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INTRODUCTION

This document aims to provide applicants all the necessary information for completing their applications for Volunteering Teams in High Priority Areas and prepare their projects. It complements the Call for proposals EAC/A01/2019. All rules and conditions for receiving a grant under the Action “Volunteering Teams in High Priority Areas” are specified in this Guide.

The Guide has four main parts:

- **Part A** offers a general overview of the European Solidarity Corps. It provides information about its objectives, priorities, main features and eligible countries.
- **Part B** provides specific information about projects to be funded under Volunteering Teams in high priority areas and what criteria they have to respect.
- **Part C** provides important information concerning quality and support measures offered to participating organisations and participants during the preparation, implementation and follow-up of projects.
- **Part D** gives detailed information on procedures for grant application and selection of projects, as well as the financial and administrative provisions linked to the award of a European Solidarity Corps grant.
PART A - GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT THE EUROPEAN SOLIDARITY CORPS

WHAT ARE THE OBJECTIVES, PRINCIPLES AND IMPORTANT FEATURES OF THE EUROPEAN SOLIDARITY CORPS?

OBJECTIVES

GENERAL OBJECTIVE
The European Solidarity Corps aims to promote solidarity as a value, mainly through volunteering, to enhance the engagement of young people and organisations in accessible and high quality solidarity activities as a means to contribute to strengthening cohesion, solidarity, democracy and citizenship in Europe, while also responding to societal challenges and strengthening communities, with particular effort to promote social inclusion. It shall also contribute to European cooperation that is relevant to young people.

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES
More specifically, its objectives are as follows:

- to provide young people, with the support of participating organisations, with easily accessible opportunities for engagement in solidarity activities effecting positive societal change, while improving their skills and competences for personal, educational, social, civic, cultural and professional development, as well as facilitating their active citizenship, employability and transition into the labour market, including by supporting the mobility of young volunteers, trainees and workers;
- to ensure that the solidarity activities that are offered to the European Solidarity Corps participants are of high quality, properly validated and respect the principles of the European Solidarity Corps;
- to ensure that particular efforts are made to promote social inclusion and equal opportunities, in particular for the participation of young people with fewer opportunities through a range of special measures such as appropriate formats of solidarity activities and personalised support;
- to contribute to European cooperation relevant to young people and raising awareness of its positive impact.

PRINCIPLES

European Solidarity Corps projects and participating organisations should respect the following principles: equal treatment, equal opportunities and non-discrimination, avoidance of job substitution, provision of high-quality activities with learning dimension focusing on personal, socio-educational and professional development, adequate training, working and volunteering arrangements, safe and decent environment and conditions, and, the 'no-profit principle' in compliance with the Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2018/1046.

IMPORTANT FEATURES

In line with the objectives of the European Solidarity Corps, the following features deserve special attention.

SOCIAL INCLUSION
The European Solidarity Corps aims to promote social inclusion by facilitating access to all opportunities to young people with fewer opportunities. Young people with fewer opportunities are young people who need additional support due to the fact that they are at a disadvantage compared to their peers because of various obstacles, such as disabilities, health problems, educational difficulties, cultural differences or economic, social or geographical obstacles, including young people with fewer opportunities.

people from a marginalised community or at risk of facing discrimination based on any of the grounds enshrined in Article 21 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union.2

Young people with fewer opportunities might face the following – non exhaustive – obstacles:

- disability (i.e. participants with special needs): related to people with mental (intellectual, cognitive, learning), physical, sensory or other disabilities;
- educational difficulties: associated with young people with learning difficulties; early school-leavers; young people with poor school performance;
- economic obstacles: associated with people with a low standard of living, low income, dependence on the social welfare system or homeless; young people in long-term unemployment or poverty; people in debt or with financial problems;
- cultural differences: related to immigrants or refugees or descendants from immigrant or refugee families; people belonging to a national or ethnic minority; people with linguistic adaptation and cultural inclusion difficulties;
- health problems: related to people with chronic health problems, severe illnesses or psychiatric conditions;
- social obstacles: associated with people facing discrimination because of gender, age, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, disability, etc.; people with limited social skills or anti-social or risky behaviours; people in a precarious situation; (ex-)offenders, (ex-)drug or alcohol abusers; young and/or single parents; orphans;
- geographical obstacles: related to people from remote or rural areas; people living in small islands or in peripheral regions; people from urban problem zones; people from less serviced areas (limited public transport, poor facilities).

The Corps foresees special measures to help the participation of those young people:

- several projects’ formats are particularly appropriate for inclusion groups;
- specific support measures have also been foreseen for this purpose such as additional guidance but also additional funding that would allow participating organisations to better accommodate and cater for the needs of young people with fewer opportunities.

Within the framework of the Erasmus+ Programme in the field of youth, an Inclusion and Diversity Strategy has been designed to support the participation and inclusion of young people with fewer opportunities. European Solidarity Corps implementing bodies, participating organisations and participants are invited to make use of this framework to ensure that the European Solidarity Corps reaches out to young people with fewer opportunities and responds positively to diversity. The Strategy is available on the website of the European Commission.

**NON-FORMAL AND INFORMAL LEARNING**

Non-formal learning refers to learning that mostly takes place outside the formal education. It has a participative and learner-centred approach; it is carried out by learners on a voluntary basis and is therefore closely linked to young people’s needs, aspirations and interests.

Informal learning refers to the learning in daily life activities, at work, with peers, etc. It can often be characterised as learning by doing. In the youth sector, informal learning has an important role for example in peer group discussions, in voluntary activities and in a variety of other situations.

Non-formal and informal learning enable young people to acquire essential competences that contribute to their personal and socio-educational development and foster their active participation in society, thereby improving their employment prospects. Such learning experiences have also a strong potential to improve the attainment in formal education and training as well as to address young NEETs (i.e. young people not in employment, education or training) or young people with fewer opportunities and combat social exclusion.

Learning activities within the youth field are meant to have a significantly positive impact on young people as well as on the organisations involved, the communities in which these activities take place, the youth field itself and the European economic and societal sectors at large.

**RECOGNITION AND VALIDATION OF LEARNING OUTCOMES**

To ensure the impact of European Solidarity Corps activities on the personal, educational, social, civic and professional development of the participants, the competences that are the learning outcomes of the solidarity activities should be properly identified and documented.

To that end, the use of effective instruments at Union and national level for the recognition of non-formal and informal learning, such as Youthpass and Europass should be encouraged, as appropriate. For further information, see part C of this Guide.

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3 The Inclusion and Diversity Strategy in the field of youth: http://ec.europa.eu/youth/library/reports/inclusion-diversity-strategy_en.pdf
EUROPEAN ADDED VALUE

The European Solidarity Corps shall support solidarity activities which present a clear European added value, for example by virtue of their:

- transnational character, particularly with regard to learning mobility and cooperation;
- ability to complement other programmes and policies at local, regional, national, Union and international level;
- European dimension with regard to the topics, aims, approaches, expected outcomes and other aspects of those solidarity activities;
- approach with regard to involving young people from different backgrounds;
- contribution to the effective use of Union transparency and recognition tools.

INTERNATIONAL DIMENSION

European Solidarity Corps includes a strong international dimension (i.e. cooperation with partner countries, through involvement of young people and organisations) under its volunteering strand.

MULTILINGUALISM

Multilingualism is one of the cornerstones of the European project and a powerful symbol of the EU’s aspiration to be united in diversity. Foreign languages have a prominent role among the skills that will help equip people better for the labour market and make the most of available opportunities. The EU has set the goal that every citizen should have the opportunity to acquire at least two foreign languages, from an early age.

While the promotion and support of language learning is primarily covered under other EU initiatives, it has been demonstrated that the lack of language competences is one of the main barriers to European cross-border mobility in general such as those supported by the European Solidarity Corps. In order to help overcoming this barrier, linguistic support is provided in the context of the European Solidarity Corps. For further information, see part C of this Guide.

PROTECTION AND SAFETY OF PARTICIPANTS

Protection and safety of participants involved in the activities supported by the European Solidarity Corps are important principles of this initiative. All persons participating in the European Solidarity Corps should have the opportunity to take full advantage of the possibilities for personal and professional development and learning. This should be assured in a safe environment which respects and protects the rights of all persons.

To this end, each organisation participating in the European Solidarity Corps must have in place effective procedures and arrangements to promote and guarantee the safety and protection of the participants in their activity. With this regard, all young people involved in an activity in the context of the European Solidarity Corps, must be insured against the risks linked to their participation. A specific insurance policy is foreseen for volunteering. For further information, see part C of this Guide.

DISSEMINATION AND EXPLOITATION OF PROJECT RESULTS

Dissemination and exploitation of results are important areas of the European Solidarity Corps project lifecycle. They give participating organisations the opportunity to communicate and share outcomes and deliverables, thus extending the impact of their projects, improving their sustainability and justifying the European added value of the European Solidarity Corps. Specific guidelines in this respect can be found in Annex I to this Guide.
WHO CAN PARTICIPATE IN THE EUROPEAN SOLIDARITY CORPS?

Individuals – young people between 18 and 30 year of age constitute the target population of the European Solidarity Corps. The Corps mainly involves these individuals through organisations, institutions, public or private bodies that organise solidarity activities. The conditions of access to the Corps therefore relate to these two actors: the “participants” (young people participating in the Corps) and the “organisations”. For both participants and participating organisations, the conditions for participation depend on the country in which they are legally based.

PARTICIPANTS

Young people express their willingness to participate in the European Solidarity Corps by registering on the European Solidarity Corps Portal. The registration at the European Solidarity Corps Portal is possible as of 17 years of age but participants must have reached 18 and must not be older than 30 at the start date of the activity.

ORGANISATIONS

European Solidarity Corps projects are mainly submitted and managed by organisations. As a general rule, organisations participating in European Solidarity Corps projects must be established in a participating country or a partner country.

ELIGIBLE COUNTRIES

The following countries can fully take part in all the Actions of the European Solidarity Corps:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participating countries</th>
<th>Member States of the European Union (EU)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Belgium</td>
<td>Greece</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bulgaria</td>
<td>Spain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Czech Republic</td>
<td>France</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denmark</td>
<td>Croatia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>Italy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Estonia</td>
<td>Cyprus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td>Latvia</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Belgium, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Denmark, Germany, Estonia, Ireland

Additionally, Volunteering Teams in high priority areas is open for participation of the following partner countries

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Partner countries</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EFTA countries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liechtenstein</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iceland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norway</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Candidate countries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Macedonia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turkey</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4 According to Article 33.3 of the Council Decision 2013/755/EU on the Association of the OCTs with the European Union, the Union shall ensure that individuals and organisations from or to Overseas Countries and Territories (OCTs) shall be eligible to participate in the European Solidarity Corps on a participating Country status, subject to the rules of the Programme and the arrangements applicable to the Member State with which these OCTs they are connected. The list of OCTs can be found at: https://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/regions/overseas-countries-and-territories-octs/eu-oct-dialogue_en.

5 FOR BRITISH APPLICANTS: Please be aware that eligibility criteria must be complied with for the entire duration of the grant. If the United Kingdom withdraws from the European Union during the grant period without concluding an agreement with the European Union ensuring in particular that British applicants continue to be eligible, you will cease to receive EU funding (while continuing, where possible, to participate) or be required to leave the project on the basis of the relevant provisions of the grant agreement on termination.
**Partner countries neighbouring the EU**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Western Balkans</th>
<th>Eastern Partnership countries</th>
<th>South-Mediterranean countries</th>
<th>Russian Federation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Montenegro, Serbia</td>
<td>Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova</td>
<td>Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Palestine, Syria, Tunisia</td>
<td>Territory of Russia as recognised by international law</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**WHAT IS ‘VOLUNTEERING’ UNDER THE EUROPEAN SOLIDARITY CORPS?**

In the context of the European Solidarity Corps, Volunteering is a solidarity activity that takes the form of a full-time (at least 30 and not more than 38 hours per week) voluntary unpaid activity. It provides young people with the opportunity to contribute to the daily work of organisations in solidarity activities to the ultimate benefit of the communities within which the activities are carried out. As the main mechanism for promoting solidarity as a value, volunteering helps to overcome important societal challenges and addresses the needs of local communities. It also enables young people to acquire useful experience, skills and competences for their personal, educational, social, civic and professional development, thereby improving their employability and active citizenship.

Volunteering can take place in a broad range of areas, such as in the fields of environmental protection, climate change mitigation and greater social inclusion. It does not include activities that are part of curricula in formal education, vocational education and training systems and activities for emergency response, and must not interfere with the functioning of the labour market.

Activities supported under volunteering must constitute a rich experience in a non-formal and informal learning context, which enhances young people’s skills and competences. They must not substitute traineeships or jobs and should be based on a written volunteering agreement.

Volunteering should cover the participants’ expenditure arising from participation in such solidarity activities but should not provide them with salaries or an economic benefit. Participation in volunteering activities must be free of charge for the volunteer, with the exception of possible contributions to travel costs (if the grant does not fully cover these costs) and additional expenses not linked to the implementation of the activity.

Volunteering activities are open to all young people, including people with fewer opportunities. Volunteers are to be selected in a fair, transparent and objective way, regardless of their ethnic group, religion, sexual orientation, political opinion, etc. No previous qualifications, educational level, specific experience or language knowledge must be required. A more specific profile of the volunteer might be drawn up if justified by the nature of the tasks of the activity or by the project context.

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6 The eligibility criteria formulated in commission notice Nr.2013/C-205/05 (OJEU C-205 of 19/07/2013, pp. 9-11) shall apply for all actions implemented through this Programme Guide, including with respect to third parties receiving financial support in the cases where the respective action involves financial support to third parties by grant beneficiaries in accordance with article 204 of the EU’s Financial Regulation.

