testing and adaptation of:
 - curricula, courses, learning materials and tools;
 - learning and teaching methodologies and pedagogical approaches, especially those delivering key competences and basic skills, language skills, entrepreneurship education and focusing on the use of ICT;
 - new forms of practical training schemes and study of real-life cases in business and industry;
 - university-enterprise cooperation, including the creation of business start-ups;
 - new forms of learning and providing education and training, notably strategic use of open and flexible learning, virtual mobility, open educational resources and better exploitation of the ICT potential;
 - guidance, counselling and coaching methods and tools;
 - tools and methods for professionalization and professional development of academic and administrative staff;
 - quality assurance at programme and institution level;
 - new governance and management systems and structures;
 - modern university services e.g. for financial management, international relations, student counselling and guidance, academic affairs and research;
- strengthening of the internationalisation of HEI and the capacity to network effectively in research, scientific and technological innovation (international openness of curricula, student services, inter-institutional mobility schemes, scientific cooperation and knowledge transfer, etc.);
- upgrading of facilities necessary to the implementation of innovative practices (e.g. for new curricula and teaching methods, for the development of new services, etc.);
- organisation of staff trainings involving teaching and support staff, technicians as well as university administrators and managers.

Curriculum reform projects, in particular, are expected to include training for teaching staff and address related issues such as quality assurance and employability of graduates through links to the labour market. Study programmes must be officially accredited before the end of the project time life. The teaching of new or updated courses must start during the life-time of the project with an adequate number of students and retrained teachers and has to take place during at least one third of the project duration. Training during curriculum reform projects can also target administrative personnel such as library staff, laboratory staff and IT staff.

Structural Projects may typically carry out a wide range of activities, such as:

- strengthening of internationalisation of higher education systems;
- introduction of Bologna-type reforms (three-level cycle system, quality assurance, evaluation, etc.);
- implementation of transparency tools such as credit systems, accreditation procedures, guidelines for the recognition of prior and non-formal learning etc.;
- establishment of National Qualification Frameworks;
- development and implementation of internal and external quality assurance systems/guidelines;
- development and implementation of new approaches and tools for policy making and monitoring, including the establishment of representative bodies, organisations or associations;
- strengthening the integration of education, research and innovation.

In more concrete terms, these activities can include:

- surveys and studies on specific reform issues;
- policy and expert advice;
- organisation of conferences, seminars, workshops, round tables (which should result in operational conclusions and recommendations);
- organisation of staff trainings on policy issues;
- organisation of staff trainings (which may include the production of training manuals and guidelines) involving teaching and support staff, technicians as well as university administrators and managers;
- organisation of awareness-raising campaigns.

In both categories of projects described above, a **Special Mobility Strand** may be granted comprising one or more of the following activities and concerns exclusively projects with Partner Countries eligible for the Special Mobility Strand:

Student mobility:

- a **study period** abroad at a partner HEI.

To ensure high quality mobility activities with maximum impact on the students, the mobility activity has to respond to the students' degree-related learning and personal development needs. The study period abroad must be part of the student's study programme to complete a degree at a short cycle, first cycle (Bachelor or equivalent), second cycle (Master or equivalent) and third or doctoral cycle.

Student mobility must be related to the topic or thematic area addressed by the project.

- a **traineeship (work placement) abroad** in an enterprise or any other relevant workplace in one of the consortium countries. Traineeships abroad at a workplace are also supported during short cycle, first, second, third cycle studies. This includes as well the "assistantships" for student teachers.

Wherever possible, the traineeships should be an integrated part of the student's study programme.

- **A combination of both.**

Staff mobility:

- a **teaching period**: this activity allows HEI teaching staff or staff from any participating organisation to teach at a partner HEI abroad.
- a **training period** in one of the consortium countries: this activity supports the professional development of HEI teaching and non-teaching staff in the form of: a) participation in structured courses, including professionally focused



language trainings, or training events abroad (conferences excluded); b) job shadowing/observation periods/trainings at a partner HEI, or at another relevant organisation abroad.

