

## V

(Announcements)

## ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES

## EUROPEAN COMMISSION

## CALL FOR PROPOSALS — EACEA 40/2016

## under the Erasmus+ programme

## ‘KA3 — VET-business partnerships on work-based learning and apprenticeships’

(2016/C 384/06)

**1. Objectives and description**

Against the background of high youth unemployment and skills mismatch, the overall aim of the Call is to bridge the gap between the worlds of education and business, to improve the relevance of education and training to labour market needs, and to raise excellence.

In this context the objective of the Call is to invite the submission of proposals on VET-business partnerships to develop work-based learning and thus contributing to the Riga objective to promote work-based learning in all its forms, with special attention to apprenticeships.

These partnerships should contribute to the involvement of business and social partners in the design and delivery of VET and to ensure a strong work-based learning element in VET.

This Call also intends to improve the quality of work-based learning and apprenticeships by promoting partnerships that involve companies, VET providers, other relevant stakeholders and intermediary organisations to develop more relevant, systematic and sustainable approaches by transferring knowledge and by learning from well-established models and practices.

The focus lies on the regional and local dimension in order to produce concrete and sustainable results on the ground.

**2. Eligible applicants**

*Lot 1:*

The applicant (project coordinator) must be one of the following organisations:

- a VET provider (at upper secondary or post-secondary level),
- a small, medium or large enterprise (public or private),
- a chamber of industry, trade and crafts, or similarly relevant sectoral/professional organisation,
- a local or regional authority;

The partnership must be composed of at least three full partners from at least two different Erasmus+ programme countries.

These three entities must include:

- one VET provider,
- one local or regional authority,
- one small, medium or large enterprise (public or private) or one chamber or one sectoral/professional organisation.

In addition, the partnership should include at least one employers' and one workers' organisation (social partners) as associated partners.

*Lot 2:*

The applicant (project coordinator) must be a European umbrella organisation having members or affiliates in at least 12 Erasmus+ programme countries, of which at least 6 take part in the project as partners.

Eligible participating organisations (Lot 1 and Lot 2) include:

- public local and regional authorities,
- social partners (employers' and workers' organisations),
- small, medium or large enterprises (public or private),
- chambers of industry, trade and crafts, or similarly relevant sectoral/professional organisations,
- public employment services,
- VET schools and VET providers, agencies, centres (including post-secondary VET),
- youth organisations,
- parents associations,
- other relevant bodies.

Eligible countries are:

For Lot 1 and Lot 2:

The Erasmus+ programme countries:

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

Proposals from applicants in EFTA/EEA countries or from candidate or associated countries may be selected provided that, on the date of the award, agreements have been signed setting out the arrangements for the participation of those countries in the programme.

### 3. Eligible activities

The Call for Proposals distinguishes between two different types of partnerships. Therefore, applications should be submitted under one of the following two lots:

#### 1. *Local and regional partnerships (Lot 1)*

The call supports partnerships between (i) a VET provider; (ii) a small, medium or large enterprise (public or private) or chamber or other sectoral/professional organisation; (iii) and a local or regional authority.

These projects aim to strengthen VET-business partnerships on work-based learning and apprenticeships in a local or regional context.

The partnership should include an employers' and a workers' organisation (social partners) as associated partners.

#### 2. *Partnerships between a European umbrella organisation and its national members or affiliates (Lot 2)*

The call also supports a limited number of projects carried out by European umbrella organisations. These projects aim to support targeted and strategic activities between these umbrella organisations at European level and their national members or affiliates aimed at strengthening VET-business partnerships on work-based learning and apprenticeships in a local or regional context.

The beneficiaries shall undertake the following activities:

In both Lots, beneficiaries shall set up and implement new cooperation structures on sustainable VET-business partnerships based on a skills needs assessment and possibly taking into account a sectoral dimension.

The activities shall be linked to cross-border or inter-regional cooperation strategies, local or regional economic development strategies or macro-regional strategies.

These should entail capacity building, knowledge transfer and exchange of experiences, or make existing engagement more systematic, targeted and sustainable for the improved qualitative and quantitative provision of apprenticeships and work-based learning;

In addition, beneficiaries shall undertake two of the following three activities for both lots:

- design and implement curricula, courses and modules, training material on work-based learning and apprenticeships according to skills needs and in line with the European transparency instruments (e.g. EQF, EQAVET, ECVET) and using digital and innovative technologies as appropriate,
- build effective cooperation structures between VET teachers and in-company trainers for the delivery of work-based learning and apprenticeships,
- set up and strengthen work-based learning and apprenticeships in higher VET at tertiary level<sup>(1)</sup> by facilitating cooperation between VET providers at secondary and tertiary level and businesses, including the promotion of research links to universities or universities of applied sciences to respond to skills shortages and foster the excellence agenda<sup>(2)</sup>.

#### 4. Award criteria

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

1. Relevance of the project (maximum 30 points — threshold minimum 16 points)
2. Quality of the project design and implementation (maximum 25 points — threshold minimum 13 points)
3. Quality of the project consortium and the cooperation arrangements (maximum 25 points — threshold minimum 13 points)
4. Impact and dissemination (maximum 20 points — threshold minimum 11 points)

The threshold for proposals to be put forward to the evaluation committee shall be minimum 60 points (out of 100 points in total).

#### 5. Budget

The total budget earmarked for the co-financing of projects is estimated at maximum EUR 6 million (EUR 4,5 million for Lot 1 and EUR 1,5 million for Lot 2).

Each grant will amount to between EUR 250 000 and EUR 350 000. The agency expects to fund around 20 proposals (up to 15 projects under Lot 1 and up to 5 projects under Lot 2).

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

#### 6. Deadline for submission of applications

Applications must be submitted no later than the **17 January 2017 12.00 noon (Brussels time)**.

Applications shall comply with the following requirements:

- they must be submitted exclusively online using the correct official application form,
- they must be drafted in any official EU language.

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

<sup>(1)</sup> The scope of VET goes beyond the upper-secondary level and covers also the post-secondary, non-tertiary level but also the tertiary level provided the curriculum includes a strong work-based learning component.

<sup>(2)</sup> On VET excellence see the EC Communication on 'Rethinking Education' (2012) <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?qid=1389778594543&uri=CELEX:52012DC0669>

## 7. Full details

The guidelines together with the application form can be found at the following internet address:

[http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/erasmus-plus/actions/vet-business-partnerships-apprenticeshipswork-based-learning\\_en](http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/erasmus-plus/actions/vet-business-partnerships-apprenticeshipswork-based-learning_en)

Applications must comply with all the terms of the guidelines.

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