7 This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244 and the ICIJ Opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence.

8 This designation shall not be construed as recognition of a State of Palestine and is without prejudice to the individual positions of the Member States on this issue.
PART B – VOLUNTEERING TEAMS IN HIGH PRIORITY AREAS

WHAT ARE VOLUNTEERING TEAMS IN HIGH PRIORITY AREAS PROJECTS?

Volunteering Teams in high priority areas are projects supporting voluntary activities carried out in groups of young people coming together from abroad to express solidarity by implementing short-term high-impact interventions that address societal challenges in policy areas defined each year at EU level. For the purpose of this call, applications for funding are expected to address the following policy priorities:

- European cultural heritage (including reconstruction projects such as Notre Dame de Paris);
- Integration of third-country nationals (including asylum seekers and refugees);
- Response to environmental challenges, including disaster prevention, preparedness and recovery (excluding immediate disaster response).

Examples of the valuable work that can be accomplished by volunteering teams include: e.g. restoring cultural heritage damaged by natural disaster, catering for species threatened by extinction; organising educational activities in refugee camps, etc.

HOW TO DEVELOP A PROJECT?

A project may consist of one or more eligible activities. There are three types of activities available for funding under the volunteering teams in high priority areas: volunteering teams, advance planning visits and/or complementary activities. Each type of activity has to respect the eligibility criteria laid down below (ie minimum number of participants, duration, etc...).

Projects must comprise of at least one volunteering teams activity. Each volunteering activity must involve at least 10 participants and each project should involve at least 40 participants. Advance planning visits and complementary activities are optional. See Figure 1 below for an illustration of how projects can be structured.

Volunteering teams are solidarity activities that allow groups of minimum 10 participants coming from abroad to volunteer together for a period between 2 weeks and 2 months. At least a quarter of team members must come from countries that are different from the country where the activity takes place. In volunteering teams, European Solidarity Corps’ volunteers carry out tasks for a project over a short period of time (usually, but not exclusively, during holidays, breaks between study periods, transition from education to work, etc.).

Advance planning visits (APV): are planning visits to the country of the host organisation before the start of the volunteering activities. The purpose of the APVs is to ensure high quality activities by facilitating and preparing administrative arrangements, building trust and understanding and setting-up a solid partnership between the organisations and people involved. The visits will be typically organised for activities involving young people with fewer opportunities. Advanced planning visits can also be organised, in duly justified cases, when the visit is a prerequisite to the successful implementation of the activities. Participants with fewer opportunities can be involved in the visit to help integrate them fully in the project and complement any other preparatory activity.

Complementary activities: are relevant side activities designed to add value and augment the results of the project as well as to strengthen its impact on the local, regional, and/or European level. These complementary activities also aim at raising awareness of the value of volunteering for young people and for communities as well as at strengthening the recognition of the skills and competences gained by the volunteers. Complementary activities could include workshops, conferences, seminars, training courses, job shadowing, coaching, etc.

Projects can be implemented by one or several organisations. Nevertheless, the involvement of additional organisations in activities involving young people with fewer opportunities is highly recommended.

In order to be able to take part in activities, all organisations participating need to hold either an Erasmus+ volunteering accreditation or a Quality Label for volunteering.
Projects will typically consist of the following stages:

- Preparation (including practical arrangements, selection of participants, set up of agreements with partners and participants, linguistic/intercultural/task-related preparation of participants before departure);
- Implementation of activities (including support and guidance to participants during the activities);
- Follow-up (including the evaluation of the activities, follow-up of participants, issue of the certificate of participation as well as the dissemination and use of the project’s outcomes).

Young people may express their willingness to participate in the European Solidarity Corps by registering on the European Solidarity Corps portal. Organisations must select the participants from the database of registered young people.

**FIGURE 1. PROJECT STRUCTURE EXAMPLES**

![Project Structure Examples Diagram](image_url)
**HOW WILL PROJECTS BE SELECTED?**

The projects are selected and managed at EU level, by the Education, Audiovisual and Cultural Executive Agency. The centralised approach ensures the underlying pan-European dimension of these projects and enables larger projects with more participants and high impact.

Projects will be assessed against the following criteria: eligibility, exclusion, selection and award.

**ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA**

Here below are listed the formal criteria that the projects and activities must respect in order to be eligible for a grant.

**PROJECT ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA**

| Eligible participating organisations | Any organisation legally established in a participating country or a partner country that holds a valid volunteering Quality Label\(^9\) or Erasmus+ volunteering accreditation. Participating organisations must hold a valid volunteering Quality Label or an Erasmus+ volunteering accreditation at the latest at the start of the activities they are involved in. |
| Eligible applicants | Any eligible participating organisation legally established in a participating country. The applicant organisation must hold a valid volunteering Quality Label or an Erasmus+ volunteering accreditation at the application deadline. |
| Duration of project | From 3 to 24 months. The indicative starting date is between 1 January and 31 March of the following year and in any case not earlier before both parties have signed the grant agreement. |
| Number of participants\(^10\) | Minimum 40 participants per project. |
| Where to apply? | To the Education, Audiovisual and Cultural Executive Agency. |
| When to apply? | Applicants have to submit their grant application by 19 September at 12:00 (midday Brussels time). |
| How to apply? | Please see Part D of this Guide for details on how to apply. |
| Other criteria | A Declaration of Honour of the legal representative must be annexed to the application form. |

**ADDITIONAL ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA FOR VOLUNTEERING TEAMS ACTIVITIES**

| Duration of activity | 2 weeks to 2 months\(^11\), excluding travel time. |
| Venue(s) | Activities have to take place in the country of one of the participating organisations. |
| Eligible participants | Young people between 18 and 30 years\(^12\) who are legally residing in a participating country or in a partner country and have registered in the European Solidarity Corps Portal. |
| Number of participants and composition of teams\(^13\) | Each activity should involve minimum 10 participants to volunteer together for a period between 2 weeks and 2 months. At least a quarter of team members must come from countries that are different from the country where the activity takes place. Young people can only be involved in one activity at a time. |

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\(^10\) The Agency may authorise minor deviations from the requirements only in exceptional and duly justified circumstances.

\(^11\) Up to 59 days, excluding travel days.

\(^12\) Participants must have reached 18 and must not be older than 30 at the start date of the activity.

\(^13\) The Agency may authorise minor deviations from the requirements only in exceptional and duly justified circumstances.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Number of participating organisations</strong></th>
<th>At least one eligible organisation from a participating country is required</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**ADDITIONAL ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA FOR ADVANCE PLANNING VISITS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Duration of activity</strong></th>
<th>Maximum 2 days, excluding travel time.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Eligible participants</strong></td>
<td>Representatives of participating organisations and participants with fewer opportunities taking part in the Volunteering Team activities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Number of participants</strong></td>
<td>1 representative per participating organisation. The number can be raised, provided that all additional participants are volunteers with fewer opportunities taking part in the activity.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
EXCLUSION CRITERIA

An applicant will be excluded from participating in calls for proposals under the European Solidarity Corps or will be rejected from the award procedure if it is found in one of the situations described below, in accordance with articles 136 - 140 and/or 141 of the EU Financial Regulation.14

a) the applicant is bankrupt, subject to insolvency or winding-up procedures, its assets are being administered by a liquidator or by a court, it is in an arrangement with creditors, its business activities are suspended, or it is in any analogous situation arising from a similar procedure provided for under Union or national law;

b) a final judgement or a final administrative decision has established that the applicant is in breach of its obligations relating to the payment of taxes or social security contributions in accordance with the applicable law;

c) a final judgement or a final administrative decision has established that the applicant is guilty of grave professional misconduct by having violated applicable laws or regulations or ethical standards of the profession to which the applicant belongs, or by having engaged in any wrongful conduct which has an impact on its professional credibility where such conduct denotes wrongful intent or gross negligence, including, in particular, any of the following:

(i) fraudulently or negligently misrepresenting information required for the verification of the absence of grounds for exclusion or the fulfilment of eligibility or selection criteria or in the performance of the legal commitment;

(ii) entering into agreement with other persons or entities with the aim of distorting competition;

(iii) violating intellectual property rights;

(iv) attempting to influence the decision-making of the authorising officer responsible during the award procedure;

(v) attempting to obtain confidential information that may confer upon it undue advantages in the award procedure;

d) a final judgement has established that the applicant is guilty of any of the following:


(ii) corruption, as defined in Article 4(2) of Directive (EU) 2017/1371 or active corruption within the meaning of Article 3 of the Convention on the fight against corruption involving officials of the European Communities or officials of Member States of the European Union, drawn up by the Council Act of 26 May 1997, or conduct referred to in Article 2(1) of Council Framework Decision 2003/568/JHA18, or corruption as defined in other applicable laws;

(iii) conduct related to a criminal organisation as referred to in Article 2 of Council Framework Decision 2008/841/JHA19;

(iv) money laundering or terrorist financing within the meaning of Article 1(3), (4) and (5) of Directive (EU) 2015/849 of the European Parliament and of the Council20;

(v) terrorist offences or offences linked to terrorist activities, as defined in Articles 1 and 3 of Council Framework Decision 2002/475/JHA21, respectively, or inciting, aiding, abetting or attempting to commit such offences, as referred to in Article 4 of that Decision;

(vi) child labour or other offences concerning trafficking in human beings as referred to in Article 2 of Directive 2011/36/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council22;

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e) the applicant has shown significant deficiencies in complying with main obligations in the performance of a legal commitment financed by the budget which has:

(i) led to the early termination of a legal commitment;

(ii) led to the application of liquidated damages or other contractual penalties; or;

(iii) been discovered by an authorising officer, OLAF or the Court of Auditors following checks, audits or investigations;

f) a final judgment or final administrative decision has established that the applicant has committed an irregularity within the meaning of Article 1(2) of Council Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 2988/95;23;

g) a final judgment or final administrative decision has established that the applicant has created an entity in a different jurisdiction with the intent to circumvent fiscal, social or any other legal obligations in the jurisdiction of its registered office, central administration or principal place of business;

h) a final judgment or final administrative decision has established that an entity has been created with the intent referred to in point (g);

i) in the absence of a final judgement or where applicable a final administrative decision, the applicant is in one of the cases provided in (c), (d), (f), (g) and (h) above based in particular on:

(i) facts established in the context of audits or investigations carried out by EPPO, for those Member States participating in enhanced cooperation pursuant to Regulation (EU) 2017/1939, the Court of Auditors, OLAF or the internal auditor, or any other check, audit or control performed under the responsibility of the authorising officer;

(ii) non-final administrative decisions which may include disciplinary measures taken by the competent supervisory body responsible for the verification of the application of standards of professional ethics;

(iii) facts referred to in decisions of persons and entities implementing Union funds pursuant to point (c) of the first subparagraph of Article 62(1);

(iv) information transmitted in accordance with point (d) of Article 142(2) of EU Financial Regulation by entities implementing Union funds pursuant to point (b) of the first subparagraph of Article 62(1) of EU Financial Regulation.

(v) decisions of the Commission relating to the infringement of Union competition law or of a national competent authority relating to the infringement of Union or national competition law.

(vi) decisions of exclusion by an authorising officer of an EU institution, of a European office or of an EU agency or body.

j) a applicant referred to in Article 135(2) where:

(i) a natural or legal person who is a member of the administrative, management or supervisory body of the applicant referred to in Article 135(2), or who has powers of representation, decision or control with regard to that applicant, is in one or more of the situations referred to in points (c) to (h) above;

(ii) a natural or legal person that assumes unlimited liability for the debts of the applicant referred to in Article 135(2) is in one or more of the situations referred to in point (a) or (b) above;

(iii) a natural person who is essential for the award or for the implementation of the legal commitment is in one or more of the situations referred to in points (c) to (h) above;

If an applicant is in one of the situations of exclusion listed above, it should indicate the measures it has taken to remedy the exclusion situation, thus demonstrating its reliability. They may include e.g. technical, organisational and personnel measures to prevent further occurrence, compensation of damage or payment of fines. This does not apply for the situations referred in point (d) of this section.

In the cases provided in (c) to (h) above, in the absence of a final judgement or where applicable a final administrative decision, the National or Executive Agency may exclude an applicant provisionally from participating in a call for proposals where their participation would constitute a serious and imminent threat to the Union's financial interests.

Rejection from this procedure and administrative sanctions (exclusion or financial penalty) may be imposed on applicants or affiliated entities where applicable, if any of the declarations or information provided as a condition for participating in this procedure prove to be false.

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The Executive Agency may publish on its internet site the following information related to the exclusion and, where applicable, the financial penalty in the cases referred to in points (c) to (h) above:

(a) the name of the applicant concerned;
(b) the exclusion situation;
(c) the duration of the exclusion and/or the amount of the financial penalty.

These exclusion criteria apply to applicants under all Actions of the European Solidarity Corps Programme. To certify that they are not in one of the situations mentioned above, applicants for an EU grant must provide a declaration on their honour certifying that they are not in any of the situations referred above. This declaration of honour constitutes a specific section or an annex of the application form.

In accordance with Articles from 136 to 142 of the EU Financial Regulation, administrative and financial penalties may be imposed on applicants who are guilty of misrepresentation or are found to have seriously failed to meet their contractual obligations under a previous grant award procedure.

