



Erasmus+ Programme (ERASMUS)

Call for proposals

European policy experimentation in higher education
ERASMUS-EDU-2022-POL-EXP

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EUROPEAN EDUCATION AND CULTURE EXECUTIVE AGENCY (EACEA)

EACEA.A – Erasmus+, EU Solidarity Corps
EACEA.A.1 – European Higher Education

CALL FOR PROPOSALS

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0. Introduction

This is a call for proposals for EU action grants in the field of policy experimentation in higher education under the **Erasmus+ Programme**.

The regulatory framework for this EU Funding Programme is set out in:

- Regulation 2018/1046 ([EU Financial Regulation](#))
- the basic act (Erasmus+ Regulation [2021/817](#)¹).

The call is launched in accordance with the Erasmus+ 2022 Work Programme² and will be managed by the **European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA)** ('Agency').

The call covers the following **topics**:

- **ERASMUS-EDU-2022-POL-EXP-EUdegree - Pilot a joint European degree label**
- **ERASMUS-EDU-2022-POL-EXP-EUstatus – Pilot institutionalised EU cooperation instruments to explore the feasibility for a possible European legal status for alliances of higher education institutions**

Each project application under the call must address only one of these topics. Applicants wishing to apply for more than one topic, must submit a separate proposal under each topic.

We invite you to read the **call documentation** carefully, and in particular this Call Document, the Model Grant Agreement, the [EU Funding & Tenders Portal Online Manual](#) and the [EU Grants AGA – Annotated Grant Agreement](#).

These documents provide clarifications and answers to questions you may have when preparing your application:

- the [Call Document](#) outlines the:
 - background, objectives, scope, activities that can be funded and the expected results (sections 1 and 2)
 - timetable and available budget (sections 3 and 4)
 - admissibility and eligibility conditions (including mandatory documents; sections 5 and 6)
 - criteria for financial and operational capacity and exclusion (section 7)
 - evaluation and award procedure (section 8)
 - award criteria (section 9)
 - legal and financial set-up of the Grant Agreements (section 10)
 - how to submit an application (section 11)

¹ Regulation (EU) 2021/817 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20 May 2021 establishing Erasmus+: the Union Programme for education and training, youth and sport and repealing the Regulation 1288/2013 (OJ L189/1).

² Commission Implementing Decision C(2022) 1319 final of 7/03/2022 amending Commission Implementing Decision C(2021)7862 on the financing of "Erasmus+": the Union Programme for Education, Training, Youth and Sport and the adoption of the work programme for 2022.

- the [Online Manual](#) outlines the:
 - procedures to register and submit proposals online via the EU Funding & Tenders Portal ('Portal')
 - recommendations for the preparation of the application
- the [AGA — Annotated Grant Agreement](#) contains:
 - detailed annotations on all the provisions in the Grant Agreement you will have to sign in order to obtain the grant (*including cost eligibility, payment schedule, accessory obligations, etc.*).

You are also encouraged to visit the [Erasmus+ Project Results](#) website to consult the list of projects funded previously.

1. Background

The [European Strategy for universities](#) presented on 18 January 2022 by the European Commission aims at supporting and enabling universities to adapt to changing conditions, to thrive and to contribute to Europe's resilience and recovery. It seeks to take transnational cooperation to a new level of intensity and scope and to develop a genuinely European dimension in the higher education sector, built on shared values. Deeper and more effective transnational cooperation in the higher education sector across all Europe is key to enhance its attractiveness and global competitiveness, and to build a resilient and sustainable European society and economy.

Building on this, the [Council conclusions on a European strategy empowering higher education institutions for the future of Europe](#), adopted on 5th April 2022, invites Member States and the Commission, in line with their respective competences and with due regard for the principle of subsidiarity:

- to support alliances of higher education institutions, such as the 'European Universities', to explore common criteria that could lead to a potential European label for joint programmes. Later on, the possible design and delivery, on a voluntary basis, at national, regional or institutional level, of joint degrees at all levels, based on these co-created European criteria, could be envisaged, in accordance with the existing instruments of the Bologna Process. This process should occur in close cooperation with national authorities, alliances of higher education institutions and stakeholders.
- to support alliances of higher education institutions, such as the 'European Universities', to take steps to overcome the obstacles to a deeper, long-term and flexible transnational cooperation and design institutionalised cooperation instruments, based on a preliminary thorough assessment of their necessity, benefits and feasibility. The aim is to give alliances, on a voluntary basis, the latitude to act together, make common strategic decisions, experiment joint recruitment, design joint curricula or pool resources and human, technical, data, education, research and innovation capacities.

The [Council Recommendation on building bridges for effective European higher education cooperation](#), adopted by the Council on 5 April 2022, on the basis of the Commission proposal from 18 January 2022, **recommends that Member States:**

- Encourage, where appropriate, and make it easier for higher education institutions engaged in transnational cooperation to provide joint programmes and award joint degrees, in accordance with the Bologna instruments. In this

context, and building on the results of the exploratory actions as defined in point 12, examine and facilitate the delivery of a **joint European degree label**. Later on, work could be undertaken towards a possible joint degree at all levels, based on co-created European criteria, to be delivered at national, regional or institutional level, in accordance with the National Qualifications Frameworks.

- open up the opportunity for higher education institutions to explore, in a co-creation process, the necessity, benefits, risks and feasibility of setting up institutionalised cooperation instruments, such as a **possible legal status for alliances of higher education institutions**, for example 'European Universities', with the objective of facilitating deeper cooperation by sharing human, technical, data, education, research and innovation capacities, where appropriate. Allow them to experiment with the diverse possibilities of deeper cooperation as well as to test, on a voluntary basis, existing European instruments, such as the European grouping of territorial cooperation (EGTC)³ or the European Economic Interest Grouping (EEIG)⁴.

And it invites the Commission:

- to examine the options and necessary steps - in close cooperation with Member States, higher education institutions, student organisations and stakeholders - towards a possible joint degree based on a common set of co-created European criteria. This degree, to be delivered on a voluntary basis at national, regional or institutional level, could attest learning outcomes achieved as part of transnational cooperation 'combining studies in several EU countries', offered for example within 'European Universities'. It should be easy to issue, store, share, verify and authenticate, and recognised across the EU. It will build on and boost the implementation of the Bologna instruments in the Member States.
 - a) Pilot in 2022 the development and implementation under Erasmus+ of European criteria for the award of a **joint European degree label**. Such a label would be issued as a complementary certificate to the qualifications obtained by students graduating from joint programmes delivered in the context of transnational cooperation between several higher education institutions.
 - b) Based on the results of this preparatory work, report to the Council for further decision at each step towards a possible joint degree based on co-created European criteria, in accordance with the instruments of the Bologna Process.
- to support the Member States and higher education institutions in testing the use of existing European instruments from 2022 onwards as a step on the way to facilitating deeper, long-term and flexible transnational cooperation and in examining the need for and feasibility of institutionalised cooperation instruments, such as a **possible legal status for alliances of higher education institutions**. To be used on a voluntary basis, such instruments

³ Regulation (EC) No 1082/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 5 July 2006 on a European grouping of territorial cooperation (EGTC), OJ L 210, 31.7.2006, p. 19.

⁴ Council Regulation (EEC) No 2137/85 of 25 July 1985 on the European Economic Interest Grouping (EEIG), OJ L 199, 31.7.1985, p. 1.

should facilitate the sharing of capacities and data and the exchange of staff, where appropriate, and the implementation of joint programmes, with the aim of awarding joint degrees at the level of alliances, including a joint degree based on co-created European criteria.