WHAT IS THE ROLE OF ORGANISATIONS PARTICIPATING IN A CAPACITY-BUILDING PROJECT?

Depending on their objectives, Capacity-building projects should involve the most appropriate and diverse range of partners in order to benefit from their different experiences, profiles and specific expertise and to produce relevant and high quality project results. It will be important to ensure an equitable and active involvement of the different partners based on a suitable distribution of tasks and a clear demonstration of networking capacities and in order to increase impact, to be able to draw on all the different levels of the partnership and not just on individual participation.

Partners must submit mandates¹¹⁸ signed between the coordinator and each partner, confirming that they grant power of attorney to the coordinator, to act in their name and for their account in signing the possible agreement and its subsequent riders with the Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency.

According to the scope and objectives of the Action, participating organisations from eligible Partner Countries are intended to be the target of the Capacity-building project. The activities and outcomes described in the proposal must be geared to benefit the eligible Partner Countries, their higher education institutions and systems.

HEIs from the eligible Partner Countries are encouraged to act as applicants, provided that they have the financial and operational capacity required.

Participating organisations from Programme Countries bring their expertise and experience in relation to the objectives of the project. Their role is to contribute towards achieving the objectives of the project and the needs of these institutions should not therefore feature in the project's design. Those organisations are eligible to receive a share of the budget in relation to the costs incurred by their role.

Additionally the Capacity-building in the field of higher education project may also benefit from the involvement of associated partners (optional). These organisations (for instance non-academic partners) contribute indirectly to the implementation of specific tasks/activities and/or support the dissemination and sustainability of the project. Such contribution may for example take the form of knowledge and skills transfer, the provision of complementary courses or possibilities for secondment or placement. Associated partners do not count for the minimum number of higher education institutions or Ministries required for the partnership composition. For contractual management issues, "associated partners" are not considered as part of the consortium and therefore are not considered as beneficiaries and their costs are not taken into account for the calculation of the EU grant.

If the project foresees a Special Mobility Strand:

- the sending and receiving organisations, together with the students/staff, must have agreed on the activities undertaken by the students - in a Learning Agreement - or by staff members - in a Mobility Agreement - prior to the start of the mobility period. These agreements (see below) define the target learning outcomes for the learning period abroad, specify the formal recognition provisions and list the rights and obligations of each party. When the activity is between two higher education institutions (student mobility for studies and staff mobility for teaching assignments), an inter-institutional agreement has to be in place between the sending and the receiving institutions before the exchanges can start.

WHAT IS THE ROLE OF ORGANISATIONS PARTICIPATING IN A CAPACITY-BUILDING PROJECT IN THE FIELD OF HIGHER EDUCATION?

Applicant/coordinator: a participating organisation that submits the project proposal on behalf of all the partners. The coordinator has the full responsibility to ensure that the project is implemented in accordance with the agreement. Its coordinating covers the following duties:

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The mandate duly signed by the legal representative of the partner organisation will be an annex to the Grant Agreement and has therefore legal force. The template provided by the Agency must be used in all cases without any modification or adjustment. Mandates must be provided using the template published with the official documents of the call for proposals.

- represents and acts on behalf of the project partners towards the European Commission;
- bears the financial and legal responsibility for the proper operational, administrative and financial implementation of the entire project;
- coordinates the project in cooperation with project partners.

Full partners: are those participating organisations from Programme or Partner Countries which contribute actively to the achievement of the Capacity Building project's objectives. Each full partner must sign a mandate to confer to the coordinating organisation the responsibility of acting as main beneficiary and act in his name during the implementation of the project

Associated partners (optional): Capacity-building projects can involve associated partners who contribute to the implementation of specific project tasks/activities or support the dissemination and sustainability of the project. For contractual management issues, "associated partners" are not considered as part of the partnership, and they do not receive funding, neither are they considered as regards the minimum requirements for consortium composition. However their involvement and role in the project and different activities have to be clearly described.

WHAT ARE THE CRITERIA USED TO ASSESS A CAPACITY-BUILDING PROJECT?

