PREPARING A GOOD PROJECT PROPOSAL
Preparing a good project proposal

• I. TEMPUS

• II. ERASMUS MUNDUS action 2

• III. Tips and tricks – how to ensure your proposal stands out
I. TEMPUS

1.1 Why participate in a TEMPUS project?
1.2 Who are the beneficiaries?
1.3 How to participate?
   1.3.1 Open Call for Proposals
   1.3.2 General information about the proposal
       Selection procedure
       Key documents to prepare a proposal
       Eligibility criteria
       Award criteria
   1.3.3 How to prepare a good proposal?
       Application form: how to complete, when to start, what do you need?
       Key areas of the preparation of a proposal
The purpose of this call 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**.
1.2 Who are the beneficiaries?

- *Higher education institutions* from EU and Partner Countries.
- *Any organisation* such:
  - Associations, organisations or networks of higher education institutions, national or international rector, teacher or student organisations;
  - Non-governmental organisations
  - Social Partners or their training organisations;
  - Chambers of commerce, labour associations or other public or private professional organisations;
  - Private or public enterprises;
  - Research institutions.
1.2 Who are the beneficiaries?

- *Individuals* cannot apply directly to the Programme.

- *Public administrations* (i.e. Ministries, other national, regional and local administrations) or governmental organisations may participate in the Tempus Programme under conditions.
I.3 How to participate?

I.3.1 Open Call for Proposals

I.3.2 General information about the proposal

Selection procedure
- Check of eligibility criteria
- Check of exclusion criteria
- Check of selection criteria (Check of operational and financial capacity)
- Experts evaluation against the award criteria
- Consultation with EU Delegations, the Ministries of Education and National Tempus Offices in the Partner Countries (eligibility of non-EU HEIs and relevance of the proposal regarding priorities)
- Evaluation Committee (The Evaluation Committee includes representatives from the Agency and from the associated Directorates- Generals of the European Commission, as well as from the European External Action Service.)
- Selection Decision
I.3 How to participate?

Key documents to prepare a proposal?
- 5th Call for proposals
- The Instructions for Applicants (rules and guidance to complete the application and the compulsory documents)
- The eForm User Guide (technical guidance on the working and requirements of the eForm works)

• Eligibility criteria
- Most of eligibility criteria are featured in the e-form;
  1. Formal submission requirements
  2. Grant size and duration
  3. Applicant, Partners and Partnership requirements (number of partners...)
  4. National and regional priorities
I.3 How to participate?

• Award criteria
• **Five award criteria defined in the Call**
  • 1. Relevance (25%)
  • 2. Good quality partnership (20%)
  • 3. Quality of the project’s content and methodology (25%)
  • 4. Dissemination & Sustainability (15%)
  • 5. Budget and Cost-effectiveness (15%)
1.3 How to participate?

1. Relevance

The national/regional priorities are addressed.

Key problems and needs of the specific Partner Country/ies and of the potential stakeholders are identified.

The objectives are realistic and relevant for the reform strategies of higher education in the Partner Countries.

The real needs and problems of the clearly defined target groups are addressed; relevant stakeholders are included.

The project describes how the project will contribute to solving the identified problems.

It explains how the project proposal was prepared.
I.3 How to participate?

2. Good quality partnership

- The partnership includes all the skills, recognised expertise and competences required to address the needs of the PC Higher Education Institutions or systems and to achieve the project objectives
- Each partner PC / EU should demonstrate how their experience and their role (stressing the skills and competencies) is relevant in the planned project activities
- The partnership ensures a regional dimension and diversity (new partners) and a balanced distribution of tasks (no “sleeping partners”)
- Measures to ensure effective communication among the partners are described
I.3 How to participate?

3. Quality of the project’s content and methodology

Description of the project as a whole, including:

- The academic content and the pedagogical approach; appropriate methodology, involvement of stakeholders in general, the link between wider and specific objectives and between expected outcomes and activities,
- The quality control processes foreseen and the monitoring measures that will be implemented.
- The management of the project, roles and responsibilities allocated to each partner, decision-making process and implementation structure.
- Make sure that the information in this section is consistent with the LFM
- Ensure a balanced distribution of tasks (+ role of Lead partner in work-packages)
I.3 How to participate?

4. Dissemination and Sustainability

How information/outcomes of the project will be made available to groups not directly involved
How the expected results will be sustainable in the long term (financial, institutional and policy level)
The project should consider to:

• develop a “visual” identity of the project
• clearly identify target groups
• plan internal (within PC institutions) and external (in the PC) dissemination
• use a wide range of dissemination tools
• advertise the first results / products
• consult and involve the relevant stakeholders (decision makers at national and institutional level, students organisations, professional organisations, private sector)
• demonstrate arrangements for recognition / accreditation of new courses
• evaluate and describe what will happen after the end of the project
• consult Tempus handbook “Sustainability through Dissemination”
I.3 How to participate?