This Erasmus+ European policy experimentation in higher education is an answer to this invitation, with the aim to further support all types of alliances of higher education institutions (HEI) in their transnational cooperation activities based on high quality, excellence, impact, inclusiveness and geographical balance. Taken together, these flagships will contribute to shaping a true European identity, bringing transnational cooperation to a higher level and fostering a strong sense of European belonging.

2. Objectives — Themes and priorities — Activities that can be funded — Expected impact

European policy experimentations are transnational cooperation projects that involve testing the relevance, effectiveness, potential impact and scalability of activities through field trials in different countries. By combining strategic leadership, methodological soundness and a strong European dimension, they enable mutual learning and support evidence-based policy at European level.

Objectives

The general objective of this call for proposals is to test and explore deeper transnational cooperation instruments to further develop a genuinely European dimension in the higher education sector, built on shared values, as mentioned in the European strategy for universities presented by the Commission on 18 January 2022 and as confirmed in the Council Conclusions on a European strategy empowering higher education institutions for the future of Europe and the Council recommendation on building bridges for effective European higher education cooperation, adopted on 5 April 2022. To address this objective, the call is composed of two separate topics with specific objectives:

Topic 1: Pilot a joint European degree label

The specific objective of Topic 1 is to allow alliances of higher education institutions and national authorities to examine, test and facilitate the delivery of a joint European degree label, based on a common set of co-created European criteria⁵ (see Call Annex). The aim is to encourage, where appropriate, and make it easier for higher education institutions engaged in transnational cooperation, to provide joint programmes and award joint degrees, in accordance with the Bologna instruments, as well as to take further steps to recognise the value of innovative transnational learning experiences and to increase the visibility, attractiveness and reputation, both in Europe and beyond, of joint programmes provided by alliances of European higher education institutions.

This includes:

- Exploring and testing the relevance of these criteria for establishing a label which acknowledges the European and transnational experiences in a joint transnational programme leading to a higher education qualification at all levels (European Qualification Frameworks – EQF – (level 6, 7, 8) and the feasibility of their use;

⁵ This common set of co-created European criteria are detailed in Call Annex. They have been co-created with Member States and stakeholders in Q1-Q2 2022.

- Exploring and recommending possible optimisation of the proposed set of criteria in view of maximizing the attractiveness and potential impact of such a joint European degree label;
- Elaborating proposals, in cooperation with the relevant national, regional and/or institutional authorities, aiming to facilitate the development and implementation of joint degrees in Europe. This would include proposing an approach that could be commonly agreed on for the delivery of joint degrees based on co-created European criteria by European countries at all education levels. These proposals should take into account the existing instruments developed by the Bologna Process, such as e.g. the European approach for quality assurance of joint programmes, and reflect on the potential need for updating these tools.

The testing is expected to take place on a significant sample of existing joint programmes implemented by alliances and other consortia of higher education institutions (such as European Universities alliances, Erasmus Mundus consortia, Marie Skłodowska-Curie consortia and other types of transnational cooperation partnerships), in close cooperation with relevant national, regional and/or higher education institutions authorities.

Topic 2: Pilot institutionalised EU cooperation instruments to explore the feasibility for a possible European legal status for alliances of higher education institutions

The specific objective of Topic 2 is to examine, test and facilitate the use of existing institutionalised cooperation instruments at European level, such as a possible legal status for alliances of higher education institutions - for example 'European Universities', with the objective of facilitating deeper, long-term and flexible transnational cooperation. The aim is to give alliances, on a voluntary basis, the latitude to act together, make common strategic decisions, experiment joint recruitment, design joint curricula or pool resources and human, technical, data, education, research and innovation capacities.

This includes:

- Exploring at the level of the alliance how an existing institutionalised cooperation EU instrument, such as a possible legal status for alliances of higher education institutions at European level can provide solutions to the obstacles encountered with regard to the deeper cooperation that the alliances are pursuing. The objective is to test the implementation of existing EU instruments - such as the European grouping of territorial cooperation (EGTC) or the European Economic Interest Grouping (EEIG) - based on a needs assessment of the alliance and taking into account where relevant the regulatory regional/national frameworks to which the individual higher education institutions part of the alliance need to adhere to;
- Where appropriate, elaborating a proposal for improvement of the existing institutionalised cooperation EU instruments or key elements for the design of a new EU level instrument.

Themes and priorities (scope)

The priority for this European policy experimentation call is to support partnerships of higher education institutions and relevant national, regional and/or HEI authorities to pilot:

- a joint European degree label for joint transnational higher education programmes responding to a number of co-created European criteria (Topic 1),

and/or⁶

- institutionalised cooperation EU instruments to explore the feasibility of establishing a possible legal status for alliances of higher education institutions at European level - such as 'European Universities' or any other type of alliance (Topic 2).

Activities that can be funded (scope)

Topic 1: Pilot a joint European degree label

The pilot activities should examine, test and facilitate the delivery of a joint European degree label, based on a common set of co-created European criteria, by applying it to existing joint programmes⁷ at all levels (European Qualification Frameworks – EQF – (level 6, 7, 8) by several higher education institutions from multiple countries. The proposed co-created European criteria to be tested are detailed in the Call Annex.

Eligible activities are, for example, screening the existing joint programmes for compliance with the criteria, identification of eligible programmes, contribution to the creation of the template of the European joint degree label (physical and/or digital), awarding the first set of joint European degree label to students.

Beneficiaries will conduct a joint reflection, in cooperation with the relevant national regional and/or institutional authorities (e.g. responsible for higher education, accreditation, evaluation and recognition), as well as stakeholders (e.g. students, employers) on the optimisation of the proposed set of criteria, in order to maximize the attractiveness and potential impact of the joint European degree label. Eligible activities are, for example, meetings, consultations (online or physical), surveys, focus group discussions.

Beneficiaries will also conduct a joint reflection - in cooperation with the relevant national regional and/or institutional authorities (e.g. responsible for higher education, accreditation, evaluation and recognition) as well as stakeholders (e.g. students, employers) - on possible scenarios for the delivery of a joint degree at all levels, based on these co-created European criteria, to be awarded at national, regional or HEI level, in accordance with the National Qualifications Frameworks. Beneficiaries will also develop recommendations for modalities (for example, the best ways to check criteria of a potential joint degree based on European criteria, and which organisation should perform these checks) and necessary prerequisites (for example, inclusion in national qualifications frameworks). The outcomes of this joint reflection will contribute to the possible design and delivery, on a voluntary basis, at national, regional or HEI level, of joint degrees at all levels, based on these co-created European criteria, in accordance with the existing instruments of the Bologna Process. Eligible activities are, for example, meetings, consultations (online or physical), surveys, focus group discussions.

To ensure the visibility of the joint programmes identified as compliant with the set of co-created pilot European criteria (see Call Annex), the activities will include a robust communication and dissemination plan, which will include but will not be limited to:

- Upon completion of the joint degree programme(s) complying with the European

⁶ In case an applicant wishes to apply for both topics, a proposal must be submitted for each topic separately.

⁷ These joint programmes must be managed by HEIs which are among the applicants in the proposal

criteria, issue and deliver a joint European degree label certificate⁸ to the involved students;

- Disseminating to a large audience, within and beyond joint programmes' community, information about the joint programmes complying with the set of pilot European criteria;
- Organising a final event and producing dissemination material targeting a wide audience and presenting lessons learned from the joint reflections conducted during the pilot, with key proposals towards the possible design and delivery, on a voluntary basis, at national, regional or HEI level, of joint degrees at all levels, based on the co-created European criteria.

For this topic, partnerships between several higher education institutions and/or alliances/consortia, bringing diversity and combinations in terms of modes of cooperation (such as European Universities alliances, Erasmus Mundus consortia, Marie Skłodowska-Curie consortia and other types of transnational alliances of higher education institutions), wide geographical representativeness and involving relevant national, regional and/or institutional authorities, are highly recommended.