Listed below are the formal criteria that a higher education Capacity-building project must respect in order to be eligible for an Erasmus+ grant:

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

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| Eligible Partner Countries | Partner Countries belonging to Regions 1 to 4 and 6 to 11 ¹¹⁹ included (see section "Eligible Countries" in Part A of this Guide). |
| Eligible participating organisations ¹²⁰ | <p>A participating organisation can be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ any public or private organisation offering full programmes leading to higher education degrees and recognised diplomas at tertiary education qualifications level¹²¹ (defined as higher education institution and recognised as such by the competent authority); <p>or</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ any public or private organisation active in the labour market or in the fields of education, training and youth. For example, such organisation can be: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – a public, private small medium or large enterprise (including social enterprises); – a public body at local, regional or national level (including ministries); – a social partner or other representative of working life, including chambers of commerce, craft/professional associations and trade unions; – a research institute; – a foundation; – a school/institute (on any level, from pre-school to upper secondary education, including vocational education and adult education); – a non-profit organisation, association, NGO (including national or international associations or networks of higher education institutions, students or teachers associations, etc.); |

¹²⁰ The following types of organisations are not eligible:

- EU institutions and other EU bodies including specialised agencies (their exhaustive list is available on the website ec.europa.eu/institutions/index_en.htm);
- National Erasmus+ Offices in the eligible Partner Countries (in order to avoid a possible conflict of interests and/or double funding);
- Organisations managing EU programmes such as national agencies in the Programme Countries should refer to Part C of the present Guide

¹²¹ International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED 2011), tertiary education, **at least** level 5. Post-secondary non-tertiary education ISCED 2011 level 4 is not accepted.



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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – a cultural organisation, library, museum; – a body providing career guidance, professional counselling and information services. <p>Each participating organisation must be established in a Programme Country or in an eligible Partner Country.</p> <p>Higher education institutions (HEIs) located in a Programme Country must hold a valid Erasmus Charter for Higher Education (ECHE). An ECHE is not required for participating HEIs in eligible Partner Countries; however for the Special Mobility Strand, HEIs established in the eligible Partner Countries will have to have established inter-institutional agreements with all partner HEIs, endorsing the principles of the ECHE.</p> <p>Faculties/schools/colleges/departments/centres/foundations/institutes or any other components, which are parts of higher education institutions but established as autonomous legal entities, are considered ineligible (even if they have a PIC – Participant Identification Code) unless they can provide a specific project-related statement signed by the Rector/President of the higher education institution authorising them to commit the whole institution.</p> <p>Associations or organisations of higher education institutions dedicated to the promotion, improvement and reform of higher education as well as to co-operation within Europe and between Europe and other parts of the world are eligible. If such associations, organisations or networks also cover other education sectors and training, the main focus of their activities must be on higher education, which must be clearly reflected in the organisation statutes and governance structures. An association, organisation or network of higher education institutions will count as one legal entity/partner institution, meaning that it will be treated as one entity from the country where the headquarter is based. These organisations will not be considered as HEIs. Only those members which are established in the Programme or eligible Partner Countries can benefit from the grant.</p> <p>International governmental organisations may participate as partners in Capacity-building projects on a self-financing basis.</p> <p>Specific provision for Ukraine: In the case of Ukraine, eligible Higher Education Institutions are only those recognised by the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine (for further information please contact the National Erasmus+ Office in Ukraine).</p> |
| <p>Who can apply?</p> | <p>The following types of participating organisations can apply for a grant:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a higher education institution; • an association or organisation of higher education institutions; • <u>only for Structural Projects</u>: a legally recognized national or international rector, teacher or student organisation. <p>established in a Programme or in an eligible Partner Country.</p> <p>This organisation applies on behalf of all participating organisations involved in the project.</p> <p>Exception: participating organisations from Libya and Syria (Region 3) as well as from the Russian Federation (Region 4) cannot act as applicants.</p> |