Furthermore, the Commission considers that for the implementation of Actions covered by this Guide, the following organisations are or could be in a situation of conflict of interest and therefore are or could be not eligible to participate:

- National Authorities in charge of supervising National Agencies and the implementation of the European Solidarity Corps Programme in their country cannot apply or participate in any Action managed by National Agencies in any country, but may apply for participation (as applicants or partners) in Actions managed by the Executive Agency or by DG EAC unless that is explicitly excluded for the Action concerned (as indicated in Part B of the Guide);
- National Agencies (sole activity of their legal entity) or National Agencies departments of legal entities dealing with activities outside the remit of National Agencies cannot apply or participate in any Action implemented through this Guide;
- Structures and networks identified or designated in the European Solidarity Corps Regulation or in any Annual Commission Work programme adopted for the implementation of the European Solidarity Corps for specifically receiving a financial contribution from the Commission under the implementation of the European Solidarity Corps, which are hosted by the legal entity that also hosts the National Agency, cannot apply or participate in any Action managed by National Agencies in any country, but may apply for participation (as applicants or partners) in Actions managed by the Executive Agency or by DG EAC unless that is explicitly excluded for the Action concerned (as indicated in Part B of the Guide); they should be able to demonstrate, before being awarded a grant or a contract, that they are not in a conflict of interest either because precautionary measures are taken by them or because their internal organisation is such that there is a clear separation of interests.
- Legal entities hosting the National Agencies but dealing with other activities inside or outside the remit of the European Solidarity Corps, as well as entities affiliated to these legal entities, cannot apply or participate in any Action managed by National Agencies in any country, but may in principle apply for participation in Actions managed by the Executive Agency or DG EAC unless that is explicitly excluded for the Action concerned (as indicated in Part B of the Guide). However, they have to demonstrate, before being awarded a grant or a contract, they are not in a conflict of interest either because precautionary measures are taken by them or because their internal organisation is such that there is a clear separation of interests. Furthermore, costs and revenues of each action or activity for which the EU funds are awarded must be identified. The decision for admitting there is sufficient assurance they are not in an actual conflict of interest is taken by the Executive Agency or by DG EAC, under their own responsibility and accountability, to which they apply;

24 Except for Actions implemented by National Agencies.
**SELECTION CRITERIA**

Through the selection criteria, the Executive Agency assesses the applicant's financial and operational capacity to complete the proposed project. Applicants must submit a declaration on their honour, completed and signed, attesting to their financial and operational capacity to complete the proposed activities (model declaration attached to the call for proposals).

**FINANCIAL CAPACITY**

Financial capacity means that the applicant has stable and sufficient sources of funding to maintain its activity throughout the period during which the project is being carried out or the year for which the grant is awarded and to participate in its funding.

The verification of the financial capacity does not apply to:

- public bodies, including Member States organisations;
- international organisations.

In case of EU grant requests submitted by other types of organisations (i.e. other than those mentioned above) and not exceeding EUR 60,000, applicants must provide a declaration on their honour certifying that they have the financial capacity to implement the project. This declaration of honour constitutes a specific section of the application form.

In case of EU grant requests submitted by other types of organisations and exceeding EUR 60,000, the applicant must submit, in addition to the declaration of honour, the following documents through the Participant Portal:

- a Financial Capacity Form filled in with the relevant statutory accounting figures and the financial statements (including the profit and loss account, the balance sheet, and other annexes if relevant) for the last two financial years for which accounts were closed;
- For entities which cannot provide the above documents because they are newly created, a financial declaration or an insurance declaration stating the applicant’s professional risks may replace the above documents.

Organisations must upload these documents in the Participants Portal either at the time of their registration in the Portal (see section "Step 1: Register in the Participants Portal" above) or by the deadline stipulated by the Action.

Where the application concerns grants for a project for which the amount exceeds EUR 750,000, in addition to the above, an audit report produced by an approved external auditor may be requested. That report shall certify the accounts for the last financial year available, where such an audit report is available or whenever a statutory report is required by law.

If the audit report is not available AND a statutory report is not required by law, a self-declaration signed by the applicant’s authorised representative certifying the validity of its accounts for the last financial year available must be provided.

If, following the analysis of these documents, the Executive Agency concludes that the required financial capacity has not been proved or is not satisfactory, then they may:

- ask for further information;
- offer a grant agreement or grant decision with a pre-financing covered by a financial guarantee;
- offer a grant agreement or grant decision without pre-financing or with a reduced pre-financing;
- offer a grant agreement or grant decision with pre-financing based on several instalments;
- reject the application.

**OPERATIONAL CAPACITY**

Operational capacity means that the applicant has the necessary professional competencies and qualifications to carry out the proposed project. Applicants must provide a declaration on their honour certifying that they have the operational capacity to implement the project.

In addition, if required in the application form and if the grant exceeds EUR 60,000, applicants may be asked to submit the curriculum vitae (CVs) of the key persons involved in the project to demonstrate their relevant professional experience or other supporting documents such as:

- A list of relevant publications of the main team;
- An exhaustive list of previous projects and activities performed and connected to the policy field or to this specific Action.
# Award Criteria

To be considered for funding, proposals must score at least 60 points. Furthermore, they must score at least half of the maximum points in each of the categories of the award criteria mentioned below.

| Relevance, rationale and impact (maximum 30 points) | - The relevance of the project to the objectives of the European Solidarity Corps and the thematic priorities set for this Action;  
- The extent to which the proposal will address well defined and important societal needs;  
- The relevance of the project to the needs and objectives of individual participants and participating organisations;  
- The extent to which the project will provide benefits to the communities within which the activities are carried out;  
- The potential impact of the project at local, regional, national and/or European levels;  
- The extent to which the project provides European added value;  
- The extent to which the project involves young people with fewer opportunities as participants. |
|-----------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Quality of project design (maximum 40 points)       | - The consistency between project objectives and activities proposed;  
- The clarity, completeness and quality of all the phases of the project (preparation of participants, implementation of activities, follow-up and support provided on participants’ return);  
- The quality of arrangements for the recognition and validation of participants’ learning outcomes, as well as the consistent use of European transparency and recognition tools;  
- The appropriateness of measures for selecting and/or involving participants in activities;  
- The quality of proposed measures to reach out and involve young people with fewer opportunities;  
- The quality of the non-formal learning methods and measures proposed to enable the participants to gain skills and competences that are valuable for their personal, educational, social, civic and cultural development;  
- The appropriateness and quality of the measures proposed to improve the participants’ employability and facilitate their integration on the labour market;  
- If relevant, the added value of the complementary activities to the project objectives and the impact of the project. |
| Quality of project management (maximum 30 points)    | - The quality of the practical arrangements, management and support modalities;  
- The quality of cooperation and communication between the participating organisations, as well as with other relevant stakeholders;  
- The quality of measures for evaluating and disseminating the outcomes of the project; |
**WHAT ARE THE FUNDING RULES?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Eligible costs</th>
<th>Financing mechanism</th>
<th>Amount</th>
<th>Rule of allocation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Travel</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Based on the travel distance per participant, including accompanying persons. Travel distances must be calculated using the distance calculator supported by the European Commission. The applicant must indicate the distance of a one-way travel to calculate the amount of the EU grant that will support the round trip.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contribution to the travel costs of participants from their place of origin to the venue of the activity and return. In addition, if applicable, travel costs for Advance Planning Visits.</td>
<td>Contribution on the basis of unit costs</td>
<td>For travel distances between 10 and 99KM: EUR 20 per participant</td>
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<td>For travel distances between 100 and 499 KM: EUR 180 per participant</td>
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<td>For travel distances between 500 and 1999 KM: EUR 275 per participant</td>
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<td>For travel distances between 2000 and 2999 KM: EUR 360 per participant</td>
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<td>For travel distances between 3000 and 3999 KM: EUR 530 per participant</td>
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<td>For travel distances between 4000 and 7999 KM: EUR 820 per participant</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>For travel distances of 8000 KM or more: EUR 1500 per participant</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Organisational Support</strong></td>
<td>Project management costs (e.g. planning, finances, coordination and communication between partners, administrative costs)</td>
<td>Contribution on the basis of unit costs</td>
<td>Based on the number of Volunteering Teams activities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>EUR 2000 per volunteering team activity Maximum EUR 8000 per project</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

25 The distance calculator can be found here: [https://ec.europa.eu/youth/solidarity-corps/resources-and-contacts_en](https://ec.europa.eu/youth/solidarity-corps/resources-and-contacts_en)

26 For example, if a person from Madrid (Spain) is taking part in an activity taking place in Rome (Italy), the applicant will a) calculate the distance from Madrid to Rome (1365.28 KM); b) select the applicable travel distance band (i.e. between 500 and 1999 KM) and c) calculate the EU grant that will provide a contribution to the costs of travel of the participant from Madrid to Rome and return (275 EUR).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Eligible costs</th>
<th>Financing mechanism</th>
<th>Amount</th>
<th>Rule of allocation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Organisational Support</strong></td>
<td>Activity costs - Costs directly linked to the implementation of volunteering activities (e.g. preparation, monitoring and support of participants, validation of learning outcomes), including costs linked to the subsistence of participants (e.g. boarding, lodging and local travel).</td>
<td>Contribution on the basis of unit costs</td>
<td>Amount A1 per day per participant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Inclusion Support</strong></td>
<td>Contribution to costs incurred by organisations related to reinforced mentorship, i.e. the preparation, implementation and follow-up of tailor-made activities to support participation of young people with fewer opportunities.</td>
<td>Contribution on the basis of unit costs</td>
<td>Amount A2 per day per participant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Pocket Money</strong></td>
<td>Contribution to additional personal expenses for participants.</td>
<td>Contribution on the basis of unit costs</td>
<td>Amount A3 per day per participant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Exceptional costs</strong></td>
<td>Costs for providing a financial guarantee and an audit report, if the Executive Agency asks for it. Financial support for expensive travel costs (e.g. from and to outermost regions). Visa and visa-related costs, residence permits, vaccinations, medical certifications. Costs connected to personal insurance for</td>
<td>Real costs</td>
<td>Costs for financial guarantee and audit report: 75 % of eligible costs. Expensive travel costs: maximum up to 80 % of eligible costs. Other costs: 100 % of eligible costs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eligible costs</td>
<td>Financing mechanism</td>
<td>Amount</td>
<td>Rule of allocation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Costs connected to boarding and lodging of participants during an Advance Planning Visit. Costs incurred by organisations to support the participation of young people with fewer opportunities or with special needs on equal terms as others related to reinforced mentorship, i.e. the preparation, implementation and follow-up of tailor-made activities. Costs incurred by organisations to support the participation of young people with fewer opportunities or with special needs on equal terms as others related to reasonable adjustments or investment in physical assets.</td>
<td>Real costs</td>
<td>Other costs: 100 % of eligible costs</td>
<td>For exceptional costs for expensive travel, applicants must justify that the standard funding rules (based on unit costs per travel distance band) do not cover at least 70 % of the travel costs of participants. If awarded, the exceptional costs for expensive travel replace the standard travel grant. For exceptional costs for reinforced mentorship, applicants must justify that the standard funding rules (&quot;Inclusion support&quot; unit cost per day per participant) do not cover at least 80 % of the costs incurred. If awarded, the exceptional costs to support the participation of young people with fewer opportunities will replace the inclusion support grant.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Costs directly linked to the implementation of the complementary activities of the project. Indirect costs: A flat-rate amount, not exceeding 7 % of the eligible direct costs of the complementary activities, is eligible under indirect costs, representing the beneficiary’s general administrative costs which can be regarded as chargeable to the complementary activities (e.g. electricity or internet bills, costs for premises, cost of permanent staff, etc.)</td>
<td>Real costs and flat-rate up to 7 %</td>
<td>Maximum up to 80 % of eligible costs Maximum 10 % of the total project grant</td>
<td>Conditional: the request for financial support must be motivated in the application form and justified in relation to the planned activities.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## What are the rates?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Organisational Support – Activity Costs (EUR per day)</th>
<th>Inclusion Support (EUR per day)</th>
<th>Pocket Money (EUR per day)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A1</td>
<td>A2</td>
<td>A3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Austria</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Belgium</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bulgaria</td>
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<td>Croatia</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cyprus</td>
<td>22</td>
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<tr>
<td>Czech Republic</td>
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<tr>
<td>Denmark</td>
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<tr>
<td>Estonia</td>
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<td>Finland</td>
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<td>France</td>
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<td>Germany</td>
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<td>Greece</td>
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<td>Hungary</td>
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<td>Ireland</td>
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<td>Italy</td>
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<td>Latvia</td>
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<td>Lithuania</td>
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<td>Luxembourg</td>
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<td>Malta</td>
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<td>Netherlands</td>
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<td>Poland</td>
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<td>Portugal</td>
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<td>Romania</td>
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<td>Spain</td>
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<td>Sweden</td>
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<tr>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
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<td>North Macedonia</td>
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<td>Iceland</td>
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<tr>
<td>Liechtenstein</td>
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<tr>
<td>Norway</td>
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<td>6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Turkey</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partner country neighbouring the EU</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
PART C – QUALITY AND SUPPORT MEASURES

SUPPORT FOR LEARNING

To support, reinforce and complement the learning acquired through participation in the activities, specific quality and support measures are foreseen: the General Online Training, the Training and Evaluation Cycle\(^2\), mentoring and recognition of learning outcomes.

GENERAL ONLINE TRAINING

WHAT IS THE GENERAL ONLINE TRAINING?

The General Online Training is an open access training for the registered candidates and participants selected for an activity provided via the European Solidarity Corps’ portal. General Online Training is a general induction with various modules such as the mission of the European Solidarity Corps, ethics, integrity, roles and responsibilities of the participants, European values, inter-cultural awareness, thematic training, health and safety etc. General objective of the training will be to support European Solidarity Corps registered candidates in their engagement in quality solidarity activities and contribute to the building of the community of the European Solidarity Corps. The training should become part of a non-formal learning process of European Solidarity Corps participants who will be involved in specific projects and for the registered candidates in the portal not yet selected to capture their attention and stimulate their motivation. General Online Training will be made available in the course of 2019.

