

ERASMUS MUNDUS ACTION 2 – PARTNERSHIPS Strand 1 and Strand 2

ADMINISTRATIVE AND FINANCIAL HANDBOOK

CALL FOR PROPOSALS EACEA 38/12

MODIFICATION

Due to the adoption of simplified amendment procedures by the Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA), sections II and III.C.3 of the Administrative and Financial Handbook of the Call for Proposals EACEA 38/12 are replaced by the text below.

II. MODIFICATION OF THE GRANT AGREEMENT

As indicated in Article II.12, any modification/amendment to the grant agreement must be subject to prior written approval.

Any request for an amendment (sections II.A, II.B and II.C below) must be supported by a detailed justification of the changes. Failure to provide supporting documentation may considerably delay the review process. The Agency will assess the documents received against the eligibility, selection and award criteria used at application stage, if necessary with the help of external academic experts. The Agency will evaluate whether or not to approve the amendment request and will inform the beneficiary of its decision. Should the request of amendment be judged ineligible or of insufficient quality, it may be rejected.

II.A MODIFICATIONS REQUIRING AN EXCHANGE OF LETTERS (AMENDMENT)

Where the modification needs an exchange of letters, the beneficiary must send a written request to the Agency, dated and signed in original by the legal representative. The amendment may not have as its purpose or effect to fundamentally modify the content of the grant agreement.

The amendment, unless otherwise specified, will enter into force from the date the Agency signs the letter confirming its agreement with the request for amendment. It takes effect from the date the effects described in the amendment apply and bind the parties. The date of taking effect may be different from the date of entry into force. If no specific date is indicated, the amendment will take effect on the day of entry into force.

II.A.1 Change in the composition of the partnership

The project was approved on the basis of the partnership proposed by the applicant in the application form. The composition of the partnership is a decisive factor for the qualitative implementation of the project. Any change in the composition of the partnership is therefore considered a substantial change.

As a general rule, a change in the composition of the partnership may result either from the arrival of an additional partner (which may under no circumstances lead to an increase of the grant awarded), the departure of a partner, the replacement of one partner by another, or the change of status of a member, from associate to partner and vice versa.

These events will have an impact on the content and/or on the quality of the action. They will have an impact on mobility arrangements and can also have financial implications, in particular in relation to the distribution of the grant and the scholarships among the partners, as well as in relation to the payment modalities.

If a change is envisaged, a new description of the project must be submitted to the Agency. Such a description will be based on the Project information completed at the time of application to the Call for Proposals. This needs to be accompanied by a request letter asking to change the partnership composition, signed by the legal representative.

The Project information document¹ will have to be updated in the following parts:

- part 1, section A
- part 1, section B (only for the relevant partner/s)
- part 2, (only the paragraph Partnership composition and cooperation mechanisms)

Also the Partnership statement(s) for the new partner(s) must be submitted to the Agency.

Moreover, the change in the composition of the partnership must be endorsed by all the partners.

The Agency will assess the documents received against the eligibility, selection and award criteria used at application stage, if necessary with the help of external academic experts. Should the new composition of the partnership be judged ineligible or of an insufficient quality, the grant agreement will be terminated.

Once the Agency accepts an additional/new partner, the coordinator will be obliged to send an updated MoU countersigned by the new partner.

To ensure the completion of any on-going mobility, a change in the partnership will not be granted if individual mobility flows are still on-going with the partner(s) concerned.

If a partner leaves the partnership, the use of lump sums and the payment of scholarships by that partner remain an eligible expenditure, on the condition that they occurred before the partner's departure and that the beneficiary is able to provide the relevant supporting documents concerning the payment of the scholarships.

II.A.2 Change of coordinating institution/co-coordinating institution (joint coordinator)

A change of coordinating institution (i.e. replacement by another institution of the partnership) involves a change in legal responsibility. It should always be endorsed by both institutions concerned and by the partnership. In an official document signed by both legal representatives, the former coordinating institution will have to renounce all of its rights and obligations, while the new one will have to agree to take them over from the start until the end of the grant agreement(s).

If a change of coordinating institution has an impact on the content or the quality of the proposed action, a new description of the project must be submitted to the Agency.

Such a description will be based on the Project information completed at the time of application to the Call for Proposals.

The Project information document² will have to be updated in the following parts:

¹ The template is available at: http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/erasmus_mundus/funding/2014/call_eacea_18_13_en.php

- part 1, section A
- part 1, section B (only for the relevant partner/s)
- part 2, (only the paragraph *Partnership composition and cooperation mechanisms*)

The Agency will assess the documents received against the eligibility, selection and award criteria used at application stage, if necessary with the help of external academic experts. Should the new composition of the partnership be judged ineligible or of insufficient quality, the grant agreement will be terminated.

The same procedure must be followed in case of a change of co-coordinating institution (joint coordinator), if applicable.

II.A.3 Change in the period of eligibility

Requests to change the period of eligibility will only be accepted by the Agency in very specific and duly justified cases. The extension of the eligibility period cannot exceed 12 months nor warrant additional funding.