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| <p>Number and profile of participating organisations</p> | <p>Capacity-building projects must respect all of the following criteria:</p> <p>For projects addressing one Partner Country only (national projects):</p> <p>One eligible Partner Country and at least three Programme Countries must be involved in the project.</p> <p>These projects must include, as full partners, a minimum number of HEIs, as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • minimum one HEI from at least three of the Programme Countries taking part in the project; • minimum three HEIs from the Partner Country taking part in the project. • projects must include at least as many Partner Country HEIs as there are Programme Country HEIs. <p>Exception: in Partner Countries where the number of higher education institutions is lower than 5 in the whole country or in cases where one single institution represents more than 50% of the overall student population of the country, applications counting only one HEI for those countries will be accepted.</p> <p>For projects addressing two or more Partner Countries (multi-country projects):</p> <p>At least two eligible Partner Countries and at least three Programme Countries must be involved in the project. Partner Countries can be from the same region¹²² or from different regions covered by the Action.</p> <p>These projects must include, as full partners, a minimum number of HEIs, as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • minimum one HEI from at least three of the Programme Countries taking part in the project; • minimum two HEIs from each Partner Country taking part in the project; • projects must include at least as many Partner Country HEIs as there are Programme Country HEIs. <p>Exception: in Partner Countries where the number of higher education institutions is lower than 5 in the whole country or in cases where one single institution represents more than 50% of the overall student population of the country, applications counting only one HEI for those countries will be accepted on the condition that the projects includes at least as many Partner Country HEIs as there are Programme Country HEIs.</p> <p><u>Additional specific criteria applying to:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Structural Projects: projects must also involve, as full partners, the Ministries responsible for higher education in each of the eligible Partner Countries targeted by the project. • Projects involving partners from Region 4 (Russian Federation) must involve at least another Partner Country. • Projects involving partners from Region 8 (Latin America), must involve at least two Partner Countries from that region in the project. |
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¹²² In the framework of this action, a region is defined as a grouping of countries belonging to a certain macro-geographic area. The classification of regions applied under Erasmus+ is in line with the categorisations made by the different EU external action instruments.



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| Other criteria | Where an association, organisation or network of higher education institutions is involved, the requirements for the minimum number of participating organizations indicated above must be fulfilled, counting the association / organisation / network as only one partner from the country where the headquarters is based. Please note that these organisations cannot be considered as HEIs. |
| Duration of project | Capacity-building Projects can last two or three years. The duration must be chosen at application stage, based on the objective of the project and on the type of activities foreseen over time. Only under exceptional circumstances, one extension of the eligibility period of maximum 12 months, may be granted if it becomes impossible for the coordinator to complete the project within the scheduled period. |
| Where to apply? | To the Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency, based in Brussels. |
| When to apply? | Applicants have to submit their grant application by 9 February at 12:00 (midday Brussels time) for projects starting on 15 October of the same year. |
| How to apply? | The application must be introduced in compliance with the modalities described in Part C of this Guide. |

Applicant organisations might also be assessed against **exclusion and selection criteria**. For more information please consult Part C of this Guide.

AWARD CRITERIA

The project will be assessed against the following criteria:

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| Relevance of the project (maximum 30 points) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The proposed project and results foreseen will contribute efficiently to the objectives of the Capacity-building action in the target country/ies; ▪ The application clearly addresses the thematic national and regional priorities set by the programme for its target country/ies or region(s); ▪ The proposal is relevant and feasible in the local context of the partner country(/ies) targeted by the application. Advice on this aspect is provided via the EU Delegations in the countries concerned. ▪ The proposal explains why the planned activities and expected results meet the needs of the target groups in the best way; ▪ The project inscribes itself in the modernisation, development and internationalisation strategy of the targeted higher education institutions and is in line with the development strategies for higher education in the eligible Partner Countries; ▪ The objectives of the project are clear, realistic and appropriate, based on a genuine and adequate needs analysis; ▪ The project is innovative and /or complementary to other initiatives or projects already carried out under the present or past actions; ▪ The application demonstrates that similar results could not be achieved through national, regional or local funding. |
| Quality of the project design and implementation (maximum 30 points) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The activities proposed over the lifetime of the project are of high quality, pertinent and appropriate to achieve the objectives and foreseen results; ▪ The proposed methodology is innovative, feasible and appropriate to achieve the foreseen results; ▪ The project is cost-effective and allocates appropriate resources to each activity; ▪ The overall project design ensures consistency between project objectives, methodology, activities and budget proposed; |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The work plan is clear and realistic, with well-defined activities, realistic time-lines, clear deliverables and milestones. It demonstrates a logical and sound planning capacity and includes appropriate phases for preparation, implementation, evaluation, follow-up and dissemination of results; ▪ Challenges/risks of the project are clearly identified and mitigating actions properly addressed. Quality control measures, including indicators and benchmarks, are in place to ensure that the project implementation is of high quality, completed in time and on budget. Reliable sources are given for verification of indicators to measure the outcomes of the action. |
| <p>Quality of the project team and the cooperation arrangements (maximum 20 points)</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The project involves a strong and complementary partnership of higher education institutions; ▪ The project team has the necessary skills, experience, expertise and management support to successfully deliver all aspects of the project; ▪ Where relevant, the project also includes the most appropriate and diverse range of non-academic partners, in order to benefit from their different experiences, profiles and specific expertise; ▪ The distribution of responsibilities and tasks is clear, appropriate, and demonstrates the commitment and active contribution of all participating organisations in relation to their specific expertise and capacity; ▪ An effective mechanism is proposed to ensure good coordination, decision making and communication between the participating organisations, participants and any other relevant stakeholder; ▪ The participating organisations from eligible Partner Countries are satisfactorily involved in the implementation of the action and decision making (including measures for any conflict resolution); ▪ The project involves higher education institutions that have not benefited from support for capacity building in the past. |
| <p>Impact and sustainability (maximum 20 points)</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The project will have a substantial impact on the capacities of participating organisations (notably higher education institutions) in the eligible Partner Countries, in particular on the development and modernisation of higher education, to assist them in opening themselves up to society at large, the labour market and the wider world and to support their capacity for international cooperation; ▪ The project will produce multiplier effects outside the participating organisations at local/regional/national or international level. Measures are in place to assess the effective impact achieved by the project; ▪ The dissemination plan during and beyond the project lifetime is clear and efficient, with appropriate resources identified in each of the participating organisations, to ensure high quality dissemination of project experiences and outputs to relevant stakeholders; ▪ The project will ensure a real sustainability of the proposed activities and outputs after the project lifetime, in particular through attracting co-funding or other forms of support. It will also ensure the mainstreaming and effective use/implementation of the project results. |

During the assessment stage, applications may score up to 100 points. To be considered for funding, proposals must score at least 60 points in total and - out of these points - at least 15 points for the category "relevance of the project".

The acceptance of an application does not constitute an undertaking to award funding equal of the amount requested by the applicant. The funding requested may be reduced on the basis of the financial rules applicable to the action and the results of the evaluation.

A maximum of three project proposals per applicant organisation will be recommended for funding.

PRIORITIES

Depending on the countries involved in the project, national, regional or cross cutting priorities may be defined for both categories of projects (Joint Projects and Structural Projects). Should this be the case, projects will have to demonstrate how and to which extent they address these priorities.



Proposals not respecting the national and/or regional priorities will not be considered for funding. Cross-cutting priorities will be considered at selection stage for deciding between proposals of similar quality.

Four categories of national/regional priorities are proposed, covering the following areas:

- Subject areas (for curriculum development);
- Improving quality of education and training;
- Improving management and operation of higher education institutions;
- Developing the higher education sector within society at large.

National projects, in the countries where national priorities have been established, will have to comply with national priorities. For the other countries, projects will have to comply with the regional priorities.

Multi-country projects, that is, projects involving institutions from at least two eligible Partner Countries, must respect the regional priorities or national priorities (if relevant) of the participating eligible Partner Countries involved. That is, the theme of the project must be listed as regional priority for each of the participating Partner Countries or the theme of the project must be listed as a national priority for each of the participating Partner Countries concerned. Preference will be given to projects focussing on subject areas insufficiently covered by past or existing projects and which include Partner Country higher education institutions not having benefited from or had a limited participation in the programme and/or former generation of programmes.

