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(Announcements)

ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES

COMMISSION

CALL FOR PROPOSALS — EACEA/28/09

Tempus IV — Reform of higher education through international university cooperation

(2009/C 286/03)

1. Objectives and description

The fourth phase of the Tempus programme covers the period from 2007 to 2013.

The overall objective of the programme is to contribute towards facilitating cooperation in the field of higher education among Member States of the European Union (EU) and partner countries in the surrounding area. In particular, the programme will help promote voluntary convergence with EU developments in the field of higher education, deriving from the Lisbon agenda and the Bologna process.

The purpose of this call for proposals is to promote multilateral cooperation among higher education institutions, authorities and organisations from EU Member States and partner countries with the focus on the reform and modernisation of higher education.

The Education, Audiovisual and Culture Agency ('the Agency'), acting under powers delegated from the European Commission ('the Commission'), is responsible for the management of this call for proposals.

2. Eligible applicants

In order to be eligible for the award of a grant, applicants must be legal persons ('legal entities'), legally established for more than five years in the EU or Tempus partner countries.

Applicants for Joint Projects must be State-recognised, public or private higher education institutions or associations, organisations or networks of higher education institutions dedicated to the promotion, improvement and reform of higher education.

Applicants for Structural Measures must be legal entities as stipulated above for Joint Projects or national or international rector, teacher or student organisations.

Institutions and organisations which may participate as partners/co-beneficiaries in the Tempus Programme range from higher education institutions and organisations through to non-academic institutions and organisations such as non-governmental organisations, companies, industries and public authorities.

These institutions and organisations have to be based in the following four groups of eligible countries:

- 27 Member States of the European Union,
- five countries of the Western Balkan region: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia as well as Kosovo ⁽¹⁾,

⁽¹⁾ Under the auspices of the United Nations, pursuant to UN Security Council Resolution 1244 of 10 June 1999.

- 16 countries in the Southern and Eastern neighbouring area of the European Union: Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, the occupied Palestinian territory, Syria, Tunisia, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova, the Russian Federation and Ukraine,
- five Central Asian Republics: Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan.

3. Eligible activities and duration

The two principal instruments for cooperation through this Tempus call for proposals are:

- Joint Projects: projects with a 'bottom-up' approach aiming at modernisation and reform on an institutional (university) level. Joint Projects aim at transferring knowledge between universities, organisations and institutions from the EU and from the partner countries as well as between partner country entities as appropriate.
- Structural Measures: projects seeking to contribute to the development and reform of higher education systems in partner countries, as well as to enhance their quality and relevance and to increase their convergence with EU developments. Structural Measures will be interventions designed to support structural reform of higher education systems and the strategic framework development at national level.

Under this call, national and multi-country projects can be financed:

National projects must adhere to national priorities which are established in close dialogue between European Commission Delegations and the relevant authorities in the partner countries.

- For national projects, proposals must be submitted by groupings of institutions involving:
 - at least three higher education institutions from a partner country (in the case of Montenegro and Kosovo, due to the small size of the higher education sector, one university will be sufficient),
 - at least three higher education institutions from the EU, each from a different EU Member State.

Multi-country projects must comply with regional priorities which are based on the EU's policy for cooperation with the partner countries' regions as identified in its strategic documents concerning the neighbouring countries ⁽¹⁾, those for pre-accession to the EU ⁽²⁾ and those in Central Asia ⁽³⁾. They are common to all partner countries within a specific region or they address a national priority which is common to each of the participating partner countries.

- For multi-country projects, proposals must be submitted by groupings of institutions involving:
 - at least two higher education institutions, from each of the participating partner countries (minimum two partner countries) involved in the proposal (with the exception of Kosovo and Montenegro where the requirement is one higher education institution from each),
 - at least three higher education institutions, each from a different EU Member State.

For Structural Measures, there is an additional condition: The Ministry/ies of (Higher) Education in the partner country/ies must be involved as partner/s in a Structural Measures project.

The maximum duration of projects is 24 months or 36 months. The period of eligibility of costs is expected to start on 15 October 2010.