5. Budget and Cost-effectiveness

- Implementation of project activities and achievement of expected results and objectives in the most economical way and respecting the Tempus financial rules
- Concretely, the project should:
- Respect the salary and mobility rates (according to type of task in the project and not the status of the individual) and the budget ceilings for staff costs and equipment
- Plan a reasonable/efficient amount of staff costs for each activity (including reasonable management costs)
- Use efficiently the mobility periods – making best use of time abroad for maximum benefit
- Limit the equipment purchase to what is necessary for the implementation of the project
- Check carefully the eligibility of expenses and account the expenses under the right budget heading
- Explain the principles for budget allocation amongst partners
- Eliminate calculation errors and check the consistency of the different parts of the budget
I.3 How to participate?

I.3.3 How to prepare a good proposal?

- Application form: presentation of the eForm structure

Main Body
- Front Page: Identification of the Call and Programme
- PART A: Identification of the Applicant and other organisations participating in the project
- PART B: Organisation and Activities
- PART C: Description of the project (basic data)
- PART D: Operational capacity
- PART E: Project implementation / Award criteria (the project in details)
- PART F: Workplan in Workpackages

Attachments
- 1: Declaration of Honour by the legal representative of the Applicant organisation
- 2 Logical Framework Matrix
- 3 Work-plan and Budget
I.3 How to participate?

When to start:

- As early as possible
- Set a realistic time-frame for project preparation (including reception of Mandates from partners)
- Get information on technical requirements for on-line submission as early as possible
I.3 How to participate?

Key areas of the preparation of a proposal

• **Workpackages (WPs), Outcomes and Activities**
  - Provide a logical structure of activities grouped in work-packages, with a reasonable number of deliverables / outcomes
  - Ensure a logical progression of outcomes within each WP from one project year to next
  - Propose suitable activities to achieve each individual outcome
  - Identify and quantify all appropriate target groups (no general statements)
  - Envisage realistic inputs directly relate to activities and are cost-efficient
  - Identify and justify financial resources needed to deliver the output/outcome and relate appropriately with budget (Excel tables)
  - Plan appropriate number of individual mobilities, the direction and duration for each mobility flow in relation to each activity
I.3 How to participate?

Key areas of the preparation of a proposal

- Logical Framework Matrix
  - Important planning tool: test the logic of the strategy, ensures feasibility clarifies relationships efficiency and effectiveness and management, monitoring and evaluation tool.
  - Coherent picture: together all key components in one place, expose the logic of how the project will work
  - 4 columns and 4 rows: PROJECT STRUCTURE: wider and specific objectives outputs/outcomes and activities, TARGETS: indicators of progress, SOURCES OF INFORMATION (how indicators will be measured) RISKS/ASSUMPTIONS
  - Vertical logic: what the project intends to achieve, causal Relationship and identified assumptions an risks
  - Horizontal logic: effects of the project, the resources needed for implementation and key progress indicators
I.3 How to participate?

Key areas of the preparation of a proposal

- Logical Framework Matrix

-Outputs and Outcomes:
Outputs: tangible: services, goods facilities that the project will deliver, expressed in measurable terms (quantitative dimensions)
Outcomes: intangible: likely or achieved short-term or medium-term effect, new skills, methods, practices, capacities

-Activities and inputs:
Activities: actions tasks in order to deliver planned results, presented in chronological order
Inputs: Financial and human resources, equipment, rough estimation of the necessary resources
I.3 How to participate?

Logical Framework Matrix

Indicators of progress

• variable (quantitative and qualitative) basis of the measurement of achievement and performance.
• specific and measurable, include ambitious but realistic targets
• a measure of quantity (size), quality (views, perceptions, experiences: quality of new training programme perceived by direct beneficiaries), time, target groups and locations objectively verifiable
• HOW THEY WILL BE MEASURED
• Sources of information and means of their collection: already available: publications, official statistics, reports or produced during the project implementation including methods for the collection: monitoring methods, questionnaires, interviews, surveys.
• Risks and assumptions: impact on the performance and sustainability
• Assumptions: external factors Under direct control, positive
• Risks: negative situations
II. ERASMUS MUNDUS action 2

II.1 Why participate in an EM2 project?
II.2 Who are the beneficiaries?
II.3 How to participate?