FOR WHOM?

General Online Training will be available to the registered candidates and participants selected for an activity via the European Solidarity Corps’ portal.

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\(^2\) The trainings composing the training and evaluation cycle vary depending on the activities the participants are involved in. The graph below displays the whole range of trainings composing the training and evaluation cycle. You will find below the trainings relevant for activities taking place in the frame of Volunteering Teams in high priority areas.
TRAINING AND EVALUATION CYCLE

WHAT IS THE TRAINING AND EVALUATION CYCLE (TEC)?

One of the key features of the European Solidarity Corps is the training and evaluation it provides to participants, guiding them through a non-formal learning process before, during and after their period of activity. The trainings composing the training and evaluation cycle vary depending on the activities the participants are involved in.

In the frame of Volunteering Teams in High Priority Areas, participating organisations have to ensure a pre-departure training and an on-arrival training, in line with the minimum requirements below. The minimum quality standards clarify what can be expected to be achieved at a training session.

At the same time, given the different requirements of information between participants in cross-border and in-country activities, the duration or type of the activities, organisations can tailor the content and duration of the trainings. They should - as far as possible - try to ensure that the training/evaluation opportunities offered to each participant are in line with their specific needs.

In addition to the Training and Evaluation Cycle, participants receive continuous counselling and guidance before, during and after the activity period.

PRE-DEPARTURE TRAINING

In order for the project to be successful and the European Solidarity Corps experiences to be positive and enriching for the participant, it is crucial that the participating organisations adequately prepare the participant prior to departure. This training is particularly relevant for participants in cross-border activities.

This preparation should take place before departure and should be tailored to the individual needs of the participant and the specificities of the project, the activity and the host country. The organisation in charge of the training is responsible for ensuring that the Info-Kit is given to all participants involved in its project.

It is essential to provide information on "What to expect from the European Solidarity Corps" (part of the Info-Kit) — as well as on the basics of conflict prevention and crisis management. It must participants with practical and technical information on matters such as insurance, visa, pocket money and working hours, etc.

ON-ARRIVAL TRAINING

The main objective of the on-arrival training is to introduce the participants to the host country, preparing them for the activity period and the European Solidarity Corps experience. On-arrival training helps the participants adapt to cultural and personal challenges. Participants should also receive guidance on conflict prevention and crisis management.

At the same time, when relevant, this training session equips the participants with communication skills, including aspects of intercultural learning. It helps them become aware that cultural differences require different models of behaviour. The training is also a good time for the participants to plan the coming weeks and to develop their own personal goals for their activity period, in line with the non-formal learning philosophy of the European Solidarity Corps.

ANNUAL EVENTS

Participants can participate in European Solidarity Corps annual events – organised at National level by National Agencies – which bring together former, current and potential European Solidarity Corps participants. It may serve as an evaluation meeting, alumni meeting and/or promotional event. It is particularly important as an opportunity for those who have finished their solidarity activity during the past year to discuss and evaluate their experiences and to pass them on to current and potential participants. A key question will be what learning effect the activity period had for the participant.
MENTORING

MENTORING IN VOLUNTEERING ACTIVITIES

A mentor should be appointed by the participating organisation to offer – when needed – personal support, guidance and counselling to the participants in Volunteering Teams activities. Mentoring is targeted towards the individual participant and thus the content and frequency of the meetings will vary according to the individual needs. Possible topics of mentoring meetings: personal wellbeing, wellbeing in the team, satisfaction with the tasks, practicalities etc.

REINFORCED MENTORSHIP

'Reinforced Mentorship' is an intensified mentoring process that might be necessary to support young people with fewer opportunities, if they are not able to implement an activity independently or with normal mentoring or tutoring support. Reinforced Mentorship involves closer contact, more frequent meetings and more time allocated to the implementation of tasks. This guarantees a step-by-step support of the participants during project activities as well as outside working hours. Reinforced Mentorship enables the participants to gain as much autonomy as possible, thus contributing to the successful implementation of the project.

RECOGNITION OF LEARNING OUTCOMES

WHAT IS RECOGNITION OF LEARNING OUTCOMES?

To support the impact of European Solidarity Corps activities on the personal, educational, social, civic and professional development of the participants, the competences (combination of knowledge, skills and attitudes) that are the non-formal and informal learning outcomes gained in the solidarity activities shall be identified and documented, in particular through EU level recognition tools such as Youthpass and Europass.

FOR WHOM?

The identification and documentation of non-formal and informal learning outcomes is offered to participants (on a voluntary basis) and participating organisations (mandatory, insofar as the participant requests it). This means that every young person taking part in any European Solidarity Corps activity can benefit from a process and certificate that identifies and documents individual learning outcomes.

HOW DOES IT WORK?

Every young person taking part in European Solidarity Corps activities is entitled to go through the Youthpass process and receive a Youthpass certificate at the end of the process. Youthpass identifies and documents the competences developed during the project. It is recommended to embed the educational approach of Youthpass from the start of the project and use it during the project activities as a tool to help participants to become more aware of, reflect on and assess their learning process and outcomes. Depending on the nature of the recognition needs and the individual solidarity activities, other tools can also be used such as e.g. Europass.

For more information and support on Youthpass: www.youthpass.eu

For more information on Europass: www.europass.eu
**INSURANCE**

**WHAT SHOULD YOU KNOW ABOUT INSURANCE?**

One key aspect of the activities carried out under the European Solidarity Corps is that the participant must at all time be under a safe environment. To guarantee that the participant is covered for unforeseen circumstances, the following areas must be covered:

- wherever relevant, travel insurance (including damage or loss of luggage);
- third party liability (including, wherever appropriate, professional/corporate liability of participating organisations);
- accident and illness (including permanent or temporary incapacity), pregnancy and childbirth;
- death (including repatriation in case of projects carried out abroad).

The European Solidarity Corps supports insurance coverage, when needed:

- either through the insurance provided by the European Commission [28](https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/erasmus-plus/actions/study-and-volunteering-in-another-country_en) (for cross-border activities);
- either through reimbursement of the costs linked to insurance (for in-country activities).

**FOR CROSS-BORDER ACTIVITIES**

Participants in cross-border activities must be in the possession of a European Health Insurance Card before arriving to the host country. This card gives access to medically necessary, state-provided healthcare during a temporary stay in any of the EU Member States, as well as in Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway, under the same conditions and at the same cost (free in some countries) as people insured in these respective countries [29].

In particular, the European Solidarity Corps provides insurance coverage as following:

- Those participants who are not eligible for the European Health Insurance Card free of charge (ie, at no cost for the participant), or those not entitled for reason of national legislation regarding the activities they or their individual situation, shall be entitled to receive a primary coverage through the insurance provided by the European Commission.
- Those that are eligible to a European Health Insurance Card free of charge or are registered in the host country’s national health system will obtain complementary coverage from the insurance. Information about the coverage and support available through the insurance for participants, as well as instructions for enrolment, is available on the website of the insurance company.

**FOR IN-COUNTRY ACTIVITIES**

If the participant is in need of private personal insurance given the national legislation, the participating organisations must provide the participant with personal insurance, which must offer the same coverage as the coverage for cross-border activities, in particular coverage not related to the activity for its entire duration. Should this private insurance be needed, the organisation may use exceptional costs to fund it.

For in-country activities, the European Commission does not define a unique format of third party liability insurance, nor does it recommend specific insurance companies. It is up to project organisers to seek the most suitable insurance policy according to the type of project carried out and to the insurance formats available at national level. It is not necessary to subscribe to a project-specific insurance, if the participants are already covered by existing insurance policies of the project organisers.

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INSURANCE PROVIDED BY THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION

FOR WHOM?
Every participant in a cross-border activity must be enrolled in the insurance scheme of the European Solidarity Corps or in the host country’s national health system. The insurance complements the coverage of the mandatory European Health Insurance Card and/or national social security systems.

HOW DOES IT WORK?
The applicant organisation (in cooperation with the host organisations in the case of volunteering activities), is responsible for the enrolment of the participant(s). This enrolment must be done before the departure of the participant(s) and cover the duration of the activity. In addition, the organisation is responsible to keep the insurance company updated of any relevant change with regards the registration of its participants, in particular in cases where the participant ends their activity before the previously registered end date.

The insurance provides only complementary coverage to the European Health Insurance Card or to any other insurance participants may have. Participants must be in possession of their European Health Insurance Card before the departure. In certain cases, when national rules deprive volunteers from coverage under the European Health Insurance Card for the duration of the activity, the insurance company will provide full coverage (see above). The insurance coverage has its own exclusions and ceilings and it is meant to cope with urgent and necessary care which cannot wait until the end of the activity period and the return home of the participant.

Finally, participants and organisations should take into account that it is a private insurance scheme. As such, it is highly recommended to contact the insurer before incurring a medical expense, as they will be able to provide the participant with information on whether the claim will be reimbursed, and how.

The following flow process chart explains each possible insurance coverage. It must be noted that, regardless of the activity and type of insurance coverage, the organisation is ultimately responsible to ensure the participant is appropriately insured.
EUROPEAN SOLIDARITY CORPS PORTAL

The European Solidarity Corps Portal offers European and national information and opportunities that are of interest to young people wishing to engage in the solidarity sector. It provides a one-stop shop for both interested young people and organisations wishing to join and to be part of the Corps. The Portal also allows young people to follow online trainings, get access to other services and, importantly, to build a community of like-minded young people. The aim is for the European Solidarity Portal to be integrated into all processes of the Corps. To access the European Solidarity Corps Portal, go to: http://europa.eu/youth/solidarity_en.

HOW DOES IT WORK?

BRINGING TOGETHER YOUNG PEOPLE AND ORGANISATIONS

Young people - at least 17 years old - wishing to engage in solidarity activities register in the European Solidarity Corps Portal. The European Solidarity Corps Portal offers a place for those young people and organisations holding a Quality Label and willing to implement solidarity activities to find each other. In the Portal, organisations holding a Quality Label can advertise opportunities for volunteering activities, traineeships and jobs, search for registered candidates and contact them. Registered candidates can also look for opportunities and express their interest in them. Once the organisation and the registered candidate found each other, the organisation sends an offer to the registered candidate.

BUILDING COMMUNITY AND PROVIDING SERVICES

The European Solidarity Corps Portal offers additional services to registered candidates. Additionally to the Online Training and Certificate of participation - made available through the Portal - registered candidates can benefit from community building activities, updated information through newsletters and other useful functionalities that are gradually being developed. Young people registered as well as participants can also make use of the mobile app, enabling them to exchange and share experiences with the other young people registered in the Corps.
OTHER IMPORTANT MEASURES

CERTIFICATE OF PARTICIPATION

The certificate of participation is a certificate to support the visibility of the participation in European Solidarity Corps activities. At the end of their solidarity activity, participants are entitled to receive a certificate of participation, issued (in the European Solidarity Corps portal) compulsorily by a participating organisation providing the activity.

The certificate of participation is issued (mandatorily) to every participant having finalised a European Solidarity Corps activity.

AGREEMENTS

AGREEMENTS BETWEEN PROJECT PARTNERS

All participating organisations involved in a European Solidarity Corps project are strongly recommended to sign an internal agreement between them. Such an agreement has the purpose of clearly defining responsibilities, tasks and financial contribution for all parties involved in the project. It is up to the participating organisations to jointly decide on how the EU grant will be distributed and which costs it will cover.

An internal agreement constitutes a key instrument for ensuring a solid and smooth cooperation among partners in a solidarity activity as well as to avoid or manage potential conflicts. Indicatively, it should contain at least the following information:

- project title and reference of the grant agreement between the applicant participating organisation and the granting Agency;
- names and contacts of all the participating organisations involved in the project;
- role and responsibilities of each participating organisation; division of the EU grant;
- modalities of payments and budget transfers among participating organisations.

Although this practice is strongly recommended to safeguard the interests of each partner in a project, such an agreement remains an internal document among partners; it will not be requested by the granting Agency.

AGREEMENTS WITH PARTICIPANTS

Prior to their departure, each young person participating in an activity supported by the European Solidarity Corps (with the exception of an advance planning visit) must sign a volunteering agreement. The agreement shall define at least the following aspects of the solidarity activity:

- rights and responsibilities of the volunteers and organisations;
- tasks to be carried out during the activity;
- intended learning outcomes.

VISA AND RESIDENCE PERMITS

Participants in European Solidarity Corps projects may need to obtain a visa for staying abroad in or coming from a partner Country hosting the activity. It is a responsibility of all the participating organisations to ensure that the authorisations required (short or long-term stay visas or residence permits) are in order before the planned activity takes place. It is strongly recommended that the authorisations are requested from the competent authorities well in advance, since the process may take several weeks. The Executive Agency may give further advice and support concerning visas, residence permits, social security, etc. The EU Immigration Portal contains general information on visa and residence permits, for both short-term and long-term stays:

PART D – PRACTICAL STEPS FOR APPLICANTS

All organisations that intend to submit a project proposal in order to receive financial support from the EU under the European Solidarity Corps are invited to read carefully this section which is drafted in accordance with the applicable provisions of the Financial Regulation\textsuperscript{30} applicable to the general budget of the European Union (hereafter defined as “EU Financial Regulation”) and with its rules of application.

Individuals are not entitled to submit project proposals in the framework of this Action of the European Solidarity Corps.

WHAT TO DO IN ORDER TO SUBMIT AN APPLICATION?

