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(Announcements)

ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES

EUROPEAN COMMISSION

CALL FOR PROPOSALS EACEA/33/2014

under the Erasmus+ Programme

Key Action 3: Support for policy reform — Prospective initiatives

European Forward-Looking Cooperation Projects in the fields of education and training, and youth

(2014/C 425/05)

1. Description, objectives, and priorities

Forward-Looking Cooperation Projects are cooperation projects proposed and managed by a partnership of key stakeholders in view of identifying, testing, developing, assessing new innovative approaches in the fields of education, training and youth, that have the potential of becoming mainstreamed and giving input for improving educational and youth policies.

The projects should focus on innovation in practices and policies across educational and youth sectors. The specific aim of these activities is to provide in-depth knowledge on target groups, learning, teaching, training or youth work situations and effective methodologies and tools that help policies to develop, as well as conclusions relevant for policy makers in education, training and youth at all levels.

The objectives of this call are to:

- propose and field-test innovative solutions to current or future challenges in the education, training or youth field which have the potential to improve and/or transform policies and practices and which can have a sustainable and systemic impact on Europe's education, training and youth systems,
- identify, test, develop, and assess new innovative approaches in the fields of education, training and youth, that have the potential of becoming mainstreamed,
- support transnational cooperation and mutual learning on forward-looking issues between key stakeholders to provide solutions to current challenges in the education, training and youth sectors and impact on the design of new policies in those fields,
- facilitate the collection and analysis of substantive evidence allowing the responsible authorities to develop new, innovative and effective policies and practices in the education and training field or in the youth field and elaborating concrete methodologies for a practical implementation of these in the future,
- provide in-depth knowledge on target groups, learning, teaching, training or youth work situations and effective methodologies and tools that help policies to develop, as well as conclusions relevant for policymakers in education, training and youth at all levels,
- reinforce increased attention to policy innovation in education, training or youth field.

The call for proposals supports projects in two strands.

The priorities for this call are:

— *Strand 1 — Education and training field*

1. Reducing disparities in learning outcomes affecting learners from disadvantaged backgrounds.
2. Raising the quality of education through the use of learning analytics and learning semantics.
3. Promoting innovative collaborative teaching and learning.
4. Opening up (virtual or physical) infrastructures of education and training institutions to adult learning and provision of modular certified learning opportunities.
5. Improve quality and raise excellence in vocational education and training.
6. Reforming higher education to make it more diversified, responsive and competitive.

— *Strand 2 — Youth field*

7. Using e-participation as an instrument to foster young people's empowerment and active participation in democratic life.

Under Strand 1, the proposals may address one or several priorities. If the applicant addresses several priorities, one priority must be chosen as the 'main priority' and must be satisfactorily addressed⁽¹⁾. Applications that do not address satisfactorily the 'main priority' will not be considered for funding.

2. Eligible applicants

The term 'applicants' refers to all organisations and institutions participating in an application regardless of their role in the project.

Eligible applicants are public or private organisations active in the fields of education, training and youth or other socioeconomic sectors, or organisations carrying out cross-sector activities.

Applicants considered eligible to respond to this call are:

- public authorities at national/regional/local level responsible for education, training and youth policy,
- non-profit organisations (NGOs), private or public,
- research centres,
- universities,
- chambers of commerce,
- networks,
- recognition centres,
- evaluation institutions,
- trade organisations and social partners,
- schools or other educational institutions,
- civil society and cultural organisations,
- companies,
- international organisations.

⁽¹⁾ The number of indicated priorities will not influence the scoring of the 'Relevance' criterion.

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

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

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

3. Eligible activities and project duration

Activities must start between 1 November 2015 and 1 January 2016, and 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. The maximum duration will then be 42 months.

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

- needs analysis, studies, mapping exercise,
- research activities,
- training activities,
- drafting of report(s), project conclusions, policy recommendations,
- workshop(s),
- conferences/seminars,
- exchanges/mobilities,
- concrete tests and assessments of innovative approaches at grass-roots level,
- awareness and dissemination actions,
- actions aiming at the creation and improving of networks, exchanges of good practices,
- development of ICT tools (software, platforms, apps, etc.) or learning resources,
- development of other intellectual outputs

4. Award criteria

The eligible applications will be assessed on the basis of exclusion, selection, and the award criteria ⁽¹⁾.

The award criteria for the funding of an application are:

1. relevance (30 %);
2. quality of the project design and implementation (30 %);

⁽¹⁾ See Guidelines for Applicants Sections 7, 8 and 9.

3. quality of the partnership and cooperation arrangements (20 %);

4. impact, dissemination and sustainability (20 %).

Only proposals having reached the minimum quality thresholds:

— at least the threshold of 50 % of each criterion (i.e. minimum 15 points for respectively 'Relevance' and 'Quality of the project design and implementation'; 10 points for respectively 'Quality of the partnership and cooperation arrangements' and 'Impact, dissemination and sustainability', 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.

5. Budget

The total budget available for the co-financing of projects under the present call is EUR 17 000 000 and is divided in the following way:

— Strand 1 — Education and Training: EUR 15 000 000

— Strand 2 — Youth: EUR 2 000 000

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

The maximum grant per project will be EUR 500 000.

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

6. Submission procedure and deadline

Before submitting the electronic 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.

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

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

Please ensure you are using the correct application form.

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/actions/key-action-3-support-for-policy-reform/prospective-initiatives/forward-looking-cooperation-projects-2014_en

The full Application Package must be submitted online by the submission on the correct e-form, duly completed and containing all relevant and applicable annexes and supporting documents.

Application forms which do not include all the necessary information and which are not submitted online by the deadline will not be considered.

Grant applications must be drawn up in one of the official EU languages.

Submission deadline: **24 February 2015 — 12.00 noon CET**

7. Further information

For more details, please refer to the Guidelines for Applicants.

The Call Guidelines and the Application Package are available on the following website:

https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/erasmus-plus/actions/key-action-3-support-for-policy-reform/prospective-initiatives/forward-looking-cooperation-projects-2014_en

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