Topic 2: Pilot institutionalised EU cooperation instruments to explore the feasibility for a possible European legal status for alliances of higher education institutions

The pilot activities should examine, test and facilitate the use, of existing institutionalised cooperation instruments at European level providing a possible legal status for HEI alliances, in close cooperation where appropriate with relevant national, regional and/or HEI authorities. This concerns for example the European Grouping of Territorial Cooperation (EGTC), the European Economic Interest Grouping (EEIG), or European Company (also known as Societas Europea). The aim is to give alliances, on a voluntary basis, the latitude to act together, make common strategic decisions, experiment joint recruitment, design joint curricula or pool resources and human, technical, data, education, research and innovation capacities.

Beneficiaries will analyse and explore how the existing institutionalised cooperation instruments available at European level can provide solutions to the obstacles encountered with regard to the deeper cooperation that the alliances are pursuing, based on a needs assessment of the alliance. It is highly recommended that this analysis is done in close cooperation with the public authorities at local, regional, and/or national level involved in the setting up of the institutionalised cooperation instruments at European level.

Based on this analysis, the beneficiaries' aim will be to significantly advance with the implementation of the chosen existing institutionalised cooperation instrument available at European level, i.e. through significant advances with the set-up of a legal status of their alliance of higher education institutions at European level. A realistic plan should underpin the implementation and entry into force of the chosen institutionalised cooperation instrument at European level.

Based upon the piloting, the pilot activities should near the end of the project also include where appropriate a proposal for improvement of the existing institutionalised cooperation EU instruments or key elements for the design of a new EU level instrument, taking into account the specific needs of the alliance and, where relevant, the regulatory regional/national frameworks to which the individual higher education institutions part of the alliance need to adhere to.

⁸ The template for the pilot will be co-developed by the participants in the pilot, together with the European Commission and in close cooperation with Member States.

Beneficiaries will carry out the promotion of project results near the end of the project life span. Activities will include a communication and dissemination plan, which will include but will not be limited to:

- Disseminating to a large audience, information about the chosen and tested institutionalised cooperation instrument, such as a legal status;
- Organising a final event and producing dissemination material targeting a wide audience and presenting lessons learned from the pilot with key proposals for possible improvements.

For this pilot, partnerships between an alliance of higher education institutions and public authorities involved in the setting up of an institutionalised cooperation EU instrument, such as a possible legal status for alliances of higher education institutions at European level are highly recommended. For example, where appropriate, national authorities in charge of the EGTC Regulation, as well as the higher education ministry, could join the pilot, to improve the applicability and functioning of the EGTC Regulation on their territory when it comes to higher education cooperation.

Expected impact

Topic 1: Pilot a joint European degree label

The proposed pilot projects are expected to lead to significant results and impacts in terms of:

- Improved knowledge and evidence base in the field of design and implementation of transnational joint degree programmes with potentially high systemic impact in the higher education ecosystem;
- Demonstrated European added value by identifying and sharing good practices and lessons on how to develop high quality and recognised joint degree programmes at all levels, and in all fields and disciplines, compliant with a common set of co-created European criteria;
- Ensured transferability of conclusions by testing the applicability of a common approach for the delivery of transnational joint degree programmes in different national contexts;
- Ensured scalability by involving a wide range of actors, including those facing barriers in the delivery of joint degree programmes, and by proposing recommendations for the possible design and delivery, on a voluntary basis, at national, regional or HEI level, of joint degrees at all levels, based on the co-created European criteria.

Topic 2: Pilot institutionalised EU cooperation instruments to explore the feasibility for a possible European legal status for alliances of higher education institutions

The proposed pilot projects could lead to significant results and impacts in terms of:

- Improved knowledge and evidence base in the field of institutionalised cooperation EU instruments, such as a possible legal status for alliances of higher education institutions at European level, such as 'European Universities', with potentially high systemic impact in the higher education ecosystem;

- Demonstrated European added value by identifying and sharing good practices and lessons on how to implement institutionalised cooperation EU instruments, such as a possible legal status for alliances of higher education institutions from multiple countries;
- Ensured scalability by proposing recommendations for improvement of the existing institutionalised cooperation EU instruments available or key elements for the design of a new institutionalised cooperation instrument such as a possible legal status for alliances of higher education institutions at European level and involving where relevant a wide range of actors.

3. Available budget

The available call budget is **EUR 2 000 000**.

Specific budget information per topic can be found in the table below.

Topic	Topic indicative budget
1 - Pilot a joint European degree label	EUR 1 000 000
2 - Pilot institutionalised EU cooperation instruments to explore the feasibility for a possible European legal status for alliances of higher education institutions	EUR 1 000 000

We reserve the right not to award all available funds or to redistribute them between the call topics, depending on the proposals received and the results of the evaluation.

4. Timetable and deadlines

Timetable and deadlines (indicative)	
Call opening:	15 June 2022
<u>Deadline for submission:</u>	<u>6 October 2022 – 17:00:00 CET</u> <u>(Brussels)</u>
Evaluation:	October 2022 - January 2023
Information on evaluation results:	Mid - January 2023
GA signature:	February - March 2023

5. Admissibility and documents

Proposals must be submitted before the **call deadline** (see *timetable section 4*).

Proposals must be submitted **electronically** via the Funding & Tenders Portal Electronic Submission System (accessible via the Topic page in the [Search Funding & Tenders](#) section. Paper submissions are NOT possible.

Proposals (including annexes and supporting documents) must be submitted using the forms provided inside the Submission System (⚠ NOT the documents available on the Topic page — they are only for information).

Proposals must be **complete** and contain all the requested information and all required annexes and supporting documents:

- Application Form Part A — contains administrative information about the participants (future coordinator, beneficiaries and affiliated entities) and the summarised budget for the project (*to be filled in directly online*).
- Application Form Part B — contains the technical description of the project (*to be downloaded from the Portal Submission System, completed and then assembled and re-uploaded*).
- Part C (*to be filled in directly online*) containing additional project data: not applicable
- **mandatory annexes and supporting documents** (*to be uploaded*):
 - Detailed budget table/calculator (*template available in the Submission System*): not applicable
 - CVs of core project team: not applicable
 - Activity reports of last year: not applicable
 - List of previous projects: not applicable
 - Other annexes: not applicable.

At proposal submission, you will have to confirm that you have the **mandate to act** for all applicants. Moreover, you will have to confirm that the information in the application is correct and complete and that the participants comply with the conditions for receiving EU funding (especially eligibility, financial and operational capacity, exclusion, etc.). Before signing the grant, each beneficiary and affiliated entity will have to confirm this again by signing a declaration of honour (DoH). Proposals without full support will be rejected.

Your application must be **readable, accessible and printable**.

Proposals are limited to maximum **40 pages** (Part B). Evaluators will not consider any additional pages.

You may be asked at a later stage for further documents (*for legal entity validation, financial capacity check, bank account validation, etc.*).

 For more information about the submission process (including IT aspects), consult the [Online Manual](#).

6. Eligibility

Eligible participants (eligible countries)

In order to be eligible, the applicants (beneficiaries and affiliated entities) must:

- be legal entities (public or private bodies)
- be established in one of the eligible countries, i.e. EU Member States and third countries associated to the Erasmus+ programme:
 - EU Member States (including overseas countries and territories (OCTs))
 - Non-EU countries: third countries associated to the Erasmus+ Programme (including EEA countries), countries which are in ongoing negotiations for an association agreement to the Erasmus+ programme and where that agreement enters into force before the

grant signature ([list of participating countries](#))

- The applicants (beneficiaries and affiliated entities if any) must be higher education institutions holding a valid Erasmus Charter for Higher Education (ECHE), and/or public or private organisations active in the fields of education and training or in other fields relevant to this policy experimentation call.
- Only Higher education institutions (HEIs) holding a valid Erasmus Charter for Higher Education (ECHE) can be coordinators of the project.