To submit a project application, applicants must follow the four steps described below:

- Organisations involved in the application must register in the Participant Portal and receive a Participant Identification Code (PIC). Organisations that have already obtained a PIC through their participation in other EU programmes do not need to register again. The PIC obtained from this previous registration is valid also for applying under the European Solidarity Corps;
- check the compliance with the criteria under Part B of this Guide;
- check the financial conditions;
- fill in and submit the application form.

STEP 1: REGISTER IN THE PARTICIPANT PORTAL

Organisations involved in the application must be registered and provide their basic legal and financial data in the Education, Audiovisual, Culture, Citizenship and Volunteering Participant Portal, if not already done.

To register in the Participant Portal, the person representing an organisation must carry out the following steps:

- Create an EU Login account (unless the person representing the organisation already has an account). EU Login accounts can be created via the following website: https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/cas/login;
- Access the Participant Portal and register on behalf of the organisation. Guidance and Frequently Asked Questions are available on the Participant Portal, which can be accessed using the following link: http://ec.europa.eu/education/participants/portal/desktop/en/organisations/register.html.

The organisation needs to register only once in the Participant Portal. Once the registration is completed, the organisation will obtain a Participant Identification Code (PIC). The PIC, which is an unique identifier and is necessary for the submission of applications.

It is strongly recommended, before registering your organisation, to check if it is already registered in the Portal and it has a valid European Commission PIC, particularly if you are a large organisation with different departments or campuses. Each organisation has one only PIC. Therefore, if registered, you do not have to register again and can use that PIC number.

It is also recommended that the domain address used in your mail for the Participant Portal matches the legal signatory and the contact person’s domain email address used in the application form.

As mentioned above, the Participant Portal is accessible via an individual’s EU Login account. It is recommended that the person submitting the application and the legal representative and contact person for the project have an EU Login.

The validation of your organisation does not imply the selection of your application for funding.

\textsuperscript{30} The EU Financial Regulation can be found at: https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32018R1046&from=EN.
PROOF OF LEGAL STATUS AND FINANCIAL CAPACITY
At the time of the registration, organisations must also upload the following documents in the Participant Portal:

- The Legal Entity form (this form can be downloaded from the European Commission’s website at: http://ec.europa.eu/budget/contracts_grants/info_contracts/legal_entities/legal_entities_en.cfm);
- The Financial Identification form. Please fill in the form relating to the country in which the bank is located, even if the applicant organisation is officially registered in another country (this form can be downloaded at: http://ec.europa.eu/budget/contracts_grants/info_contracts/financial_id/financial_id_en.cfm).

For grant applications concerning amounts in excess of EUR 60,000, applicants may need to upload specific documents to give proof of their financial capacity. For more details, see the section "Selection Criteria” under Part B.

The Financial Identification form should be provided only for the applicant organisation, but is not required for the partner organisations.

STEP 2: CHECK THE COMPLIANCE WITH THE CRITERIA
When developing their project and before applying for EU support, participating organisations must verify that the project respects the following criteria: eligibility, exclusion, selection and award.

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA
The eligibility criteria mainly relate to the type of project and activities (including, where relevant, duration, participating organisations, etc.), the target group (e.g. status and number of participants involved) and the conditions for submitting a grant request for such a project (e.g. deadlines for submission, completeness of the application form, etc.).

To be eligible, the project must meet all the eligibility criteria available under Part B. If the project does not meet these criteria at application stage, it will be rejected without being further evaluated.

As an exception, some eligibility criteria (e.g. duration, profile of participants, etc.) may only be verified during the stage of project implementation or at final report stage (not at application stage). At application stage, the applicants will be asked to declare that these criteria will be met by the project. The Agency may authorise minor deviations from the requirements related to the number of participating volunteers in exceptional and duly justified cases. However, if it appears at implementation or final report stage that these criteria have not been fulfilled, the participants and/or the activity will be considered ineligible with a consequent reduction/recovery of the EU grant initially awarded to the project.

FOR BRITISH APPLICANTS: Please be aware that eligibility criteria must be complied with for the entire duration of the grant. If the United Kingdom withdraws from the European Union during the grant period without concluding an agreement with the European Union ensuring in particular that British applicants continue to be eligible, you will cease to receive EU funding (while continuing, where possible, to participate) or be required to leave the project on the basis of the relevant provisions of the grant agreement on termination.

EXCLUSION CRITERIA
An applicant will be excluded from participating in calls for proposals under the European Solidarity Corps or will be rejected from the award procedure if it is found in one of the situations described under Part B of this Guide.

SELECTION CRITERIA
Through the selection criteria, the Executive Agency assesses the applicant’s financial and operational capacity to complete the proposed project. Applicants must submit a declaration on their honour, completed and signed, attesting to their financial and operational capacity to complete the proposed activities (model declaration attached to the call for proposals).

AWARD CRITERIA
The award criteria allow the Executive Agency to evaluate the quality of the project proposals submitted in the framework of the European Solidarity Corps. Within the limits of the budget available, grants will be awarded to those projects which respond to these qualitative criteria in the best way.

The full set of award criteria applying to this action through this Guide are described in Part B.
**STEP 3: CHECK THE FINANCIAL CONDITIONS**

**TYPES OF GRANT - FORMS OF FUNDING**

The grant may be any of the following types:

- reimbursement of a specified proportion of the eligible costs actually incurred: e.g. the amount awarded to cover additional costs linked to visa related costs;
- reimbursement on the basis of contribution to unit costs: e.g. the amount awarded for organisational support;
- flat-rate financing: e.g. indirect costs;
- a combination of the above.

The financing mechanism applied under the European Solidarity Corps in most cases provides grants based on the reimbursement on the basis of contribution to unit costs. These types of grant help applicants to easily calculate the requested grant amount and facilitate a realistic financial planning of the project.

To know which type of grant is applied to each funding item under each European Solidarity Corps activity covered by this Guide, please see the column "financing mechanism" in the "funding rules" tables in Part B.

**PRINCIPLES APPLYING TO EU GRANTS**

**NON RETROACTIVITY**

No EU grant may be awarded retroactively for projects already completed.

An EU grant may be awarded for a project which has already begun only where the applicant can demonstrate the need to start the project before the grant agreement has been signed or the grant decision has been notified. In such cases, the costs eligible for financing must not have been incurred prior to the date of submission of the grant application.

If the applicant starts implementing the project before the grant agreement is signed or the grant decision is notified, this is done at the risk of the applicant.

**NON-CUMULATIVE AWARD**

An action may only receive one grant from the EU budget. In no circumstances shall the same costs be financed twice by the Union budget.

To avoid the risk of double-funding, under no circumstances shall the same costs be financed twice by the Union budget. To ensure this, applicants shall indicate in the grant application the sources and amounts of Union funding received or applied for the same action or part of the action or for its (the applicant’s) functioning during the same financial year as well as any other funding received or applied for the same action.

Identical or very similar applications – submitted by the same applicant - will be subject to a specific assessment in order to exclude the risk of double-funding and may all be rejected.

**NO-PROFIT AND CO-FINANCING**

A grant financed from the Union budget must not have the purpose or effect of producing a profit within the framework of the project carried out by the beneficiary. Profit is defined as surplus calculated at the payment of the balance, of receipts over the eligible costs of the action or work programme, where receipts are limited to the Union grant and the revenue generated by that action or work programme. The no-profit principle does not apply to grants provided in the form of a unit cost, a lump sum or a flat-rate financing, neither to grant requests that do not exceed EUR 60,000. For the purpose of calculating the profit generated by the grant, co-financing in the form of contributions in kind will not be taken into account.

Furthermore, an EU grant is an incentive to carry out a project which would not be feasible without the EU financial support, and is based on the principle of co-financing. Co-financing implies that the EU grant may not finance the entire costs of the project; the project must be funded by sources of co-financing other than the EU grant (e.g. beneficiary’s own resources, income generated by the action, financial contributions from third parties).

When the EU grant is provided in the form of a unit cost, a lump sum or a flat-rate financing - this is the case for most of the Actions covered by this Guide - the principles of no-profit and co-funding are ensured by the Commission for the Action as a whole in advance when it defines the rates or percentages of such units, lump sums and flat-rates. The respect of the no-profit and co-financing principles is generally assumed and therefore, applicants do not have to provide information about sources of funding other than the EU grant, nor they have to justify the costs incurred by the project.

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35 To this aim, the receipts are limited to income generated by the project. The profit (or the loss) as defined above is then the difference between:
- the provisionally accepted amount of the grant and the income generated by the action, and the eligible costs incurred by the beneficiary.
- In addition, whenever a profit is made, it will be recovered. The Executive Agency are entitled to recover the percentage of the profit corresponding to the Union contribution to the eligible costs actually incurred by the beneficiary to carry out the action. Further clarifications on the calculation of the profit will be provided for actions for which grants take the form of reimbursement of a specified proportion of eligible costs.
However, the payment of the grant based on the reimbursement on the basis of contribution to unit costs, lump sums, or flat-rate financing is without prejudice to the right of access to the beneficiaries’ statutory records. Where a check or audit reveals that the generating event has not occurred (e.g. project activities not realised as approved at application stage, participants not taking part in the activities, etc.) and an undue payment has been made to the beneficiary on a grant based on the reimbursement on the basis of contribution to unit costs, lump sums, or flat-rate financing, the National or Executive Agency shall be entitled to recover up to the amount of the grant. Similarly, if the activities undertaken or the outputs produced are of insufficient quality, the grant may be reduced partly or in full even if the activities have taken place and are eligible.

In addition, for statistical and monitoring purposes the European Commission may carry out surveys on samples of beneficiaries aimed at quantifying the actual costs incurred in projects funded based on the reimbursement on the basis of contribution to unit costs, lump sums, or flat-rate financing.

**SPECIFIC PROVISIONS APPLYING TO GRANTS PAID ON THE BASIS OF REIMBURSEMENT OF A SPECIFIED PORTION OF ELIGIBLE COSTS**

When the EU grant is provided as a reimbursement of a specified portion of eligible costs, the following provisions apply:

**ELIGIBLE COSTS**

An EU grant must not exceed an overall amount which is established by the Executive Agency at the time of the project selection on the basis of the estimated eligible costs indicated in the application form. Eligible costs are costs actually incurred by the beneficiary of a grant which meet all of the following criteria:

- they are incurred during the lifetime of the project, with the exception of costs relating to final reports and audit certificates;
- they are indicated in the estimated overall budget of the project;
- they are necessary for the implementation of the project which is the subject of the grant;
- they are identifiable and verifiable, in particular being recorded in the accounting records of the beneficiary and determined according to the applicable accounting standards of the country where the beneficiary is established and according to the usual cost accounting practices of the beneficiary;
- they comply with the requirements of applicable tax and social legislation;
- they are reasonable, justified, and comply with the principle of sound financial management, in particular regarding economy and efficiency;
- they are not covered through EU grants in the form of contribution to unit costs, lump sums or flat-rate financing.

The following categories of costs are also considered eligible:

- costs relating to a pre-financing guarantee lodged by the beneficiary of the grant, where that guarantee is required by the National or Executive Agency;
- costs relating to certificates on the financial statements and operational verification reports where such certificates or reports are required in support of the requests for payments by the Executive Agency.

The beneficiary’s internal accounting and auditing procedures must permit direct reconciliation of the costs and revenue declared in respect of the project with the corresponding accounting statements and supporting documents.

**Value Added Tax (VAT)**

Value added tax will be considered as an eligible cost only if it is not recoverable under the applicable national VAT legislation\(^{32}\). The only exception relates to activities or transactions in which states, regional and local government authorities and other public bodies engage as public authorities\(^{33}\). In addition:

- deductible VAT not actually deducted (due to national conditions or to the carelessness of beneficiaries) is not eligible;
- the VAT Directive does not apply to non-EU countries. Organisations from partner countries can be exempted from taxes (including VAT), duties and charges, if an agreement has been signed between the European Commission and the partner country where the organisation is established.

**Eligible indirect costs**

For certain types of activities (for details of the funding rules for Actions, please consult Part B of this Guide), a flat-rate amount not exceeding 7 % of the eligible direct costs of the project is eligible under indirect costs, representing the beneficiary’s general administrative costs which are not already covered by the eligible direct costs (e.g. electricity or Internet bills, cost for premises, etc.) but which can be regarded as chargeable to the project.

Indirect costs may not include costs entered under another budget category. Indirect costs are not eligible where the beneficiary already receives an operating grant from the Union budget.

\(^{32}\) In the Member States the VAT national legislation translates the VAT Directive 2006/112/EC.

\(^{33}\) See article 13(1) of the Directive.
Supporting documents

The final amount of the grant to be awarded to the beneficiary is established after completion of the action or work programme, upon approval of the request for payment containing the following documents:

- a final report providing details of the implementation and results of the action/work programme;
- further documents as requested in the grant agreement.

In case of:

- Grants for an action of more than EUR 60,000, but less than EUR 750,000

The beneficiary is required to submit, in support of the final payment, a “Report of Factual Findings on the Final Financial Report - Type I” produced by an approved auditor or in case of public bodies, by a competent and independent public officer.

The procedure and the format to be followed by an approved auditor or in case of public bodies, by a competent and independent public officer, are detailed in the following “Guidance Notes”:

- The use of the report format set by the “Guidance Notes” is compulsory.

In case of:

- Grants for an action of EUR 750,000 or more, when the cumulative amounts of request for payment is at least EUR 325,000
- Operating grants of EUR 100,000 or more

The beneficiary is required to submit, in support of the final payment, a “Report of Factual Findings on the Final Financial Report - Type II” produced by an approved auditor or in case of public bodies, by a competent and independent public officer. The certificate shall certify, in accordance with a methodology approved by the Agency, that the costs declared by the beneficiary in the financial statements on which the request for payment is based are real, accurately recorded and eligible in accordance with the grant agreement or grant decision.