An extension of the period of eligibility affects the deadline for submission of the final report, which will be postponed by the same amount of time.

II.A.4 Changes to the mobility flows

Requests for amendments to the grant agreement related to changes to the mobility flows will be accepted only in very specific and duly justified cases.

The mobility flows must be implemented as agreed in the grant agreement and they have to fulfil the requirements specified in the Programme Guide and the Guidelines to the Call for proposals for each specific lot.

Changes may concern:

- Total number of individual mobility flows
- Planned range for Target Group 1
- Distribution of the mobility flows between EU and third country nationals
- Distribution range per type of mobility

Changes to the mobility flows may lead to a decrease of the EU grant. This will be calculated based on the actual mobility implemented and reported in the final report.

II.A.5 Change in the deadlines for submission of the reports (not related to an extension of the eligibility period)

Requests to change the deadline for submission of a report will only be accepted by the Agency if duly justified and substantiated.

II.A.6 Change of legal representative

The letter notifying the Agency of the change must be accompanied by an official document confirming the capacity of the new legal representative to enter into legal /financial commitments on behalf of the beneficiary.

II.A.7 Change of bank account information

Any change must be reported to the Agency updating the Bank Account Form/Financial identification³ submitted at the time of application. The document must be duly stamped and

² The template is available at: http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/erasmus_mundus/funding/2014/call_eacea_18_13_en.php

³ http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/erasmus_mundus/funding/2014/documents/fich_sign_ba_gb_en.pdf

signed by the bank and the account holder (legal representative or coordinator).

II.B MODIFICATIONS VIA THE PARTICIPANT PORTAL (AMENDMENT)

Modifications related to updates of the beneficiaries' legal records may concern changes in the following data, e.g.:

- Legal name
- Legal address
- VAT n°
- Registration n°
- Legal status
- Legal type (Public, Private, etc.)

The above modifications should be done in the Participant Portal, which is the platform where the LEAR (Legal Entity Appointed Representative) of each beneficiary registers any changes related to their legal entity⁴. Changes made by the beneficiaries in the Participant Portal are considered to be sufficient and deemed to be equal to an amendment request.

Such changes often entail changes of the bank information as well, which will then require an amendment via an "exchange of letters" (see section II.A.7 above).

The accuracy of the changes and any supporting documents are checked and validated by the Research Executive Agency (REA). Once REA has validated these changes, they notify the beneficiary that this information is up to date in the database of the Commission. The impact that the modifications may have on the projects in which the organisation is involved is a separate procedure, which has to be carried out by the Agency. Provided that the changes are compatible with the eligibility, exclusion and selection criteria applied during the selection process, the Agency will approve the changes and the beneficiary concerned will be informed by means of a notification.

II.B.1 Change of coordinating institution status/type (e.g. merger)

The new legal status/type of a beneficiary has to be examined to ensure that it still fulfils all the eligibility and selection criteria originally applied. If this change results in non-fulfilment of the eligibility and/or selection criteria, this might lead to the termination of its participation. It will also be verified whether the eligibility criteria at project level are still respected.

II.B.2 Change of coordinating institution data (e.g. legal name, legal address, VAT n°, registration n°)

In certain cases, what appears to be a change of the legal name may in fact refer to a different change (e.g. new legal entity, transfer of rights and obligations), which may require other supporting documents to be provided and a different treatment. In case of doubt, the beneficiary must contact the Agency.

⁴ Changes of organisation data of a beneficiary will have to be communicated by the Legal Entity Appointed Representative (LEAR), or the person with Account Administrative role, and provide the supporting documents via the "My Organisations" option in the organisations menu by using the Unique Registration Facility (URF) hosted in the Participant Portal under the following link:

<https://ec.europa.eu/education/participants/portal/desktop/en/organisations/register.html>

II.C MODIFICATIONS BY E-MAIL (AMENDMENT)

II.C.1 Change of coordinator

Such amendment can be requested through an email or a letter attached to an email. In the first case, the legal representative should be at least in CC of the email. In the second case, the letter attached to the email should be signed by the legal representative.

Since the coordinator plays a vital role in the management and monitoring of the partnership, a change of coordinator must be endorsed by all the partners. A signed document confirming such endorsement must accompany this request for amendment.

II.D NOTIFICATION (CHANGES NOT REQUIRING AN AMENDMENT)

For the following changes, only a notification to the Agency is required:

II.D.1 Change of an associated member within the partnership

Since the associated members can play an important role in the promotion, implementation, evaluation and sustainable development of the project, such a change must be endorsed by all the partners. This endorsement should accompany the letter notifying the change to the Agency.

II.D.2 Change of contact data of the legal representative/coordinator

Changes of the legal representative/coordinator data (e.g. address, phone number etc.) should be notified to the Agency.

II.D.3 Change of partner data

Changes of any partner data (e.g. address, phone etc.) should be notified to the Agency.

II.D.4 Minor changes to the mobility flows

Some minor changes to the mobility scheme might occur during the implementation phase. The coordinator shall introduce a request to the Agency via the EMT. The status of the request (approved or rejected) can be consulted directly in the EMT.