Beneficiaries and affiliated entities must register in the [Participant Register](#) — before submitting the proposal — and will have to be validated by the Central Validation Service (REA Validation). For the validation, they will be requested to upload documents showing legal status and origin.

Other entities may participate in other consortium roles, such as associated partners, subcontractors, third parties giving in-kind contributions, etc. (*see section 13*).


Specific cases

Natural persons — Natural persons are NOT eligible (with the exception of self-employed persons, i.e. sole traders, where the company does not have legal personality separate from that of the natural person).

International organisations — International organisations are not eligible. The rules on eligible countries do not apply to them.

Entities without legal personality — Entities which do not have legal personality under their national law may exceptionally participate, provided that their representatives have the capacity to undertake legal obligations on their behalf, and offer guarantees for the protection of the EU financial interests equivalent to that offered by legal persons⁹.

EU bodies — EU bodies (with the exception of the European Commission Joint Research Centre) can NOT be part of the consortium.

Associations and interest groupings — Entities composed of members may participate as 'sole beneficiaries' or 'beneficiaries without legal personality'¹⁰.  Please note that if the action will be implemented by the members, they should also participate (either as beneficiaries or as affiliated entities, otherwise their costs will NOT be eligible).

Countries currently negotiating association agreements — Beneficiaries from countries with ongoing negotiations (*see list above*) may participate in the call and can sign grants if the negotiations are concluded before grant signature (with retroactive effect, if provided in the agreement).

EU restrictive measures — Special rules apply for certain entities (*e.g. entities subject to [EU restrictive measures](#) under Article 29 of the Treaty on the European Union (TEU) and Article 215 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the EU (TFEU)*¹¹ and entities covered by Commission Guidelines No [2013/C 205/05](#)¹²). Such entities are not eligible

⁹ See Article 197(2)(c) EU Financial Regulation [2018/1046](#).

¹⁰ For the definitions, see Articles 187(2) and 197(2)(c) EU Financial Regulation [2018/1046](#).

¹¹ Please note that the EU Official Journal contains the official list and, in case of conflict, its content prevails over that of the [EU Sanctions Map](#).

¹² Commission guidelines No [2013/C 205/05](#) on the eligibility of Israeli entities and their activities in the territories occupied by Israel since June 1967 for grants, prizes and financial instruments funded by the EU from 2014 onwards (OJEU C 205 of 19.07.2013, pp. 9-11).

to participate in any capacity, including as beneficiaries, affiliated entities, associated partners, subcontractors or recipients of financial support to third parties (if any).

 For more information, see [Rules for Legal Entity Validation, LEAR Appointment and Financial Capacity Assessment](#).

Consortium composition

Proposals must be submitted by a consortium of at least 2 applicants (beneficiaries; not affiliated entities), which complies with the following conditions:

- Minimum 2 eligible higher education institutions from 2 different eligible countries.

Eligible activities

Eligible activities are the ones set out in section 2 above.

Projects should take into account the results of projects supported by other EU funding programmes. The complementarities must be described in the project proposals (Part B of the Application Form).

Projects must comply with EU policy interests and priorities (*such as environment, social, security, industrial and trade policy, etc.*).

Geographic location (target countries)

Proposals must relate to activities taking place in the eligible countries (*see above*).

Duration

Projects should normally last 12 months (extensions are possible, if duly justified and through an amendment).

7. Financial and operational capacity and exclusion

Financial capacity

Applicants must have **stable and sufficient resources** to successfully implement the projects and contribute their share. Organisations participating in several projects must have sufficient capacity to implement all these projects.

The financial capacity check will be carried out on the basis of the documents you will be requested to upload in the [Participant Register](#) during grant preparation (*e.g. profit and loss account and balance sheet, business plan, audit report produced by an approved external auditor, certifying the accounts for the last closed financial year, etc.*). The analysis will be based on neutral financial indicators, but will also take into account other aspects, such as dependency on EU funding and deficit and revenue in previous years.

The check will normally be done for all beneficiaries, except:

- public bodies (entities established as public body under national law, including local, regional or national authorities) or international organisations
- if the individual requested grant amount is not more than EUR 60 000.

If needed, it may also be done for affiliated entities.

If we consider that your financial capacity is not satisfactory, we may require:

- further information
 - an enhanced financial responsibility regime, i.e. joint and several responsibility for all beneficiaries or joint and several liability of affiliated entities (*see below, section 10*)
 - prefinancing paid in instalments
 - (one or more) prefinancing guarantees (*see below, section 10*)
- or
- propose no prefinancing
 - request that you are replaced or, if needed, reject the entire proposal.

 For more information, see [Rules for Legal Entity Validation, LEAR Appointment and Financial Capacity Assessment](#).

Operational capacity

Applicants must have the **know-how, qualifications** and **resources** to successfully implement the projects and contribute their share (including sufficient experience in projects of comparable size and nature).

This capacity will be assessed together with the 'Quality' award criterion, on the basis of the competence and experience of the applicants and their project teams, including operational resources (human, technical and other) or, exceptionally, the measures proposed to obtain it by the time the task implementation starts.

If the evaluation of the award criterion is positive, the applicants are considered to have sufficient operational capacity.

Applicants will have to show their operational capacity via the following information:

- profiles (qualifications and experience) of the staff responsible for managing and implementing the project
- description of the consortium participants

Additional supporting documents may be requested, if needed to confirm the operational capacity of any applicant.

Public bodies, Member State organisations and international organisations are exempted from the operational capacity check.

Exclusion

Applicants which are subject to an **EU exclusion decision** or in one of the following **exclusion situations** that bar them from receiving EU funding can NOT participate¹³:

- bankruptcy, winding up, affairs administered by the courts, arrangement with creditors, suspended business activities or other similar procedures (including procedures for persons with unlimited liability for the applicant's debts)
- in breach of social security or tax obligations (including if done by persons with unlimited liability for the applicant's debts)

¹³ See Articles 136 and 141 of EU Financial Regulation [2018/1046](#).

- guilty of grave professional misconduct¹⁴ (including if done by persons having powers of representation, decision-making or control, beneficial owners or persons who are essential for the award/implementation of the grant)
- committed fraud, corruption, links to a criminal organisation, money laundering, terrorism-related crimes (including terrorism financing), child labour or human trafficking (including if done by persons having powers of representation, decision-making or control, beneficial owners or persons who are essential for the award/implementation of the grant)
- shown significant deficiencies in complying with main obligations under an EU procurement contract, grant agreement, prize, expert contract, or similar (including if done by persons having powers of representation, decision making or control, beneficial owners or persons who are essential for the award/implementation of the grant)
- guilty of irregularities within the meaning of Article 1(2) of Regulation No [2988/95](#) (including if done by persons having powers of representation, decision-making or control, beneficial owners or persons who are essential for the award/implementation of the grant)
- created under a different jurisdiction with the intent to circumvent fiscal, social or other legal obligations in the country of origin or created another entity with this purpose (including if done by persons having powers of representation, decision-making or control, beneficial owners or persons who are essential for the award/implementation of the grant).

Applicants will also be refused if it turns out that¹⁵:

- during the award procedure they misrepresented information required as a condition for participating or failed to supply that information
- they were previously involved in the preparation of the call and this entails a distortion of competition that cannot be remedied otherwise (conflict of interest).

8. Evaluation and award procedure

Proposals will have to follow the **standard submission and evaluation procedure** (one-stage submission + one-step evaluation).