The procedure and the format to be followed by an approved auditor or in case of public bodies, by a competent and independent public officer, are detailed in the following “Guidance Notes”:


The use of the report format set by the “Guidance Notes” is compulsory.

If the eligible costs actually incurred by the beneficiary are lower than anticipated, the Agency will apply the rate of co-financing stated in the grant agreement or grant decision to the expenditure actually incurred.

In the event of non-execution or clearly inadequate execution of an activity planned in the application attached to the funding decision, the final grant will be reduced accordingly.

INELIGIBLE COSTS

The following items are not considered as eligible costs:

a) return on capital and dividends paid by a beneficiary;

b) debt and debt service charges;

c) provisions for losses or debts;

d) interest owed;

e) doubtful debts;

f) exchange losses;

g) costs of transfers from the Agency charged by the bank of a beneficiary;

h) costs declared by the beneficiary under another action receiving a grant financed from the Union budget. Such grants include grants awarded by a Member State and financed from the Union budget and grants awarded by bodies other than the Agency for the purpose of implementing the Union budget. In particular, beneficiaries receiving an operating grant financed by the EU or Euratom budget cannot declare indirect costs for the period(s) covered by the operating grant, unless they can demonstrate that the operating grant does not cover any costs of the action.

i) contributions in kind from third parties;

j) excessive or reckless expenditure;

34 Article 203 FR.
k) [deductible VAT][VAT]35;

l) [- cost of replacing persons involved in the project;]

m) [- expenses for travel to or from countries other than those participating in the project/programme, unless explicit prior authorisation is granted by the Agency.]

n) others (in accordance with the relevant legal base).

**Sources of Financing**

The applicant must indicate in the application form the contribution from sources other than the EU grant. External co-financing may take the form of the beneficiary's own resources, financial contributions from third parties or income generated by the project. If, at the time of the final report and request of payment of the balance, there is evidence that there is a surplus of the income (see section on No-profit and Co-financing) over the eligible costs incurred by the project, the Executive Agency is entitled to recover the percentage of the profit corresponding to the Union contribution to the eligible costs actually incurred by the beneficiary to carry out the project. This provision does not apply to projects requesting a grant that does not exceed EUR 60 000. Contributions in kind are not considered as a possible source of co-financing.

**Step 4: Fill in and Submit the Application Form**

To request an EU grant under the Volunteering Teams in high priority areas, applicants must use the specific online form available on the website of the Executive Agency (for the contact details, see Annex III of this Guide). The applicant can be any of the organisations to be involved in the project, regardless of their role.

In case of any doubt about the content of the Call for proposals or the application package, you can contact the EACEA European Solidarity Corps' team, before the deadline. After the deadline, no information on the submission and evaluation process will be communicated.

**Application Procedure**

**E-Forms**

Applicants are required to submit their application online to the Executive Agency using the correct electronic form and including all requested annexes. Applications sent by post, courier service, fax or email will not be accepted.

The application package consists of five documents, which must be downloaded from the Education, Audio-visual and Culture Executive Agency's website: [https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/european-solidarity-corps/funding_en](https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/european-solidarity-corps/funding_en)

1. Application Form (e-form)
2. Annex I – Description of the project (Word)
3. Annex II – Estimated budget (Excel)
4. Annex III – Declaration of Honour signed by the Legal representative of the Applicant Organisation (PDF)
5. Annex IV - Activities' timetable (Excel)

If any of the parts of the application package is not submitted, completed or not signed, the application may not be accepted. Documents different from those of the application package will not be taken into account.

The application package must be completed in one of the EU official languages. If you use abbreviations, please make sure each abbreviation is clearly defined. It is advisable to compile a list of all abbreviations used in your application and attach it to the Description of the project document.

Applicants cannot make changes to their application after the submission deadline.

In case of multiple submissions of the same application the Executive Agency will always consider valid the last version submitted before the deadline has expired.

The eForm is an Adobe development and applicants should ensure that they can install Adobe version 9 or higher on the computer they will be using to complete the application form. The eForm is downloaded onto a local computer and completed remotely. Once the text and the attachments are linked to the application, it has to be submitted using an internet connection.

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35 Choose “deductible VAT” if non-deductible VAT remains eligible. Choose “VAT” if the nature of the action implies full ineligibility of VAT, e.g. if the basic act provides for such ineligibility or if all applicants are public bodies implementing the respective actions in their capacity of public authorities. In this case, the special condition on ineligibility of VAT provided in the model grant agreement on BudgWeb should be included in the grant agreement.
In order to succeed with the submission of the eForm, you must fill in all the mandatory fields. You will find all the useful information in the eForm User Guide. We strongly recommend you to read carefully this guide before starting to complete the eForm.

**RESPECT THE DEADLINE**

The application must be submitted by the deadline set under Part B – Eligibility Criteria. Applications submitted later than the 12:00 will be considered as ineligible.

Applicants are strongly advised to submit their application well in advance and to keep proof of the submission within the deadline (e.g. print screens).

Applicants, who encounter some technical problems during the submission process, are invited to contact the EACEA IT Helpdesk (EACEA-HELPDESK@ec.europa.eu) well before the deadline. If the form cannot be validated and submitted because e.g. all mandatory fields are not filled in or wrong / contradictory information has been completed, this will not be considered as technical problem.

**N.B.: The deadline for submission of electronic forms is always set at 12:00 (midday CET - Brussels time). Applicants established in countries that have a different time zone should carefully consider the time differences to avoid rejections.**

**WHAT HAPPENS ONCE THE APPLICATION IS SUBMITTED?**

Once the eForm and annexes have been submitted, a reference number is automatically generated. An acknowledgment of receipt email is sent automatically to the contact person of the applicant organisation to the email address indicated in the eForm. It is your responsibility to verify that you are providing the right contact email address. This will be the contact email to be used during the whole selection process.

All applications received by the Executive Agency undergo an evaluation procedure.

**ASSESSMENT PROCEDURE**

Project proposals are assessed by the Executive Agency receiving the application, exclusively on the basis of the criteria described in this Guide. The assessment implies:

- a formal check to verify that the eligibility and exclusion criteria are respected;
- a quality assessment to evaluate the extent to which the participating organisations meet the selection criteria (i.e. operational and financial capacity) and the project meets the award criteria. Such quality assessment is in most cases carried out with the support of independent experts. In their assessment, experts will be supported by guidelines developed by the European Commission; these guidelines will be made available on the websites of the European Commission and of the Agencies responsible for the management of projects;
- a verification, that the proposal does not present risks of double funding. If necessary, such verification is carried out in cooperation with other Agencies or other stakeholders.

The Executive Agency will appoint an evaluation committee to oversee the management of the whole selection process. On the basis of the assessment carried out by experts, the evaluation committee will establish a list of projects proposed for selection. Applicants may be asked to provide additional information or to clarify the supporting documents submitted in connection with the application, provided that such information or clarification does not substantially change the proposal. Additional information and clarifications are particularly justified in case of obvious clerical errors made by the applicant.

**FINAL DECISION**

At the end of the evaluation procedure, the Executive Agency decides on the projects to be granted on the basis of:

- the ranking list proposed by the evaluation committee;
- the budget available.

After the completion of the selection procedure, the application files and accompanying material are not sent back to the applicant, irrespective of the outcome of the procedure.
NOTIFICATION OF GRANT AWARD DECISIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Deadline for submitting applications</td>
<td>19 September 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation period</td>
<td>September-November 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Notification of results</td>
<td>December 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Signature of the grant agreements</td>
<td>December 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indicative starting date of the project</td>
<td>January – March 2020</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN THE APPLICATION IS APPROVED?

GRANT AGREEMENT

If the project is selected for an EU grant under the European Solidarity Corps:

- a grant agreement is signed between the Executive Agency and the applicant. The applicant will receive the grant agreement, to be signed by its legal representative and return it for counter signature to the Executive Agency; the Executive Agency is the last party to sign. When the grant agreement is signed by both parties, the applicant becomes beneficiary of an EU grant and can start the project.

Grant agreements take the form of mono-beneficiary agreements, with the applicant being the single beneficiary.

GRANT AMOUNT

The acceptance of an application does not constitute an undertaking to award funding equal to the amount requested by the applicant. The funding requested may be reduced on the basis of the specific financial rules applying to a given Action.

It should be noted that the grant amount foreseen by the agreement is a maximum which cannot be increased, even if the beneficiary requests a higher amount.

Funds transferred by the Executive Agency must be identified within the account or sub-account indicated by the beneficiary for the payment of the grant.

PAYMENT PROCEDURES

Depending on the duration of the grant agreement and the assessment of financial risk, projects supported under the European Solidarity Corps are subject to different payment procedures.

Except for the first pre-financing payment, other payments or recoveries will be made on the basis of the analysis of reports or payment requests submitted by the beneficiary.

PRE-FINANCING PAYMENT

A pre-financing payment will be transferred to the beneficiary within 30 days of the date when the last of the two parties signs the grant agreement or when the grant decision is notified to the beneficiary, and where relevant, any appropriate guarantees are received (see section “financial guarantee” below). Pre-financing is intended to provide the beneficiary with a float. The Executive Agency may decide to split the first pre-financing payment into more instalments. They may also decide to reduce the pre-financing or not pay any pre-financing at all, if the financial capacity of the beneficiary is not deemed satisfactory.

FURTHER PRE-FINANCING PAYMENTS

Depending on the duration of the grant agreement a second – and in some cases a third - pre-financing payment will be transferred to the beneficiary within 60 calendar days of the receipt, by the Executive Agency, of the further pre-financing payment requests advanced by the beneficiary or within 60 calendar days if the further pre-financing payment request is accompanied by a progress report. These further pre-financing payments may be requested when at least 70 % of the previous pre-financing payment has been used up. Where the statement on the use of the previous pre-financing payment(s) shows that less than 70 % of the previous pre-financing payment(s) has been used to cover costs of the action, the amount of the new pre-financing to be paid shall be reduced by the unused amounts of the previous pre-financing.

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* See footnote above.
INTERIM (OR PROGRESS/TECHNICAL) REPORT

Under some Actions, beneficiaries will be asked to submit an interim as well as a progress/technical report informing on the state of implementation of the project and - in some cases - accompanying the request for a further pre-financing payment. The interim and the progress/technical reports must be submitted by the deadline indicated in the grant agreement or grant decision.

PAYMENT OR RECOVERY OF THE BALANCE

The amount of the final payment to be made to the beneficiary will be established on the basis of a final report to be submitted by the deadline indicated in the grant agreement or grant decision. If a) the events generating the grant are not implemented or are implemented in a different way than planned; or b) the eligible costs actually incurred by the beneficiary are lower than those planned at application stage, or c) the quality of the realised activities/outputs is of insufficient quality, the funding may be reduced proportionally or, where applicable, the beneficiary will be required to repay any excess amounts already received as pre-financing payment.

Under some Actions, in justified cases the Executive Agency may transfer 100% of the grant awarded through the pre-financing instalments. In such cases a payment of the balance is not due. However, if - on the basis of a final report to be submitted by the beneficiary by the deadline indicated in the grant agreement - a) the events generating the grant are not implemented or are implemented in a different way than planned; or b) the eligible costs actually incurred by the beneficiary are lower than those planned at application stage, or c) the quality of the realised activities/outputs is of insufficient quality, the beneficiary will be required to repay any excess amounts already received as pre-financing payment.

As a general rule, the final payment or request for recovery of the balance will be issued within 60 calendar days of the receipt of the final report.

Reduction due to improper implementation or breach of other obligations

The Agency may reduce the maximum amount of the grant if the action has not been implemented properly (i.e. if it has not been implemented or has been implemented poorly, partially or late), or if another obligation under the Agreement has been breached.

The amount of the reduction will be proportionate to the degree to which the action has been implemented improperly or to the seriousness of the breach.
OTHER IMPORTANT CONTRACTUAL PROVISIONS

FINANCIAL GUARANTEE
If the financial capacity is not considered satisfactory, the Executive Agency may require any beneficiary which has been awarded a grant exceeding EUR 60 000 to lodge a guarantee in advance in order to limit the financial risks connected with the pre-financing payment. This guarantee can be requested for up to the same amount of the pre-financing payment(s).

The purpose of such guarantee is to make a bank or financial institution stand as irrevocable collateral security or first-call guarantor of the beneficiary’s obligations deriving from the grant agreement or grant decision.

This financial guarantee, in euro, shall be provided by an approved bank or financial institution established in an EU Member State. When the beneficiary is established in a non-EU country, the Executive Agency may agree that a bank or financial institution established in such country provides the guarantee, if it considers that the bank or financial institution offers equivalent financial security and characteristics as those offered in an EU Member State.

The guarantee may be replaced by a joint third-party guarantee, or from several third-party guarantees from the participating organisations who are parties to the same grant agreement.

The guarantee will be released after the pre-financing is gradually cleared against an interim payment or payment of the balance to the beneficiary, in accordance with the conditions laid down in the grant agreement or grant decision. In case the payment of the balance takes the form of a recovery, the guarantee will be released after the beneficiary is notified.

SUB-CONTRACTING AND AWARD OF A PROCUREMENT CONTRACT

Where the implementation of the action requires the award of procurement contracts (implementation contracts), the beneficiary may award the contract in accordance with its usual purchasing practices provided that the contract is awarded to the tender offering best value for money or the lowest price (as appropriate), avoiding conflicts of interest.

