Erasmus Mundus Joint Master Degrees

What are the aims of an Erasmus Mundus Joint Master Degree?

Erasmus Mundus Joint Master Degrees (EMJMD) aim to:

- foster quality improvements, innovation, excellence and internationalisation in higher education institutions (HEI);
- increase the quality and the attractiveness of the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) and supporting the EU's external action in the higher education field, by offering full degree scholarships to the best Master students worldwide;
- improve the level of competences and skills of Master graduates, and in particular the relevance of the Joint Masters for the labour market, through an increased involvement of employers.

In this regard, EMJMDs are expected to contribute to the objectives of the Europe 2020 Strategy and of the Education and Training strategic framework 2020 (ET2020), including the corresponding benchmarks established in those policies.

All Erasmus+ Programme Countries committed within the Bologna Process to common standards and guidelines in quality assurance, as well as a common degree structure and credit system. These aim to ensure mutual trust in higher education systems, facilitate the international mobility of students and graduates, cooperation between universities across borders as well as the mutual recognition of qualifications and study periods abroad. In the Communication “Strengthening European identity through education and culture”, the European Commission outlined its vision for a European Education Area by 2025, for "a Europe in which learning, studying and doing research would not be hampered by borders. Quality assurance across borders is a key element to working towards a European Education Area. In particular, the "European Approach for the Quality Assurance of Joint Programmes"\(^1\), adopted by the Bologna Ministerial Conference in Yerevan, in 2015, has been developed to ease external quality assurance of these programmes: it defines standards that are based on the agreed tools of the EHEA, without applying additional national criteria. This is expected to facilitate integrated approaches to quality assurance of joint programmes, which genuinely reflect and mirror their joint character.

EMJMDs are invited to take the European Approach for Quality Assurance of Joint Programmes as a basis for the external quality assurance of their course, if allowed by national legislation.

EMJMDs shall contribute to raising the attractiveness of the EHEA worldwide and demonstrating the excellence and high level of integration of the joint study programmes delivered by European HEIs.

This Action also supports EU external actions, objectives and priorities in the higher education field in their various aspects.
What is an Erasmus Mundus Joint Master Degree?

An EMJMD is a high-level integrated international study programme of 60, 90 or 120 ECTS credits, delivered by an international consortium of HEIs from different countries and, where relevant, other educational and/or non-educational partners with specific expertise and interest in the study areas/professional domains covered by the joint programme. Their specificity lies in the high degree of jointness/integration and the excellent academic content and methodology they offer. There is no limitation in terms of discipline. The list of joint programmes funded under Erasmus+ programme can be found on the Executive Agency website.

All participating HEIs established in a Programme Country must be Master degree-awarding institutions. The successful completion of the joint EMJMD Master programme must lead to the award of either a joint degree (i.e. one single diploma issued on behalf of at least two HEIs from different Programme Countries) or multiple degrees (i.e. at least two diplomas issued by two higher education institutions from different Programme Countries). If national legislation allows, joint degrees are encouraged, as they represent a full integration of the learning and teaching process. Besides the degree-awarding HEIs from Programme Countries, other partner HEIs from Partner Countries can be involved in the award of joint or multiple degrees.

EMJMD proposals at application stage must present fully developed joint study programmes, ready to run and to be advertised worldwide immediately after their selection. In this context, the EMJMD selection process will be very selective with the aim of supporting only the very best proposals.

In return, selected EMJMDs will receive high levels of funding for four intakes of students to allow them to increase their worldwide visibility and reinforce their sustainability prospects.

The sections below describe the nature, selection and funding conditions of newly selected EMJMDs.

Which Activities are supported under this Action?

This Action will support the following activities:

- the delivery of an EMJMD programme corresponding to 60, 90 or 120 ECTS credits, organised through an international consortium of HEIs including the participation of invited scholars (guest lecturers) for teaching, training and/or research purposes;
- the award of scholarships to excellent students worldwide for their participation in one of these EMJMD programmes.

What is the role of organisations participating in an Erasmus Mundus Joint Master Degree?