An **evaluation committee** (assisted by independent outside experts) will assess all applications. Proposals will first be checked for formal requirements (admissibility, and eligibility, *see sections 5 and 6*). Proposals found admissible and eligible will be evaluated (for each topic) against the operational capacity and award criteria (*see sections 7 and 9*) and then ranked according to their scores.

For proposals with the same score (within a topic or budget envelope) a **priority order** will be determined according to the following approach:


Successively for every group of *ex aequo* proposals, starting with the highest scored group, and continuing in descending order:

¹⁴ Professional misconduct includes: violation of ethical standards of the profession, wrongful conduct with impact on professional credibility, false declarations/misrepresentation of information, participation in a cartel or other agreement distorting competition, violation of IPR, attempting to influence decision-making processes or obtain confidential information from public authorities to gain advantage.

¹⁵ See Article 141 EU Financial Regulation [2018/1046](#).

- 1) Projects focusing on a theme that is not otherwise covered by higher ranked projects will be considered to have the highest priority.
- 2) The ex aequo proposals within the same topic will be prioritised according to the scores they have been awarded for the award criterion 'Relevance'. When these scores are equal, priority will be based on their scores for the criterion 'Quality'. When these scores are equal, priority will be based on their scores for the criterion 'Impact'.
- 3) If this does not allow to determine the priority, a further prioritisation can be done by considering the overall project portfolio and the creation of positive synergies between projects, or other factors related to the objectives of the call. These factors will be documented in the panel report.
- 4) After that, the remainder of the available call budget will be used to fund projects across the different topics in order to ensure a balanced spread of the geographical and thematic coverage and while respecting to the maximum possible extent the order of merit based on the evaluation of the award criteria.

All proposals will be informed about the evaluation result (**evaluation result letter**). Successful proposals will be invited for grant preparation; the other ones will be put on the reserve list or rejected.

 No commitment for funding — Invitation to grant preparation does NOT constitute a formal commitment for funding. We will still need to make various legal checks before grant award: *legal entity validation, financial capacity, exclusion check, etc.*

Grant preparation will involve a dialogue in order to fine-tune technical or financial aspects of the project and may require extra information from your side. It may also include adjustments to the proposal to address recommendations of the evaluation committee or other concerns. Compliance will be a pre-condition for signing the grant.

If you believe that the evaluation procedure was flawed, you can submit a **complaint** (following the deadlines and procedures set out in the evaluation result letter). Please note that notifications which have not been opened within 10 days after sending are considered to have been accessed and that deadlines will be counted from opening/access (see also [Funding & Tenders Portal Terms and Conditions](#)). Please also be aware that for complaints submitted electronically, there may be character limitations.

9. Award criteria

TOPIC 1 - Pilot a joint European degree label	
1. Relevance (maximum 25 points)	
Level of ambition of the proposal	<p>Extent to which the pilot proposal</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • contributes to the EU strategic and legislative context, as highlighted in European strategy for universities and related Council Recommendation; • matches the themes, priorities and objectives of topic 1 of the call; • builds upon existing cooperation between the higher education institutions in the provision of joint educational activities to further strengthen this dimension through piloting the joint European degree label; • offers to test the criteria of the joint European degree label in a significant number of existing joint programmes and ensures a good coverage in term of levels, fields,

	disciplines and geographical scope.
European added value	<p>Extent to which the proposal demonstrates European added value</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • through piloting a joint European degree label, in terms of its potential benefits for students, employers and higher education ecosystems; • through sharing best practices with other higher education institutions in Europe for implementing transnational joint degree programmes.
2. Quality (maximum 50 points)	
2.1. Project design and implementation <i>maximum 25 points</i>	<p>Extent to which the proposal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates how existing joint programmes included in the pilot activities are matching and/or will match the criteria of a joint European degree label; • Is ready for implementation: extent to which the proposal demonstrates the capacity to pilot a joint European degree label during the project implementation period; • Provides clarity and demonstrates feasibility of the work plan within the proposed time frame, explicitly describing the expected progress, outputs and outcomes associated to concrete activities and tasks; • Demonstrates the clarity of the methodology for implementing the project (i.e. concept and methodology, management, procedures, timetable, risks and risk management, monitoring and evaluation); • Ensures cost effectiveness (i.e. sufficient/appropriate budget and resources for proper implementation; best value for money).
2.2 Partnership and cooperation arrangements <i>maximum 25 points</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Level of involvement of the relevant national, regional and/or HEI authorities active in the fields of education and training, notably for the accreditation, evaluation, quality assurance, delivery and recognition of joint programmes; • The extent to which the consortium includes a solid representation of higher education institutions from different EU Member States and ensures geographical balance; • Quality of the consortium and project teams, including a distribution of responsibilities and tasks that is clear and appropriate; • Appropriate procedures and problem-solving mechanisms for cooperating within the project teams.
3. Impact (maximum 25 points)	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Robust communication strategy for ensuring visibility of the partners' and students participation in the pilot activities and of the joint degree programmes involved; • Clear plan for dissemination of results and sharing of good practices, openly accessible to a wide range of stakeholders during and after the EU funding period; <p>Sustainability of results beyond EU funding period: elaborated strategy for the sustainability of the joint</p>

	programmes matching the criteria of the joint European degree label.
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TOPIC 2 - Pilot institutionalised EU cooperation instruments to explore the feasibility for a possible European legal status for alliances of higher education institutions

1. Relevance (*maximum 25 points*)

Level of ambition and innovative approach of the proposal	<p>Extent to which the proposal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • contributes to the EU strategic and legislative context, as highlighted in the European strategy for universities and related Council Recommendation on building bridges for effective European higher education cooperation; • matches the themes, priorities and objectives of topic 2 of the call; • builds upon the existing common vision and shared values within the alliance of higher education institutions, for pursuing a high level of systemic, structural and sustainable institutional cooperation at all levels of the involved institutions, across all their missions, and across different areas of activity, building on their complementary strengths, to pilot institutionalised cooperation EU instruments to establish a legal status for alliances of higher education institutions at European level.
European added value	<p>Extent to which the proposal demonstrates European added value</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • through piloting institutionalised cooperation EU instruments to establish a legal status for alliances of higher education institutions at European level, in particular in terms of its potential benefits for the involved higher education institutions and involved stakeholders; • through sharing best practices with other higher education institutions in Europe.

2. Quality (*maximum 50 points*)

<p>2.1. Project design and implementation</p> <p><i>maximum 25 points</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extent to which the proposal demonstrates consistency between the existing joint long-term strategy of the alliance of higher education institutions and the proposed institutionalised cooperation EU instrument, such as a legal status for alliances of higher education institutions at European level; • Readiness for implementation: extent to which the proposal demonstrates significant advances towards the possible implementation of a legal status; • Clarity and feasibility of the work plan within the proposed time frame, explicitly describing the expected progress, outputs and outcomes associated to concrete activities contributing to the implementation of a institutionalised cooperation EU instrument such as a legal status for alliances of higher education institutions at European level; • Clarity of the methodology for implementing the project (i.e. concept and methodology, management, procedures,
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	<p>timetable, risks and risk management, monitoring and evaluation);</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cost effectiveness (i.e. sufficient/appropriate budget for proper implementation; best value for money).
<p>2.2 Partnership and cooperation arrangements</p> <p><i>maximum 25 points</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proven prior institutionalised cooperation between the higher education institutions involved, as demonstrated in an existing joint long-term strategy of the alliance of higher education institutions; • Level of involvement of the relevant national, regional and/or HEI authorities involved in the setting up of institutionalised cooperation EU instrument such as a legal status for alliances of higher education institutions at European level; • The extent to which the consortium includes a solid representation of higher education institutions from different EU Member States and ensures geographical balance; • Quality of the consortium and project teams, including a distribution of responsibilities and tasks that is clear and appropriate; • Appropriate procedures and problem-solving mechanisms for cooperating within the project teams.
3.Impact (<i>maximum 25 points</i>)	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear plan for dissemination of results and sharing of good practices, openly accessible to a wide range of stakeholders during and after the EU funding period; • Sustainability of results after EU funding ends: strategy for the sustainability of the institutionalised cooperation EU instrument such as a legal status for alliances of higher education institutions at European level;

Award criteria		Minimum pass score	Maximum score
Relevance		13	25
Quality	Project design and implementation	13	25
	Partnership and cooperation arrangements	13	25
Impact		13	25
Overall (pass) scores		70	100

Maximum points: 100 points.