⁽¹⁾ Regulation (EC) No 1638/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 October 2006 laying down general provisions establishing a European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument; http://ec.europa.eu/world/enp/pdf/oj_1310_en.pdf; European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument, ENPI Inter-regional Programme, Strategy Paper 2007-2013 and Indicative Programme 2007-2010; http://ec.europa.eu/world/enp/pdf/country/enpi_interregional_en.pdf

⁽²⁾ Council Regulation (EC) No 1085/2006 of 17 July 2006 establishing an Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA); http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/site/en/oj/2006/l_210/l_21020060731en00820093.pdf Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA), Multi-annual Indicative Planning Document (MIPD), 2008-2010, Multi-beneficiary; MIPD (2008-2010), reference C(2008) 3585 of 17 July 2008 http://www.cc.cec/sg_vista/cgi-bin/repository/getdoc/COMM_NATIVE_C_2008_3585_1_EN_ANNEXE.doc

⁽³⁾ The EU and Central Asia: Strategy for a New Partnership; The Council of the EU, 31 May 2007, 10113/07 http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/librairie/PDF/EU_CtrlAsia_EN-RU.pdf

4. Award criteria

Eligible applications for Joint Projects and Structural Measures will be assessed by external independent experts according to the following award criteria:

- the clarity and coherence of the project objectives; their relevance to the higher education reforms (EU modernisation agenda, Bologna process) in the institution or system of the partner country and a clear link to how the project will have an impact on these reforms,
- the quality of the partnership (skills, recognised expertise and competences required to carry out all aspects of the work programme, suitable distribution of tasks, effective communication and cooperation),
- the applied methodology including, amongst others, appropriateness of project outcomes and related activities in consistency with the project aim and specific objectives, demonstrated logical and sound planning capacity (Logical framework matrix and work plan), anticipated quality control, monitoring and management of the project (indicators and benchmarks),
- the sustainability or lasting impact of the project on the institutions, target groups and/or higher education system, including dissemination and exploitation of activities and project results,
- the budget and cost-effectiveness, including staff planning respecting the daily salary rates, appropriate equipment purchase, efficient use of mobility periods.

Of the proposals that pass the external assessment and that obtain the highest scores, and according to the budget allocations for each region, an Interservice selection committee will short-list the projects on which the Ministries of Education, EC Delegations and National Tempus offices in the partner countries will be consulted. The Agency will take the final decision on which projects it will fund, taking into consideration the results of the evaluation and consultation and the geographical balance between the partner countries and the budgetary constraints.

5. Budget and grant amounts

The indicative budget earmarked for the co-financing of projects under this call amounts to EUR 53,8 million.

The financial contribution from the Community cannot exceed 90 % of the total eligible costs. A co-financing of a minimum of 10 % of the total eligible cost is needed.

The minimum grant for both Joint Projects and Structural Measures will be EUR 500 000. The maximum grant will amount to EUR 1 500 000. For national projects in Kosovo and Montenegro the minimum grant for both project types is set at EUR 300 000.

6. Submission of proposals and deadline

Grant applications must be drawn up in English, French or German using the eForm specifically designed for this purpose, which will be available on the website of the Agency: http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/tempus/index_en.php

The duly completed electronic applications forms for Joint Projects and Structural Measures must be sent no later than 9 March 2010, 12:00 Brussels time.

This online submission is considered to be the master copy. However, in order to provide safeguards for both applicants and for the Agency, and in order to submit additional required information, a complete paper copy of the submitted eForm together with additional documents (see Application Guidelines) must be sent by post to the Agency by 9th March 2010 (date of postmark) to the following address:

Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency
Tempus
Call for Proposal EACEA/28/09
Office: BOUR 2/17
Avenue du Bourget 1
1140 Bruxelles/Brussel
BELGIQUE/BELGIË

Applications sent by fax or e-mail will not be accepted.

7. Further information

Applications must comply with the provisions contained in the Application Guidelines — Call for proposals EACEA/28/09, be submitted on the application form provided for this purpose and contain the relevant Annexes. The said documents can be found on the Internet at the following address: http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/tempus/index_en.php