II.3.1 Open Call for Proposals

II.3.2 General information about the proposal
• Selection procedure
• Key documents to prepare a proposal?
• Eligibility criteria
• Award criteria

II.3.3 How to prepare a good proposal?
• Application form: how to complete, when to start, what do you need?
• Key areas of the preparation of a proposal (partnership, mobility)
II.1 Why participate in an EM A2 project?

*Cooperation:*
- large partnerships between higher education institutions in EU and third countries in a specific region
- countries / regions covered by the EU’s external co-operation instruments
- Erasmus-style cooperation mechanisms, transfer of know-how
- definition of priorities according to the needs of third countries involved

*Mobility:*
- scholarships of varying length (1 month to 3 years)
- bachelor, master, doctorate and post-doctorate students and HE staff (training, teaching, research activities)
- mobility not linked to specific programmes
- Special attention paid to socio-economically disadvantaged groups and population in a vulnerable situation
II.2 Who are the beneficiaries?

**Institutional beneficiaries**
- Partnerships

**Individuals**
- Students in higher education can receive scholarships for undergraduate studies, masters studies, doctoral studies, post-doctoral studies
- Academics
- Teachers and researchers can receive fellowships
- Administrative staff
II.3 How to participate?

II.3.1 Open Call for Proposals

II.3.2 General information about the proposal
  • Selection procedure
    - Check of eligibility criteria
    - Check of exclusion criteria
    - Check of selection criteria
    - Check of technical and financial capacity
    - Consultation with EU Delegations (eligibility of non-EU HEIs and relevance of the proposal regarding geographical region)
    - Evaluation Committee
    - Selection Decision
II.3 How to participate?

- Key documents to prepare a proposal?

- Call for Proposals EACEA
- The Programme Guide Guidelines
- The application form
II.3 How to participate?

Eligibility criteria

• Currently the coordinating institution of an Action 2 partnership must be from an EU country
• Mainly formal requirement: right application form, respect of deadline, signature, respect of partnership requirement...
II.3 How to participate?

- Award criteria
  The assessment of the application is based upon an objective opinion (award criteria) on whether the initiative can be an effective project and make a contribution to the identified need.

  - Relevance: needs analysis according to priorities, development of higher education cooperation, capacity building, cross-cutting issues
  
  - Quality: composition and cooperation mechanisms, expertise, capacity, diversity and involvement, organisation and implementation of mobility promotion, selection, recognition, evaluation, student/staff facilities and follow-up, agreements, practical arrangements, integration
  
  - Sustainability: dissemination and multiplier effects, impact, future potential
II.3 How to participate?

II.3.3 How to prepare a good proposal?

- Key areas of the preparation of a proposal (partnership, mobility)
- Partnership:
  - Constitution of consortium: expertise: specific and complementary in the area and experience in the field, regional dimension and diversity: representative number of HEI from PC with broad geographical area / non academic members, grant applicant: sufficient resources, institutional support, experience in management of international projects.
  - Cooperation mechanisms: communication strategy that includes face-to-face, email, skype, meetings that all partners can attend, division of tasks according to experience and expertise, sub-groups need to be organised to address specific tasks, risk management
II.3 How to participate?

Mobility:
- How to plan mobility? (according to needs and objectives of the institutions, the requirements of the action, taking into consideration all obstacles to the mobility),
- How to attract the number and type of individuals requested by the Call? (appropriate dissemination strategy, support of relevant associate partners and stakeholders)
- What do you need to receive students? Different types of incentives: - curricular support through a variety of technical mechanisms, personal support, especially in the form of guidance and counselling, in order to more effectively convince a wider range of individuals to take part and more consistently ensure a high quality mobility experience from start to finish.
- How to ensure academic recognition? (long/short term recognition, institutional support, involve relevant stakeholders)
II.3 How to participate?

- Application form: how to complete, when to start, what do you need?

- Start with the Programme Guide and the Guidelines of the Call
- Decide for the geographical area of your interest
- Chose your partners and involve them accordingly
- Define roles and responsibilities
- Match your proposal with call requirements
- Analyze the needs of partners, students and staff, countries, regions
- Plan mobility meeting quality, quantity and diversity
- Put in place a realistic time schedule
- Make your proposal unique
- Convince with enthusiasm
III. Tips and tricks – how to ensure your proposal stands out

III.1 Tips

III.2 Evaluators’ point of view

III.3 General advises

III.4 Three key words
III.1 Tips

- Relevance: make clear there is “institutional ownership” of the project, maintain the transnational dynamic, remember the responsibilities of an EM project (your project does not exist in isolation) and provide a “documented strategy” based on (updated national, regional and European reports, explain the emergence of the idea of the project (based on a previous project)