Minor changes concern:

- replacement of candidates by others belonging to the same type of mobility and included in the corresponding reserve list;
- replacement of candidates by others belonging to a different type of mobility and included in the corresponding reserve list.
- reduction/extension of the duration of the mobility within the limits defined in Article I.2.3 of the grant agreement.

II.D.5 Change in deadlines for submission of the reports (not related to an extension of the eligibility period and below 30 days)

The request can be sent by the coordinator by letter or e-mail. The coordinator will receive a reply by e-mail/EMT, if necessary.

II. E SUMMARY TABLE OF MODIFICATIONS TO THE GRANT AGREEMENT

	A EXCHANGE OF LETTERS (Amendment)	B MODIFICATIONS VIA THE PARTICIPANT PORTAL (Amendment)	C MODIFICATIONS BY EMAIL (Amendment)	D NOTIFICATION (Changes not requiring an Amendment)
CHANGES	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Change in the composition of the partnership 2) Change of coordinating institution or co-coordinating institution (joint coordinator – if applicable) 3) Change in the period of eligibility 4) Change to the mobility flow Change in the deadlines for reports' submission (without extension of the eligibility period) > 30 days 5) Change of the legal representative of the coordinating institution 6) Change of bank account information 	Change of coordinating institution's legal records: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Change of status/type (e.g. merger) 2) Change of data (e.g. legal name, legal address, VAT n°, registration n°) 3) Change of language/website 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Change of coordinator of the project 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Change of an associated member within the partnership 2) Change of contact data of the legal representative/coordinator (e.g. address, phone/fax number) 3) Change of partner data 4) Minor changes to the mobility flows 5) Change in the deadlines for reports' submission (without extension of the eligibility period) <= 30 days
PROCEDURE	Request for an amendment by letter, with supporting documents attached or form, dated and signed/sent by the legal representative of the beneficiary. Submission of the request: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - For 1) to 4) above: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • before it is due to take effect • to be submitted to the Agency at least 30 calendar days before the end of the period of eligibility mentioned in the grant agreement - For 5) and 6) above: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • as soon as the change occurs 	Request for an amendment via the Participant Portal, introduced by the LEAR. To be submitted as soon as the change occurs.	Request for an amendment by email or letter attached to an email, together with relevant supporting documents. The request must be submitted as soon as the change occurs.	Notification by letter or email, by legal representative or coordinator. Request for modification to be submitted as soon as the change occurs, to be proposed in due time and before the end of the period of eligibility.
EACEA	Acknowledgement of receipt will be sent. The Agency approves or rejects the request for modification in writing within 30 calendar days (indicative) after receipt of the request. If approved, the Agency sends an amendment letter. Pending such exchange of letters, changes are not considered as approved by the Agency.	Acknowledgement of receipt and validation of the change will be sent via the Participant Portal. A notification of the modification occurred will be sent by the Agency.	Acknowledgement of receipt will be sent. The Agency approves or rejects the request for modification in writing within 30 calendar days (indicative) after receipt of the request.	As soon as the Agency receives this information it will update its database. The coordinator will receive a confirmation by email (with Cc to the legal representative if the latter has sent the notification). For 4) above: Following analysis of the request, the Agency validates the changes in the EMT. For 1), 2), 3) and 5) above: The Agency confirms it has taken note of the (proposed) modification by email within 15 calendar days (indicative) after receipt of the notification.

III.C.3 Management of the scholarship funds in case of interruption of the mobility

A scholarship may be put on hold if the student has to temporarily leave the host institution as a result of duly justified and well documented reasons (e.g. serious illness, etc.) during the academic activities. In this case, the scholarship payment must be interrupted until she/he has returned to the host institution and can actively participate in the activities. If, despite the temporary absence, the scholarship holder can catch up on the study/research activities, the monthly allowances corresponding to the period of interruption could be paid to the candidate, if agreed among the partners and notified to the Agency.

If the scholarship holder could not catch up because of serious and justified reasons, his/her absence might lead to an extension of the eligibility period of the grant agreement. Hence, the coordinator must send to the Agency a duly substantiated request for amendment as per Chapter II.A.

In addition, academic grounds may justify a split in a period of mobility, to allow a student (except undergraduates) to study or carry out research activities for a short period of time. In the event that the scholarship holder returns to his/her home country or goes to other countries, which are not the ones of the institutions included in the partnership, the scholarship will not be paid for this period.

For master students, a split can take place only after having spent a minimum of one academic semester at the first host institution. For doctorates and post-doctorates, the mobility can be split into several periods, without the one academic semester restriction.

Before the split occurs, a duly justified request has to be sent to the Agency, endorsed by the relevant academic responsible for the scholarship holder. The Agency will evaluate and approve such requests on a case-by-case basis. The Agency reserves the right to refuse a request that is not duly justified.

Conversely, staff mobility can be split into several periods without prior authorisation from the Agency, on the condition that the total mobility is at least one month.

In any case, mobility flows for students and staff between the European or between third-country institutions involved in the partnership are not eligible. Additional costs incurred during the interruption period are not eligible.