The detailed list of priorities applying to Capacity-building projects will be published on the websites of the Executive Agency.

SPECIAL MOBILITY STRAND

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

Eligible flows

| | Programme Country to Programme Country | Programme Country-to eligible Partner Country | Eligible Partner Country to Programme Country | Eligible Partner Country to eligible Partner Country |
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| Students | Not eligible | Eligible | Eligible | Eligible |
| Staff for teaching purpose | Not eligible | Eligible | Eligible | Eligible |
| HE Staff for training purpose | Not eligible | Not eligible | Eligible | Eligible |

Mobility of student and staff must take place abroad (in a country different from the country of the sending organisation and the country where the student/staff lives) in any of the other partner organisations involved in the project. Traineeships for students may take place abroad (in a country different from the country of the sending organisation and the country where the student has his/her accommodation during his/her studies) in any relevant organisation located in one of the countries involved in the project.

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| Eligible Partner Countries | Partner Countries belonging to Region 1, 2 and 3 (see section "Eligible Countries" in Part A of this Guide) |
| Eligible Activities | <p><u>Student mobility:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ a study period abroad at a partner HEI; or ▪ a traineeship (work placement) abroad in an enterprise or any other relevant workplace. ▪ a combination of both. <p><u>Staff mobility:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ a teaching period: this activity allows HEI teaching staff or staff from enterprises to teach |

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| | <p>at a partner HEI abroad.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ a training period: this activity supports the professional development of HEI teaching and non-teaching staff in the form of: a) participation in structured courses, including professionally focused language trainings, or training events abroad (conferences excluded); b) job shadowing/observation periods/trainings at a partner HEI, or at another relevant organisation abroad in one of the consortium countries. |
| Eligible participants | <p>Student mobility:</p> <p>Students enrolled in studies, leading to a recognised degree or other recognised tertiary-level qualification (up to and including doctorate level) in a partner HEI. In case of mobility for studies, the students must be enrolled at least in the second year of higher education studies. For traineeships, this condition does not apply.</p> <p>Staff mobility:</p> <p>For teaching periods: staff employed in a HEI or in an enterprise involved in the Capacity-building project.</p> <p>For training periods: staff employed in a HEI involved in the Capacity-building project.</p> <p>It is important to note that students and staff cannot apply directly for a grant; the selection criteria for participation in the mobility activities are defined by the consortium.</p> |
| Duration of Student Mobility | <p>Study periods: from 3¹²³ to 12 months (including a complementary traineeship period, if planned).</p> <p>Traineeships: from 2 to 12 months.</p> <p>The same student may participate in mobility periods totalling up to 12 months¹²⁴ maximum per cycle of study¹²⁵, independently of the number and type of mobility activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ during the first study cycle (Bachelor or equivalent) including the short-cycle (EQF levels 5 and 6); ▪ during the second study cycle (Master or equivalent - EQF level 7); and ▪ during the third cycle as doctoral candidate (doctoral level or EQF level 8). <p>Participation with a zero-grant from EU funds counts as well towards this maximum duration.</p> |
| Duration of Staff Mobility | <p>Staff Mobility: from 5 days to 2 months, excluding travel time.</p> <p>In addition, in all cases a teaching activity has to comprise a minimum 8 hours of teaching per week (or any lower period of stay). If the mobility lasts longer than one week, the minimum number of teaching hours for an incomplete week should be proportional to the duration of that week.</p> |

ADDITIONAL AWARD CRITERIA

Project proposals applying for the special mobility strand will have to demonstrate which is the added value and/or innovative character of the course(s) proposed by the mobile teachers and/or to the mobile students. The relevance of the staff mobility contribution to the receiving higher education and to the sending higher education institutions should be clearly explained. Both sending and receiving higher education institutions must comply with the Erasmus Charter for Higher Education provisions and agree on arrangements for optimal organisation of the mobility activities.