Individual thresholds per criterion: 13/25 points.

Overall threshold: 70 points.

Proposals that pass the individual thresholds AND the overall threshold will be considered for funding – within the limits of the available call budget. Other proposals will be rejected.

10. Legal and financial set-up of the Grant Agreements

If you pass evaluation, your project will be invited for grant preparation, where you will be asked to prepare the Grant Agreement together with the EU Project Officer.

This Grant Agreement will set the framework for your grant and its terms and conditions, in particular concerning deliverables, reporting and payments.

The Model Grant Agreement that will be used (and all other relevant templates and guidance documents) can be found on [Portal Reference Documents](#).

Starting date and project duration

The project starting date and duration will be fixed in the Grant Agreement (*Data Sheet, point 1*). Normally the starting date will be after grant signature. Retroactive application can be granted exceptionally for duly justified reasons but never earlier than the proposal submission date.

Project duration: projects should normally last 12 months (extensions are possible, if duly justified and through an amendment).

Milestones and deliverables

The milestones and deliverables for each project will be managed through the Portal Grant Management System and will be reflected in Annex 1 of the Grant Agreement. Applicants need to envisage submitting regular deliverables to allow proper project monitoring and timely information about the pilot activities.

Form of grant, funding rate and maximum grant amount

The grant parameters (*maximum grant amount, funding rate, total eligible costs, etc.*) will be fixed in the Grant Agreement (*Data Sheet, point 3 and art 5*). Project budget (maximum grant amount): 200 000 EUR per project. The grant awarded may be lower than the amount requested.

The grant will be a budget-based mixed actual cost grant (actual costs, with unit cost and flat-rate elements). This means that it will reimburse ONLY certain types of costs (eligible costs) and costs that were *actually* incurred for your project (NOT the *budgeted* costs). For unit costs and flat-rates, you can charge the amounts calculated as explained in the Grant Agreement (*see art 6 and Annex 2 and 2a*).

The costs will be reimbursed at the funding rate fixed in the Grant Agreement (80%).

Grants may NOT produce a profit (i.e. surplus of revenues + EU grant over costs). For-profit organisations must declare their revenues and, if there is a profit, we will deduct it from the final grant amount (*see art 22.3*).

Moreover, please be aware that the final grant amount may be reduced in case of non-compliance with the Grant Agreement (*e.g. improper implementation, breach of obligations, etc.*).

Budget categories and cost eligibility rules

The budget categories and cost eligibility rules are fixed in the Grant Agreement (*Data Sheet, point 3, art 6 and Annex 2*).

Budget categories for this call:

- A. Personnel costs
 - A.1 Employees, A.2 Natural persons under direct contract, A.3 Seconded persons
 - A.5 Volunteers
- B. Subcontracting costs
- C. Purchase costs
 - C.1 Travel and subsistence
 - C.2 Equipment
 - C.3 Other goods, works and services
- E. Indirect costs


Specific cost eligibility conditions for this call:

- personnel costs:
 - SME owner/natural person unit cost¹⁶: No
 - volunteers unit cost¹⁷: Yes (with indirect costs)
- travel and subsistence unit cost¹⁸: Yes
- equipment costs: depreciation
- other cost categories:
 - cost for financial support to third parties: not allowed.
- indirect cost flat-rate: 7% of the eligible direct costs (categories A-D, except volunteers costs and exempted specific cost categories, if any)
- VAT: non-deductible VAT is eligible (but please note that since 2013 VAT paid by beneficiaries that are public bodies acting as public authority is NOT eligible)
- other:
 - in-kind contributions for free are allowed, but cost-neutral, i.e. they cannot be declared as cost
 - kick off meeting: costs for kick off meeting organised by the granting authority are eligible (travel costs for maximum 2 persons, return ticket to Brussels and accommodation for one night) only if the meeting takes place after the project starting date set out in the Grant Agreement; the starting date can be changed through an amendment, if needed
 - project websites: communication costs for presenting the project on the participants' websites or social media accounts are eligible; costs for *separate* project websites are not eligible
 - other ineligible costs: No

¹⁶ Commission [Decision](#) of 20 October 2020 authorising the use of unit costs for the personnel costs of the owners of small and medium-sized enterprises and beneficiaries that are natural persons not receiving a salary for the work carried out by themselves under an action or work programme (C(2020)7715).

¹⁷ Commission [Decision](#) of 10 April 2019 authorising the use of unit costs for declaring personnel costs for the work carried out by volunteers under an action or a work programme (C(2019)2646).

¹⁸ Commission [Decision](#) of 12 January 2021 authorising the use of unit costs for travel, accommodation and subsistence costs under an action or work programme under the 2021-2027 multi-annual financial framework (C(2021)35).

 **Volunteers costs** — Volunteers costs are not a classic cost category. There are no costs because volunteers work for free, but they may nonetheless be added to the budget in the form of a pre-fixed unit cost (per volunteer) and thus allow you to benefit from the volunteers' work for the grant (by increasing the amount of reimbursement up to 100% of the normal costs, i.e. cost categories other than volunteers). More information is available in the [AGA — Annotated Grant Agreement, art 6.2.A.5](#).

If indirect costs for volunteers costs are eligible, you can add them manually to the volunteers costs category in Annex 2 (calculate the 7% flat-rate on the amount of volunteers costs calculated as unit costs, and then add them on top).

Reporting and payment arrangements


The reporting and payment arrangements are fixed in the Grant Agreement (*Data Sheet, point 4 and art 21 and 22*).

After grant signature, you will normally receive a **prefinancing** to start working on the project (float of normally **90%** of the maximum grant amount; exceptionally less or no prefinancing). The prefinancing will be paid 30 days from entry into force/financial guarantee (if required) — whichever is the latest.

There will be no **interim payments**.

Payment of the balance: At the end of the project, we will calculate your final grant amount. If the total of earlier payments is higher than the final grant amount, we will ask you (your coordinator) to pay back the difference (recovery).

All payments will be made to the coordinator.

 Please be aware that payments will be automatically lowered if one of your consortium members has outstanding debts towards the EU (granting authority or other EU bodies). Such debts will be offset by us — in line with the conditions set out in the Grant Agreement (*see art 22*).

Please also note that you are responsible for keeping records on all the work done and the costs declared.

Prefinancing guarantees

If a prefinancing guarantee is required, it will be fixed in the Grant Agreement (*Data Sheet, point 4*). The amount will be set during grant preparation and it will normally be equal or lower than the prefinancing for your grant.

The guarantee should be in euro and issued by an approved bank/financial institution established in an EU Member State. If you are established in a non-EU country and would like to provide a guarantee from a bank/financial institution in your country, please contact us (this may be exceptionally accepted, if it offers equivalent security).

Amounts blocked in bank accounts will NOT be accepted as financial guarantees.

Prefinancing guarantees are formally NOT linked to individual consortium members, which means that you are free to organise how to provide the guarantee amount (*by one or several beneficiaries, for the overall amount or several guarantees for partial amounts, by the beneficiary concerned or by another beneficiary, etc*). It is however important that the requested amount is covered and that the guarantee(s) are sent to us in time to make the prefinancing (scanned copy via Portal AND original by post). If agreed with us, the bank guarantee may be replaced by a guarantee from a third party.