- Partnership: appropriate description of partners and their involvement in the project, appropriate associate/networks

- Promotion/selection: develop equal and transparent mechanisms

- Dissemination and Exploitation: vitally important, ensure that there is a detailed and responsive strategy that involves all partners from the start, ensure that it is not a single or limited approach and that different forms, media are used for different target groups and / or for different outcomes

- Quality Assurance: ensure it is a strategy on several levels: project processes, communication, meetings, performance of the partnership, engagement with end-users, target groups, stakeholders, quality of outcomes and products, consider internal and external evaluation approaches
III.2 Evaluators’ point of view

*Particular attention*

- compliance with each individual assessment criteria: award and assessment criteria indicators to pay specific attention
- coherence among different sections of the project proposal: narrative and costs and tables
- relevance of the supporting information: capacities and competences of the main project actors
- quality of the language and clarity of information
III.2 Evaluators’ point of view

General mistakes

- unclear methodology for the implementation of outputs and activities: lack of detailed or insufficient presentation
- insufficient specification of target groups or measures to ensure their active participation in the project: lack of quantitative target groups
- unbalanced distribution of tasks among the project partners or missing information about their involvement: adequate and if possible balanced distribution of tasks
III.3 General advice

- Explain always your choices, be supportive to the objectives of the call, institutions, countries
- Not duplicate efforts, idea in line with EU and useful arguments/data explicit references while describing the relevance of the project in the regional / country context
- Identify and Categorise the beneficiaries and stakeholders: direct target groups (institutions, beneficiaries, usually users of the services (direct benefit) / indirectly, long term benefit at the level of sector or society (Policy makers, enterprises, universities not involved) support sustainability, dissemination activities)
III.3 General advice

- Be always precise and specific
- Be coherent
- Provide clear methodology: what will be done, how, when and with which resources
- Be realistic, “give time to time” and at the same time be rigorous with the planning
- Check out the capacity of your institution to participate in the project (sufficient resources, linguistic competences, financial capacity)
III.4 Three key words of a good quality project

- Relevant: supportive to the overarching Policy objectives and based on real needs and problems of the target groups and beneficiaries

- Feasible: objectives realistically achieved within the constraints of the operating environment and capacities of the implementing partners

- Sustainable: benefits generated by the project to be continued once the programme funding comes to an end.
IV. Additional references

• IV.1 “How to prepare competitive project proposals in Tempus”, Monika Botz, Advisor for European Funds

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• IV.2 Mapping mobility in European higher education, ACA (June 2011)
• Thank you for your attention!!!
Further questions

What are the main steps to submit a proposal?

- understand the programme and specific action
- locate key information
- complete the application
- send the application
Further questions

- Which are the main explanations by action?
  - detailed description of objectives
  - eligible organisations
  - deadline
  - duration
  - grant
  - specific eligible rules
  - partnership
Further questions

- How to find information about the projects already selected under the Programme?
  - compendia

- What does the final selection take account of?
  - quality and coverage of priorities

- How to provide good quality information for experts?
  - experts will judge whether it is sufficiently addressed
Further questions

- How to find and work with partners?
  - start with a clear idea of the ideal mixture of skills
  - partner organisations also need to find the results relevant and useful
  - mix “old” and “new”: previous collaborators + new ones
  - work with your own networks (former projects, other projects)
  - work with organisations with the skills needed for the specific project
Further questions

❖ How to find and work with partners?

- use recommendations of people you trust (colleagues, previous partners)
- use programme compendia and partner-search databases
- select carefully according to criteria you establish in advance
- involve them in all stages of development and drafting
Further questions

- How to complete the application form?
  - have the project idea firmly in mind in advance of starting to complete the form
  - take time to understand how the form is constructed
  - be sure that your project fits into a specific action
  - allow time for drafting and reviewing and redrafting the texts
  - involve all partners at this stage
  - test your draft application on someone outside the partnership
Further questions

- How to complete the application form?
  - the time required is variable (a few weeks to more than a year from concept to finalisation)
  - it is a time-intensive process and will require dedicated staff time
  - don’t wait until the last minute of the last day before submitting the application
Further questions

- As a “new applicant” what are the chances to be selected?
- Which are the specific advices to the “new applicants”?

Particular attention on:
- early planning
- experienced partners and external evaluator
- gaining experience as a project partner before becoming coordinator
- focus significantly on tasks and quality assurance
Further questions

- approval from participating institutions is essential and can take time
- the objectives of the project need to fit into the objectives of the partner organisations and the objectives of the programme/action
- when planning communication with partners take into account: importance of social time, organising different types of meeting (workshops and virtual meetings as well as formal meetings)