The Special Mobility Actions will be evaluated and scored as a separate component of the Capacity-building projects. They will be assessed against the following criteria:

¹²³ Minimum duration of a study period is 3 months, or 1 academic term or trimester.

¹²⁴ Prior experience under LLP-Erasmus Programme and the Erasmus Mundus Programme counts towards the 12 months per study cycle.

¹²⁵ In one-cycle study programmes, such as Medicine, students can be mobile for up to 24 months.



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| <p>Quality of the design and implementation of the Special Mobility Action</p> <p>(maximum 10 points)</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The mobility component fully contributes to the achievements of the project objectives and is well articulated with them in particular in terms of subject areas / topics addressed by the project. Course(s) to be taught by mobile teachers and/or to the mobile students demonstrate(s) an added value to the project; ▪ The proposal includes transparent criteria and an effective procedure for the identification and selection of participants for mobility; ▪ Quality measures are put in place both at the sending and the receiving organisation to monitor the mobility activity, and take appropriate measures if the results are not reached as initially envisaged. Quality services are offered to the students in their host institution (induction session, local language/culture courses, tutoring and mentoring, support for accommodation, etc.); ▪ The project demonstrates that mobility actions have a positive impact not only on individuals benefitting from them, but also on the eligible Partner Country institutions and explains how the successful mobility experiences will be recognised and valued at institutional level. Relevance of the contribution of the staff mobility to the host higher education institutions for the targeted students and to the home higher education institutions (dissemination of the experience/competences gained within and beyond the higher education area) is clearly proved; ▪ The proposal describes the strategy for efficient validation and/or recognition of the participants' learning outcomes and mobility periods, such as the definition of joint recognition and performance evaluation mechanisms (including the elaboration of grades conversion grids); usage of the transferable credits and Diploma Supplement. |
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Mobility Strands components that score five points or less will not be considered for funding.

At application stage, the applicants for a Special mobility strand for higher education students and staff will have to provide the following information:

- number of students and staff that are supposed to take part in mobility activities during the life-time of the project;
- average duration per participant of the planned mobility activities;
- receiving and sending institutions

On this basis and depending on the results of the evaluation process, the Executive Agency may award a grant to support a certain number of mobility activities, up to the maximum number requested by the applicant. In any circumstance, this grant will not exceed 80% of the grant awarded for the Joint or Structural project (excluding the mobility strand).

WHAT ELSE SHOULD YOU KNOW ABOUT A CAPACITY-BUILDING PROJECT?

The Capacity Building in higher education action is carried out within the context of the priorities of the European Union's Agenda for Change. The European Union shall take into account the need for geographical balance and diversity, the increased differentiation between developing countries when considering the final list of projects to be funded.

Funding for this action is on the basis of regional financial envelopes. After having considered the quality of projects in relation to the award criteria, their relevance to the local needs and the budget available for the given region, the need to achieve a sufficient geographical representation and diversity in terms of the numbers of projects for a given country may be taken into account.

REGIONAL COOPERATION

Regional (countries within a same region) and cross-regional cooperation (cooperation between different regions of the world) should be relevant and justified by a detailed analysis of common needs and objectives. The choice of the countries must be adequate and coherent with the objectives proposed, in particular in cases where countries from different regions are concerned. Cross-regional cooperation is possible in multi-country projects provided that the theme of the proposal is listed as a regional priority or national priority (if relevant) for all the eligible Partner Countries concerned.



IMPACT AND DISSEMINATION

Capacity-building projects are expected to have a long-term structural impact on the systems, organisations/institutions and individuals in the eligible Partner Countries. Projects will have to demonstrate their innovative character, the impact and sustainability of their results and how they intend to maintain or develop the outcomes after the end of the project. Where applicable, projects should demonstrate that they build upon the results of previous EU-funded projects, such as those under the former Alfa, Edulink, Erasmus Mundus and Tempus programmes. Every proposal has to demonstrate how the project results would be disseminated in the relevant target groups. Proposals for Structural Projects which mainly aim to impact at institutional level without demonstrating that the project will have a nation-wide impact, will not be selected.