The beneficiary is expected to clearly document the tendering procedure and retain the documentation in the event of an audit.

Entities acting in their capacity as contracting authorities within the meaning of Directive 2014/24/EU37 or contracting entities within the meaning of Directive 2014/25/EU38 must comply with the applicable national public procurement rules.

Beneficiaries may subcontract tasks forming part of the action. If they do so, they must ensure that, in addition to the above-mentioned conditions of best value for money and absence of conflicts of interests, the following conditions are also complied with:

a) subcontracting does not cover core tasks of the action;

b) recourse to subcontracting is justified because of the nature of the action and what is necessary for its implementation;

c) the estimated costs of the subcontracting are clearly identifiable in the estimated budget;

d) any recourse to subcontracting, if not provided for in description of the action, is communicated by the beneficiary and approved by the Agency. The Agency may grant approval:
   (i) before any recourse to subcontracting, if the beneficiaries requests an amendment
   (ii) after recourse to subcontracting if the subcontracting:
      – is specifically justified in the interim or final technical report and
      – does not entail changes to the grant agreement which would call into question the decision awarding the grant or be contrary to the equal treatment of applicants;

e) the beneficiaries ensure that certain conditions applicable to beneficiaries, enumerated in the grant agreement (e.g. visibility, confidentiality, etc.), are also applicable to the subcontractors.

**PUBLICITY**

**By the Agency and/or the Commission**

In line with the principle of transparency and the requirement for ex-post publicity, all information relating to grants awarded in the course of a financial year shall be published on an internet site of the European Union institutions no later than the 30 June of the year following the financial year in which the grants were awarded.

The Agency and/or the Commission will publish the following information:

- name of the beneficiary;
- address of the beneficiary when the latter is a legal person, region when the beneficiary is a natural person, as defined on NUTS 2 level if he/she is domiciled within the EU or equivalent if domiciled outside the EU;
- subject of the grant;
- nature and amount awarded.

Upon a reasoned and duly substantiated request by the beneficiary, the publication shall be waived if such disclosure risks threatening the rights and freedoms of individuals concerned as protected by the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union or harm the commercial interests of the beneficiaries.

**By the beneficiaries**

Beneficiaries must clearly acknowledge the European Union’s contribution in all publications or in conjunction with activities for which the grant is used.

In this respect, beneficiaries are required to give prominence to the name and emblem of the European Commission on all their publications, posters, programmes and other products realised under the co-financed project.

To do this they must use the text, the emblem and the disclaimer which will be provided by the Agency.

If this requirement is not fully complied with, the beneficiary’s grant may be reduced in accordance with the provisions of the grant agreement or grant decision.

Please refer to the Dissemination Guidelines for beneficiaries in Annex I of this Guide for further requirements regarding the visibility of the project.

**CHECKS AND AUDITS**

The Executive Agency and/or the European Commission may carry out technical and financial checks and audits in relation to the use of the grant. They may also check the statutory records of the beneficiary for the purpose of periodic assessments of lump sum, unit cost or flat-rate financing. The beneficiary will undertake, with the signature of its legal representative, to provide proof that the grant has been used correctly. The European Commission, the Executive Agency and/or the European Court of Auditors, or a body mandated by them, may check the use made of the grant at any time up to five years, or for up to three years for grants not exceeding EUR 60 000, starting from the date of payment of the balance or execution of the recovery by the Executive Agency. Therefore, beneficiaries shall keep records, original supporting documents, statistical records and other documents connected with the grant during this period.

**DATA PROTECTION**

Any personal data included in the application form or in the grant agreement/decision shall be processed by the Executive Agency, or by the European Commission in accordance with:

- Regulation (EU) 2018/1725 of the European Parliament and of the Council on the protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data by the European Union institutions and bodies and on the free movement of such data.
- In secondary order and only in so far as Regulation (EU) 2018/1725 does not apply – the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR or EU Regulation 2016/679 of the European Parliament and of the Council) or the national data protection legislation in case the GDPR does not apply (non-EU countries).

Unless marked as optional, the applicant’s replies to the questions in the application form are necessary to evaluate and further process the grant application in accordance with this Guide. Personal data will be processed solely for that purpose by the department or Unit responsible for the Union grant programme concerned (entity acting as data controller). Personal

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data may be transferred on a need to know basis to third parties involved in the evaluation of applications or in the grant management procedure, without prejudice of transfer to the bodies in charge of monitoring and inspection tasks in accordance with European Union law or to bodies mandated to undertake evaluations of the Programme or any of its Actions. In particular, for the purposes of safeguarding the financial interests of the Union, personal data may be transferred to internal audit services, to the European Court of Auditors, to the Financial Irregularities Panel or to the European Anti-Fraud Office and between authorising officers of the Commission and the executive agencies. The applicant shall have the right of access to his/her personal data and the right to rectify any such data. Should the applicant have any queries concerning the processing of his/her personal data, he/she shall address them to the Agency that has selected the project. In case of conflicts; the applicant also has the right of recourse at any time to the European Data Protection Supervisor. More information regarding the processing of personal data is included in the grant agreement or decision.

Concerning the processing of personal data under the European Solidarity Corps, a detailed privacy statement, including contact information, is available on the website of the Commission and Executive Agency.

Within the framework of centralised actions managed by the Executive Agency, applicants - and, if they are legal entities, persons who are members of the administrative, management or supervisory body of that applicant or who have powers of representation, decision or control with regard to that applicant, or natural or legal persons that assume unlimited liability for the debts of that applicant - are informed that, their personal data (name, given name if natural person, address, legal form and name and given name of the persons with powers of representation, decision-making or control, if legal person) may be registered in the Early Detection and Exclusion System (EDES) by the Authorising Officer of the Agency, should they be in one of the situations mentioned in the Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2018/1046 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 July 2018 on the financial rules applicable to the general budget of the Union.

**OPEN LICENCE AND INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS**

An open licence is a way by which the owner of a work grants permission to everyone to use the resource. There are different open licences according to the extent of the permissions granted or the limitations imposed and the beneficiaries are free to choose the specific license to apply to their work. An open licence must be associated to each resource produced.

An open licence is not a transfer of copyrights or Intellectual Property Rights (IPR). Beneficiaries will remain the copyright holders of the materials they produce and are allowed to use them as they wish. The only requirement for grant beneficiaries is to make educational resources (or other documents and media produced by the project) freely accessible through open licences. To fulfil this requirement, licenses need at least to grant use and, ideally, sharing and, adaptation rights. Beneficiaries can also commercialise their project outcomes and experience shows that open access brings visibility and may encourage interested users to buy the printed version or physical material, document or media.

**APPLICABLE RULES**

ANNEX I – DISSEMINATION AND EXPLOITATION OF RESULTS - A PRACTICAL GUIDE FOR BENEFICIARIES

Activities serving the dissemination and exploitation of results are a way to showcase the work that has been done as part of the European Solidarity Corps project. Sharing results, lessons learned and outcomes beyond the participating organisations will enable a wider community to benefit from a work that has received EU funding, as well as to promote the organisation’s efforts towards the objectives of the European Solidarity Corps, which attaches fundamental importance to the link between supported activities and policies. Therefore each of the projects supported by the European Solidarity Corps is a step towards achieving the general objectives defined for the European Solidarity Corps in its legal base.

Dissemination activities will vary between projects, and it is important to consider what kind of dissemination activities are fitted to each participating organisation. Organisations participating in smaller projects should undertake dissemination and exploitation appropriate to the level of their activity. The extent of dissemination and exploitation activities will increase with the size and strategic importance of the project. When applying for EU funding, applicants will be asked to explain their intentions/plans for dissemination and exploitation activities, and if successful, required to carry them out.

The below Guide is composed of two parts:

- The first one defines some key terms and explains what can be achieved with dissemination and exploitation of results and how these activities will contribute to the overall objectives of the project.
- The second one outlines the requirements for European Solidarity Corps beneficiaries (participating organisations) in terms of dissemination and exploitation of results.

DISSEMINATION AND EXPLOITATION OF PROJECT RESULTS: WHAT, WHY, WHO, WHEN AND WHERE AND HOW.

WHAT DO DISSEMINATION AND EXPLOITATION MEAN?

Dissemination is a planned process of providing information on the results of programmes and initiatives to key actors. It occurs as and when the result of programmes and initiatives become available. In terms of the European Solidarity Corps, this involves spreading the word about the project successes and outcomes as far as possible. Making others aware of the project will impact on other organisations in the future and will contribute to raising the profile of the organisation carrying out the project. To effectively disseminate results, an appropriate process at the beginning of the project needs to be designed. This should cover why, what, how, when, to whom and where disseminating results will take place, both during and after the funding period.

Exploitation is (a) a planned process of transferring the successful results of the programmes and initiatives to appropriate decision-makers in regulated local, regional, national or European level, on the one hand; and (b) a planned process of convincing individual end-users to adopt and/or apply the results of programmes and initiatives, on the other hand. For the European Solidarity Corps this means maximising the potential of the funded activities, so that the results are used beyond the lifetime of the project. Results should be developed in such a way that they can be tailored to the needs of others; transferred to new areas; sustained after the funding period has finished; or used to influence future policy and practice.

Dissemination and exploitation are therefore distinct but closely related to one another.

WHAT IS INTENDED BY "RESULTS OF THE ACTIVITY"?

Results are achievements of the European activity or project that received EU funding. The type of result will vary depending on the type of project. Results can be classified as either (a) outputs or (b) outcomes:

Output: a tangible product which is produced by a given project and which may be quantified; outputs can be accessible products like publications, videos, events, blog posts, social media pages or websites.

Outcome: an intangible added value achieved through the achievement of the project objectives and targets. Ordinarily, such added value defies quantification, whether it covers concrete events and actions or more abstract consequences such as increased awareness, increased skills or improved abilities, knowledge and experience gained by participants, partners or other stakeholders involved in the project.
**What do impact and sustainability mean?**

**Impact** is the effect that the activity carried out and its results have on people, practices, organisations and systems. Dissemination and exploitation of results plans can help to maximize the effect of the activities being developed so that they will impact on the immediate participants and partners for years to come. Benefits to other stakeholders should also be considered in order to make a bigger difference and get the most from the project.

**Sustainability** is the capacity of the project to continue and share its results beyond the end of the funding period. Not all parts of the project or results may be sustainable and it is important to view dissemination and exploitation as a progression that extends beyond the duration of the project, and into the future.

**What are the aims and objectives of dissemination and exploitation?**

The first goal of dissemination and exploitation is to spread projects’ results. The second goal is to contribute to the implementation and shaping of national and European policies and programmes. Finally, dissemination of project results is also supposed to raise the quality of future European Solidarity Corps activities by sharing good practices.

Beneficiaries should develop their own way of achieving the aforesaid goals. Developing ideas for dissemination and exploitation is important for every project funded by the European Solidarity Corps. However, the type and intensity of dissemination and exploitation activities should be proportional and tailored to particular needs and the type of project developed. Participating organisations should discuss the aims and objectives of the activities/plan and decide on the best activities and approaches as well as share the tasks among partners taking into account the particular specifics of the project.

While a formal dissemination and exploitation plan is not obligatory, all participating organisations are invited to communicate the learning outcomes reached by the participants. They should also encourage participants to share with others what they have gained from taking part in European Solidarity Corps activities.

Insofar as a dissemination and exploitation plan is developed, it should include measurable and realistic objectives; a detailed timetable and provide a resource planning for the activities to be undertaken. Involving target groups in activities will also help to maximise the use of the project’s results. It is important to set the strategy right from the beginning as this is the main way that will foster communication with the target audiences.

**Project-related communication vs. dissemination and exploitation of project results**

Compared to dissemination and exploitation of project results, communication is a broader concept. It includes information and promotion activities to raise awareness and enhance the visibility of the project’s activities in addition to the dissemination and exploitation of the project results. However, very often it is difficult to make a clear distinction between these areas. For this reason, planning an overall strategy framework covering both fields can be a more efficient way to make the most of the available resources. Dissemination and exploitation of results should form a crucial part of any communication activities taking place during the project’s lifetime.

**Why is it important to share project results? What are the wider benefits?**

Taking the time to develop a comprehensive dissemination and exploitation plan will be advantageous for both the beneficiary and its partners. As well as raising the profile of the organisation, dissemination and exploitation activities can often create new opportunities to extend the project and its results or develop new partnerships for the future. Successful dissemination and exploitation may also lead to external recognition of the work carried out, adding further credit to it. Sharing the results will enable others to benefit from the activities and experiences of the European Solidarity Corps. Project results can serve as examples and inspire others by showing what is possible to achieve under this initiative.

Dissemination and exploitation of project results can help to inform future policy and practice. Dissemination and exploitation of results activities carried out by beneficiaries will support the wider aim of improving the European Union’s policies and programmes. The impact of the European Solidarity Corps is measured not only by the quality of project results but also by the extent to which these results are known and used outside the project partnership. By reaching out to as many potential stakeholders as possible through effective dissemination, this will help to achieve a return on investment.

The dissemination and exploitation of project results also increases awareness of the opportunities offered by the European Solidarity Corps and highlights the European added value of activities supported by this initiative. This can contribute to a positive public perception and encourage wider participation in this new EU initiative. It is fundamental to consider the aims
and objectives of the dissemination and exploitation plan. These should link to the project aims to ensure that the methods and approaches used are appropriate for the European Solidarity Corps project and its results, as well as for the identified target audiences. Dissemination and exploitation goals may be to:

- raise awareness;
- extend the impact;
- engage stakeholders and target groups;
- share solutions and know how;
- influence policy and practice;
- develop new partnerships.