The guarantee will be released at the end of the grant, in accordance with the conditions laid down in the Grant Agreement.

Certificates

Depending on the type of action, size of grant amount and type of beneficiaries, you may be requested to submit different certificates. The types, schedules and thresholds for each certificate are fixed in the Grant Agreement (*Data Sheet, point 4 and art 24*).

Liability regime for recoveries

The liability regime for recoveries will be fixed in the Grant Agreement (*Data Sheet point 4.4 and art 22*).

For beneficiaries, it is one of the following:

- limited joint and several liability with individual ceilings — *each beneficiary up to their maximum grant amount*
- unconditional joint and several liability — *each beneficiary up to the maximum grant amount for the action*
- or
- individual financial responsibility — *each beneficiary only for their own debts*.

In addition, the granting authority may require joint and several liability of affiliated entities (with their beneficiary).

Provisions concerning the project implementation

IPR rules: *see Model Grant Agreement (art 16 and Annex 5)*:

- rights of use on results: Yes
- access to results for policy purposes: Yes
- access rights to ensure continuity and interoperability obligations: Yes

Communication, dissemination and visibility of funding: *see Model Grant Agreement (art 17 and Annex 5)*:

- additional communication and dissemination activities: Yes

Specific rules for carrying out the action: *see Model Grant Agreement (art 18 and Annex 5)*:

EU restrictive measures

Yes

Other specificities

n/a

Non-compliance and breach of contract

The Grant Agreement (chapter 5) provides for the measures we may take in case of breach of contract (and other non-compliance issues).



For more information, see [AGA — Annotated Grant Agreement](#).

11. How to submit an application

All proposals must be submitted directly online via the Funding & Tenders Portal Electronic Submission System. Paper applications are NOT accepted.

Submission is a **2-step process**:

a) **create a user account and register your organisation**

To use the Submission System (the only way to apply), all participants need to [create an EU Login user account](#).

Once you have an EU Login account, you can [register your organisation](#) in the Participant Register. When your registration is finalised, you will receive a 9-digit participant identification code (PIC).

b) **submit the proposal**

Access the Electronic Submission System via the Topic page in the [Search Funding & Tenders](#) section (or, for calls sent by invitation to submit a proposal, through the link provided in the invitation letter).

Submit your proposal in 2 parts, as follows:

- Part A includes administrative information about the applicant organisations (future coordinator, beneficiaries, affiliated entities and associated partners) and the summarised budget for the proposal. Fill it in directly online
- Part B (description of the action) covers the technical content of the proposal. Download the mandatory word template from the Submission System, fill it in and upload it as a PDF file
- Annexes (*see section 5*). Upload them as PDF file (single or multiple depending on the slots). Excel upload is sometimes possible, depending on the file type: not applicable

The proposal must keep to the **page limits** (*see section 5*); excess pages will be disregarded.

Documents must be uploaded to the **right category** in the Submission System otherwise the proposal might be considered incomplete and thus inadmissible.

The proposal must be submitted **before the call deadline** (*see section 4*). After this deadline, the system is closed and proposals can no longer be submitted.

Once the proposal is submitted, you will receive a **confirmation e-mail** (with date and time of your application). If you do not receive this confirmation e-mail, it means your proposal has NOT been submitted. If you believe this is due to a fault in the Submission System, you should immediately file a complaint via the [IT Helpdesk webform](#), explaining the circumstances and attaching a copy of the proposal (and, if possible, screenshots to show what happened).

Details on processes and procedures are described in the [Online Manual](#). The Online Manual also contains the links to FAQs and detailed instructions regarding the Portal Electronic Exchange System.

12. Help

As far as possible, ***please try to find the answers you need yourself***, in this and the other documentation (we have limited resources for handling direct enquiries):

- [Online Manual](#)
- FAQs on the Topic page
- [Portal FAQ](#) (for general questions).

Please also consult the Topic page regularly, since we will use it to publish call updates. (For invitations, we will contact you directly in case of a call update).

Contact

For individual questions on the Portal Submission System, please contact the [IT Helpdesk](#).

Non-IT related questions should be sent to the following email address: EACEA-POLICY-EXPERIMENTATION-HE@ec.europa.eu.

Please indicate clearly the reference of the call and topic to which your question relates (*see cover page*).

13. Important



IMPORTANT

- **Don't wait until the end** — Complete your application sufficiently in advance of the deadline to avoid any last minute **technical problems**. Problems due to last minute submissions (*e.g. congestion, etc.*) will be entirely at your risk. Call deadlines can NOT be extended.
- **Consult** the Portal Topic page regularly. We will use it to publish updates and additional information on the call (call and topic updates).
- **Funding & Tenders Portal Electronic Exchange System** — By submitting the application, all participants **accept** to use the electronic exchange system in accordance with the [Portal Terms & Conditions](#).
- **Registration** — Before submitting the application, all beneficiaries, affiliated entities and associated partners must be registered in the [Participant Register](#). The participant identification code (PIC) (one per participant) is mandatory for the Application Form.
- **Consortium roles** — When setting up your consortium, you should think of organisations that help you reach objectives and solve problems.

The roles should be attributed according to the level of participation in the project. Main participants should participate as **beneficiaries** or **affiliated entities**; other entities can participate as associated partners, subcontractors, third parties giving in-kind contributions. **Associated partners** and third parties giving in-kind contributions should bear their own costs (they will not become formal recipients of EU funding). **Subcontracting** should normally constitute a limited part and must be performed by third parties (not by one of the beneficiaries/affiliated entities). Subcontracting going beyond 30% of the total eligible costs must be justified in the application.

- **Coordinator** — In multi-beneficiary grants, the beneficiaries participate as consortium (group of beneficiaries). They will have to choose a coordinator, who will take care of the project management and coordination and will represent the consortium towards the granting authority. In mono-beneficiary grants, the single beneficiary will automatically be coordinator.
- **Affiliated entities** — Applicants may participate with affiliated entities (i.e. entities linked to a beneficiary which participate in the action with similar rights and obligations as the beneficiaries, but do not sign the grant and therefore do not become beneficiaries themselves). They will get a part of the grant money and must therefore comply with all the call conditions and be validated (just like beneficiaries); but they do not count towards the minimum eligibility criteria for consortium composition (if any).
- **Associated partners** — Applicants may participate with associated partners (i.e. partner organisations which participate in the action but without the right to get grant money). They participate without funding and therefore do not need to be validated.
- **Consortium agreement** — For practical and legal reasons it is recommended to set up internal arrangements that allow you to deal with exceptional or unforeseen circumstances (in all cases, even if not mandatory under the Grant Agreement). The consortium agreement also gives you the possibility to redistribute the grant money according to your own consortium-internal principles and parameters (for instance, one beneficiary can reattribute its grant money to another beneficiary). The consortium agreement thus allows you to customise the EU grant to the needs inside your consortium and can also help to protect you in case of disputes.