**WHAT CAN BE DISSEMINATED AND EXPLOITED?**

The next step is to identify what to disseminate and exploit. The results of the project may be of diverse nature and consist of both concrete (tangible) results as well as of skills and personal experiences that both project organisers and participants to the activities have acquired (intangible results).

**Tangible results** may include for example:

- videos
- information leaflets
- websites or social media pages
- evaluation reports
- recognition certificates, etc.

In order to disseminate more widely experiences, processes, etc., it is recommended to document them.

**Intangible results** may include for example:

- knowledge and experience gained by participants;
- increased skills or achievements;
- improved cultural awareness;
- better language skills.

Intangible results are often more difficult to measure. The use of interviews, questionnaires, tests, observations or self-assessment mechanisms may help to record this type of result.

**WHO ARE THE TARGET AUDIENCES?**

Identifying target groups, both at different geographical levels (local, regional, national, European) and in the own field of the beneficiary (colleagues, peers, local authorities, other organisations leading the same type of activity, networks, etc.) is essential. Activities and messages have to be tailored appropriately taking into account audiences and target groups, e.g.:

- end-users of the project activities;
- stakeholders, experts or practitioners in the field and other interested parties;
- decision-makers at local, regional, national and European level;
- press and media;
- general public.

The project plans should be flexible enough to allow target groups and other stakeholders to become involved during the different stages of the project. This will help to ensure that the project remains on track in terms of their needs. Their participation will also highlight the potential value of your project as well as help to spread the news to other interested parties throughout Europe.

**HOW TO DISSEMINATE AND EXPLOIT RESULTS?**

In order to reach as many people as possible, it is advisable to translate as many communication materials and project outcomes in as many languages as possible. It is recommended to cover all languages of the partnership as well as English. There are many different ways to disseminate and exploit results. Being creative and thinking of fresh ideas so that your European Solidarity Corps project and results really stand out will be appreciated. Beneficiaries could use:

- the European Solidarity Corps Results Platform (see below);
- project or organisational websites;
- meetings and visits to key stakeholders;
- annual European Solidarity Corps events;
- dedicated discussion opportunities such as information sessions, workshops, (online) seminars, training courses, exhibitions, demonstrations or peer reviews;
- targeted written material such as reports, articles in specialised press, newsletters, press releases, leaflets or brochures;
- audiovisual media and products such as radio, TV, YouTube, Flickr, video clips, podcasts or apps;
- social media;
In terms of exploitation it is important to think about how results can make a difference. Exploitation mechanisms include:

- positive reputational effects for the participating organisations;
- increased awareness on a theme, target or area of work;
- increased financial support by other supporters or donors;
- increased influencing on policy and practice.

**WHEN SHOULD DISSEMINATION AND EXPLOITATION ACTIVITIES BE CARRIED OUT?**

Dissemination and exploitation of results are an integral part of the European Solidarity Corps project throughout its lifetime: from the beneficiary’s initial idea, during the project and even after European funding has ended.

Setting up a timetable of activities together with the partners involved and allocating appropriate budget and resources is necessary. The plan shall:

- agree realistic targets and deadlines with partners to monitor progress;
- align dissemination and exploitation activities with key stages of the project;
- offer sufficient flexibility to respond to the needs of the target group as well as wider developments in policy and practice.

Examples of activities at different stages of the project cycle are:

**BEFORE** the project starts

- drafting the dissemination and exploitation plan;
- definition of the expected impact and deliverables;
- consideration of how and to whom dissemination and exploitation outcomes will be disseminated.

**DURING** the project

- contacting relevant media e.g. at local or regional level;
- conducting regular activities such as information sessions, training, demonstrations, peer reviews;
- assessing the impact on target groups;
- involving other stakeholders in view of transferring results to end users / new areas/policies;
- uploading the project results and an update of the project description on the European Solidarity Corps Project Results Platform[^40].

**AFTER** the project

- continuing further dissemination (as described above);
- developing ideas for future cooperation;
- evaluating achievements and impact;
- contacting relevant media;
- contacting policy-makers if relevant;
- cooperate with the European Commission, the Executive Agency where appropriate by providing useful inputs to its dissemination and exploitation efforts.

**HOW TO ASSESS SUCCESS?**

The impact assessment is an essential part of the process. It evaluates achievements and generates recommendations for future improvements. Indicators could be used to measure progress towards goals. These are signs that help to measure performance. Indicators can be both quantitative relating to numbers and percentages as well as qualitative relating to the quality of the participation and experience. Questionnaires, interviews, observations and assessments could also be used to measure the impact. Defining indicators relating to the different project activities should be foreseen at the start of the project and be part of the overall dissemination plan.

Some examples:

- Numbers of participants involved in discussions and information sessions (workshops, seminars, peer reviews);
- follow-up measures;
- Production and circulation of products;

[^40]: The European Solidarity Corps Project Results Platform will be launched in the course of 2019. The exact address will be posted on the European Solidarity Corps Portal in due time.
- Media coverage (articles in specialised press newsletters, press releases, interviews, etc.);
- Visibility in social media;
- Participation in public events;
- Links with existing networks and transnational partners; transfer of information and know-how;
- Impact on regional, national, EU policy measures;
- Feedback from end-users, other stakeholders, peers, policy-makers.

**Requirements in Terms of Dissemination and Exploitation**

**General Qualitative Requirements**

Applicants for funding under the European Solidarity Corps are required to consider dissemination and exploitation activities at the application stage, during their activity and after the activity has finished. This section gives an overview of the basic requirements laid down for the European Solidarity Corps.

Dissemination and exploitation is one of the award criteria on which the application will be assessed. For all project types, reporting on the activities carried out and to share the results inside and outside participating organisations will be requested at final stage.

**Visibility of the European Union and of the European Solidarity Corps**

Beneficiaries shall always use the European emblem (the 'EU flag') and the name of the European Union spelled out in full in all communication and promotional material. The preferred option to communicate about EU funding through the European Solidarity Corps is to write 'Co-funded by the European Solidarity Corps of the European Union' next to the EU emblem.

Guidelines for beneficiaries, examples of acknowledgement of EU funding and translations of the text are available at: https://ec.europa.eu/youth/solidarity-corps

**Use of the European Solidarity Corps Project Results Platform**

A European Solidarity Corps Project Results Platform is currently under development (and is expected to be launched mid 2019) with the aim of offering a comprehensive overview of projects funded under the initiative and to highlight good practice examples. The platform is envisaged to also make available outputs which are the result of the projects funded.

The European Solidarity Corps Project Results Platform will serve several different purposes:

- Transparency, as it will provide a comprehensive overview of all projects funded under the initiative (including project summaries, funding figures, URL links, etc.);
- Accountability;
- Inspiration.
## ANNEX II — GLOSSARY OF TERMS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Accompanying person</td>
<td>A person who accompanies participants with special needs (i.e. with disabilities) or fewer opportunities in an activity, in order to ensure protection, provide support and extra assistance as well as assist in their effective learning during the experience.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Action</td>
<td>Strand or measure of the European Solidarity Corps.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activity</td>
<td>Set of tasks carried out as part of a project. An activity is defined by the same location, the same time frame and the same scope.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advance Planning Visit (APV)</td>
<td>Planning visit to the host country ahead of a volunteering activity. The purpose of the APV is to build trust, understanding and a solid partnership between organisations and people involved. Young participants with fewer opportunities can be involved in the visit to integrate them fully in the project design.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Applicant</td>
<td>Participating organisation or group of young people that submits an application.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Application) deadline</td>
<td>Final date by when the application form must be submitted to the National or Executive Agency to be considered eligible.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beneficiary</td>
<td>If the project is selected, the applicant becomes beneficiary of a European Solidarity Corps grant. The beneficiary signs a grant agreement with – or is notified of a grant decision by – the National or Executive Agency that has selected the project.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Call for proposals</td>
<td>Invitation published by or on behalf of the Commission to present, within a given deadline, a proposal for Action that corresponds to the objectives pursued and fulfils the required conditions. Calls for proposals are published in the Official Journal of the European Union (C series) and/or at relevant websites of the Commission, National or Executive Agency.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Certificate of participation</td>
<td>In the context of the European Solidarity Corps, a document issued to a person having completed a European Solidarity Corps activity. Such document certifies the attendance of the participant in the activity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clerical Error</td>
<td>A minor mistake or inadvertence unintentionally made in a document that changes its meaning, such as a typographical error or the unintentional addition or omission of a word, phrase, or figure.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Co-financing</td>
<td>The co-financing principle implies that part of the costs of a project supported by the EU must be borne by the beneficiary, or covered through external contributions other than the EU grant.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cross-border activity</td>
<td>Activity taking place in another country than the country where the participant is legally resident.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Established</td>
<td>Relates to an organisation or body fulfilling certain national conditions (registration, statement, publication, etc.) that allow such an organisation or body to be formally recognised by its national authority. In case of a group of young people, the legal residence of its legal representative is considered as having the equivalent effects for the purposes of eligibility to a European Solidarity Corps grant.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Europass</td>
<td>Europass is a portfolio of five different documents and an electronic folder aiming to contain descriptions of the entire holder’s learning achievements, official qualifications, work experience, skills and competences, acquired over time. These documents are: the Europass CV (curriculum vitae), the Diploma Supplement, the Certificate Supplement, the Europass Mobility and the Language Passport. Europass also includes the European Skills Passport, a user-friendly electronic folder that helps the holder to build up a personal, modular inventory of his/her skills and qualifications. The aim of Europass is to facilitate mobility and improve job and lifelong learning prospects in Europe.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Force majeure</td>
<td>An unforeseeable exceptional situation or event beyond the participant’s control and not attributable to error or negligence on his/her part.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>In-country activity</strong></td>
<td>activity taking place in the same country than the one where the participant is legally resident.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Informal learning</strong></td>
<td>learning resulting from daily activities related to work, family or leisure which is not organised or structured in terms of objectives, time or learning support; it may be unintentional from the learner’s perspective.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Key competences</strong></td>
<td>the basic set of knowledge, skills and attitudes which all individuals need for personal fulfilment and development, employability, social inclusion, sustainable lifestyle, successful life in peaceful societies, health-conscious life management and active citizenship, as described in Recommendation 2018/C 189/01 of the European Parliament and of the Council.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Learning outcomes</strong></td>
<td>statements of what a participant knows, understands and is able to do as a result of a learning process.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Non-formal learning</strong></td>
<td>learning which takes place through learning activities where some form of learning support is present, but which is not part of the formal education and training system.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Participant</strong></td>
<td>young person registered in the European Solidarity Corps and involved in a project. Under Solidarity Projects, young people implementing the project are considered as participants.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Participating organisation</strong></td>
<td>any organisation or group of young people involved in the implementation of a European Solidarity Corps project. Depending on their role in the project, participating organisations can be applicants or partners. If the project is granted, applicants become beneficiaries.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Partner organisation</strong></td>
<td>participating organisation involved in the project but not taking the role of an applicant.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>People with fewer opportunities</strong></td>
<td>individuals who need additional support due to the fact that they are at a disadvantage compared to their peers because of various obstacles. A more detailed definition of people with fewer opportunities can be found in Part A of this Guide - section &quot;Social Inclusion&quot;.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Project</strong></td>
<td>a coherent set of activities which are organised in order to achieve defined objectives and results.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Qualification</strong></td>
<td>a formal outcome of an assessment and validation process which is obtained when a competent body determines that an individual achieved learning outcomes to given standards.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Quality Label</strong></td>
<td>process that ensures that the organisations wishing to receive funding under an Action of the European Solidarity Corps respect a set of qualitative standards or pre-requisites defined by the European Commission for that given Action. Depending on the type of organisation and/or the country where the requesting organisation is located, the Quality Label is carried out by the Executive Agency, a National Agency or a SALTO Resource Centre. The Quality Label process is in place for organisations wishing to participate in Volunteering activities, Traineeships and Jobs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Registered Candidate</strong></td>
<td>an individual aged between 17 and 30 years who has registered in the European Solidarity Corps Portal for the purposes of expressing interest in engaging in a solidarity activity but who is not yet participating in a solidarity activity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Solidarity activity</strong></td>
<td>a volunteering activity, a traineeship, a job or a solidarity project carried out in the frame of the European Solidarity Corps.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Union transparency and recognition tools</strong></td>
<td>instruments that help stakeholders to understand, appreciate and, as appropriate, recognise learning outcomes and qualifications throughout the Union.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **Validation of non-formal and informal learning** | process of confirmation by an authorised body that an individual has acquired learning outcomes measured against a relevant standard and consists of the following four distinct phases:  
  - Identification through dialogue of particular experiences of an individual;  
  - Documentation to make visible the individual’s experiences;  
  - Formal assessment of these experiences;  
  - Certification of the results of the assessment which may lead to a partial or full qualification. |
| Youthpass | the European tool to improve the recognition of the learning outcomes of participants of projects supported by the European Solidarity Corps. Youthpass consists of: a) certificates that can be obtained by participants and b) a defined process which supports young people and organisations to reflect about the learning outcomes from a project. Youthpass is also part of a broader European Commission strategy which aims to enhance the recognition of non-formal and informal learning and of youth work in Europe and beyond. |
ANNEX III - CONTACT DETAILS

Volunteering Teams in high priority areas are managed by the European Commission’s Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency (Executive Agency). The Executive Agency is in charge of the complete life-cycle management of centralised projects, from the promotion of the initiative, the analysis of the grant requests, the monitoring of projects on the spot, up to the dissemination of the result of the initiative and individual projects supported in its context.

European Commission - Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA)

European Commission - Directorate General Education & Culture (DG EAC)
https://ec.europa.eu/youth/solidarity-corps