- **Balanced project budget** — Grant applications must ensure a balanced project budget and sufficient other resources to implement the project successfully (*e.g. own contributions, income generated by the action, financial contributions from third parties, etc*). You may be requested to lower your estimated costs, if they are ineligible (including excessive).
- **No-profit rule** — Grants may NOT give a profit (i.e. surplus of revenues + EU grant over costs). This will be checked by us at the end of the project.
- **No double funding** — There is a strict prohibition of double funding from the EU budget (except under EU Synergies calls). Outside such Synergies calls, any given action may receive only ONE grant from the EU budget and cost items may under NO circumstances declared to two different EU actions.
- **Completed/ongoing projects** — Proposals for projects that have already been completed will be rejected; proposals for projects that have already started will be assessed on a case-by-case basis (in this case, no costs can be reimbursed for activities that took place before the project starting date/proposal submission).
- **Combination with EU operating grants** — Combination with EU operating grants is possible, if the project remains outside the operating grant work programme and you make sure that cost items are clearly separated in your accounting and NOT declared twice (see [AGA — Annotated Model Grant Agreement, art 6.2.E](#)).
- **Multiple proposals** — Applicants may submit more than one proposal for *different* projects under the same call (and be awarded a funding for them).
Organisations may participate in several proposals.
BUT: if there are several proposals for *very similar* projects, only one proposal will be accepted and evaluated; the applicants will be asked to withdraw one of them (or it will be rejected).
- **Resubmission** — Proposals may be changed and re-submitted until the deadline for submission.
- **Rejection** — By submitting the application, all applicants accept the call conditions set out in this this Call Document (and the documents it refers to). Proposals that do not comply with all the call conditions will be **rejected**. This applies also to applicants: All applicants need to fulfil the criteria; if any one of them doesn't, they must be replaced or the entire proposal will be rejected.
- **Cancellation** — There may be circumstances which may require the cancellation of the call. In this case, you will be informed via a call or topic update. Please note that cancellations are without entitlement to compensation.
- **Language** — You can submit your proposal in any official EU language (project abstract/summary should however always be in English). For reasons of efficiency, we strongly advise you to use English for the entire application. If you need the call documentation in another official EU language, please submit a request within 10 days after call publication (for the contact information, see *section 12*).

- **Transparency** — In accordance with Article 38 of the [EU Financial Regulation](#), information about EU grants awarded is published each year on the [Europa website](#).

This includes:

- beneficiary names
- beneficiary addresses
- the purpose for which the grant was awarded
- the maximum amount awarded.

The publication can exceptionally be waived (on reasoned and duly substantiated request), if there is a risk that the disclosure could jeopardise your rights and freedoms under the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights or harm your commercial interests.

- **Data protection** — The submission of a proposal under this call involves the collection, use and processing of personal data. This data will be processed in accordance with Regulation [2018/1725](#). It will be processed solely for the purpose of evaluating your proposal, subsequent management of your grant and, if needed, programme monitoring, evaluation and communication. Details are explained in the [Funding & Tenders Portal Privacy Statement](#).

Call Annex

List of **European criteria** for the joint transnational programmes to test a joint European degree label

Minimum requirements		
Higher education institutions involved	The joint programme is jointly designed and delivered by at least 2 higher education institutions from at least 2 different EU Member States ¹⁹ .	EQF 6, 7, 8
Transnational joint degree delivery	The joint programme leads to the award of a joint degree.	EQF 6, 7, 8
	Dissertations are co-evaluated by supervisors or a committee with members from at least 2 different institutions located in 2 different countries.	EQF 8
Transparency of the learning outcomes	The joint programme is described in ECTS.	EQF 6, 7
	A joint Diploma Supplement is issued to the student at the end of the joint study programme.	EQF 6, 7
Quality assurance arrangements	Internal and external QA is conducted in accordance with the European Standards and Guidelines (ESG). The programme, the study field or the institutions are accredited/evaluated by an EQAR-registered agency. If external quality assurance is required at programme level in the countries involved, the transnational programme should be accredited/evaluated preferably using the European Approach for Quality Assurance of Joint Programmes (EA).	EQF 6, 7, 8
Joint policies for the joint programme	The higher education institutions involved have joint policies for admission, selection, supervision, monitoring, assessment and recognition procedures for the joint study programme.	EQF 6, 7, 8
Transnational campus – access to services	The joint programme provides enrolled students, regardless of their location, with seamless and free access to the participating HEI's services such as e.g. IT services, shared infrastructure and facilities, (online) library services, faculty development and support, academic guidance and psychological counselling, career advice/mentoring, alumni systems.	EQF 6, 7, 8
Flexible and embedded student mobility	The joint programme includes at least 1 period of student physical mobility at another partner institution of at least 30 ECTS.	EQF 6, 7

¹⁹ Beyond this minimum, any higher education institution within or beyond the EU can take part in the joint programme.

arrangements	<p>The joint programme includes a total of at least 6 months²⁰ of physical mobility at another partner institution (including secondment).</p> <p>In addition to physical mobility, the joint programme includes opportunities for doctoral candidates to participate in one or more of these activities at another partner institution: teaching activities, international events, international conferences, joint research scientific projects between partner institutions, joint research publications with researchers from partner institutions.</p>	EQF 8
Multilingualism	<p>During the joint programme, each student is exposed to at least 2 different EU official languages²¹, language classes excluded.</p> <p>Exposure to EU official languages can take place in active and/or passive use of language(s), at any level in teaching and/or learning activities, examinations, research activities, professional or civic engagement activities and during mobility periods, including by going on mobility to a country where a different EU official language is predominantly used in daily life²².</p>	EQF 6, 7, 8
Innovative learning approaches	The joint programme includes embedded interdisciplinary and/or intersectoral components using student-centred and/or challenged-based approaches.	EQF 6, 7, 8
Graduate outcomes	The joint programme has a system to monitor graduate outcomes. This system can be at the level of the programme or institutional level(s). If possible, the content is aligned to the survey content of EUROGRADUATE.	EQF 6, 7, 8
Inclusiveness and sustainability	The joint programme commits to wide participation through socially and geographically inclusive admission through tailored measures for all categories of disadvantaged students.	EQF 6, 7, 8
	The joint programme commits to respect the principles of the European Charter for Researchers and Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers and commits to the principles of the MSCA Green Charter.	EQF 8

²⁰ The total 6 months mobility period can be the sum of several shorter mobility periods.

²¹ This may include students' mother tongue(s).

²² Examples: A joint programme is offered in 2 different EU official languages; a joint programme is offered in 1 EU official language and students have the opportunity to go on mobility in a country where a different EU official language is predominantly used in daily life.

Optional criteria²³		
<input type="checkbox"/>	In addition to physical mobility, the joint programme includes additional formats of transnational learning activities with partner higher education institutions (e.g. online or blended, in the format of regular or intensive courses, summer/winter schools).	EQF 6, 7
<input type="checkbox"/>	The joint programme offers the possibility to take language classes so as to enhance the command of multiple European languages.	EQF 6, 7, 8
<input type="checkbox"/>	The joint programme supports future labour market needs and/or includes cooperation with businesses and sectors in its curriculum.	EQF 6, 7, 8
<input type="checkbox"/>	The joint programme provides opportunities for international professional internships/work-based learning recognised through the award of ECTS.	EQF 6, 7
<input type="checkbox"/>	The joint programme includes a career development plan devised with the candidate and/or exposure to the non-academic sector (such as internships, seminars, networking).	EQF 8
<input type="checkbox"/>	The joint programme includes components and actions related to environmental sustainability and implements measures to minimise the environmental footprint of its activities.	EQF 6, 7, 8
<input type="checkbox"/>	The joint programme includes components and actions related to the development of high level digital skills of students, it offers high quality digital education content, as well as assessment of student skills.	EQF 6, 7, 8
<input type="checkbox"/>	The joint programme offers the possibility for students to participate in activities promoting democratic values and addressing societal needs of the local community(ies), including volunteering, and to receive ECTS for it.	EQF 6, 7, 8
<input type="checkbox"/>	The higher education institutions offering the joint study programme conducts joint promotion and awareness-raising activities to ensure visibility of the joint programme and provide the necessary information about it for students and other relevant stakeholders such as future employers.	EQF 6, 7, 8

²³ Optional criteria are not mandatory but are encouraged to be tested.