EMJMD programmes are delivered by an international consortium of HEIs and where relevant other types of organisations (enterprises, public bodies, research organisations, etc.) contributing to the implementation of the EMJMD.

The EMJMD consortium is composed of the:

- Applicant/coordinator: a HEI established in a Programme Country that submits the project
proposal on behalf of all the partners. When the EMJMD is granted, the applicant/coordinator will become the main EU grant beneficiary and will sign a multi-beneficiary grant agreement on behalf of the EMJMD consortium. Its coordinating role stands for the following duties:

- represents and acts on behalf of the group of participating organisations vis-à-vis the European Commission;
- bears the financial and legal responsibility for the proper operational, administrative and financial implementation of the entire project;
- coordinates the EMJMD in cooperation with all other project partners.

- Partners: degree-awarding HEIs recognised as such by the relevant authorities of the Programme or Partner Country in which they are established and any private or public organisation that contributes actively to the preparation, implementation and evaluation of the EMJMD. Each partner must sign a mandate by which the signatory grants power of attorney to the coordinator to act in its name and on its behalf during the implementation of the project.

- Associated partners (optional): additionally the EMJMD study programme may also benefit from the involvement of associated partners. These organisations contribute indirectly to the implementation of specific tasks/activities and/or support the dissemination and sustainability of the EMJMD. Such contribution may for example take the form of knowledge and skills transfer, the provision of complementary courses or backing possibilities for secondment or placement. For contractual management issues, “associated partners” are not considered as part of the EMJMD consortium because they have a more limited role in the implementation of the EMJMD, as their expertise is called upon on an ad-hoc basis.

- Affiliated entities (optional): Organisations which contribute to the achievement of project objectives and activities. Affiliated entities must be identified in the grant application and satisfy the requirements as described in Annex III (Glossary of terms) of this Programme Guide.

HEIs from Programme Countries must be in a position to physically host EMJMD students and deliver at least the minimum number of ECTS credits for the study period spent in their institution.

All partner organisations from Programme or Partner Countries must be identified at the time of applying for a grant.

The necessary institutional commitment of all the organisations participating in the EMJMD consortium must be ensured prior to the enrolment of the first EMJMD students in order to guarantee solid institutional embedding and backing. The EMJMD Consortium Agreement (see guidelines and models available on the Executive Agency website) will be a key instrument for this purpose and will have to be signed by all partner institutions prior to the launching of the first scholarship application and selection procedure. This EMJMD Consortium Agreement will have to cover as precisely as possible all academic, operational, administrative and financial aspects related to the implementation of the EMJMD and the management of the EMJMD scholarships.

What are the criteria used to assess an Erasmus Mundus Joint Master Degree?

Listed below are the formal criteria that an EMJMD must respect in order to be eligible for an Erasmus+ grant:
Eligibility Criteria

A participating organisation can be any public or private organisation, with its affiliated entities (if any), established in a Programme Country or in a Partner Country that contributes directly and actively to the delivery of the EMJMD.

For example, such organisation can be:

• a higher education institution (HEI);
• a public or private, a small, medium or large enterprise (including social enterprises);
• a public body at local, regional or national level;
• a non-profit organisation, association, NGO;
• a research institute.

Eligible participating organisations

HEIs established in a Programme Country must hold a valid Erasmus Charter for Higher Education (ECHE). An ECHE is not required for participating Partner Country HEIs.

HEIs established in a Programme Country must be able to demonstrate at application stage that they have fulfilled the external QA requirements of their jurisdiction (e.g. accreditation or evaluation) for the joint programme. This can result either from having successfully implemented the European Approach for Quality Assurance of Joint Programmes (if national legislation allows), or be based on the individual accreditation decisions for each national component on the basis of which the EMJMD is composed.

Who can apply?

A HEI established in a Programme Country. The HEI applies on behalf of the EMJMD consortium. Branches of Partner Country HEIs established in a Programme Country or branches of Programme Country HEIs established in a Partner Country are not eligible to apply.

Number and profile of participating organisations

An EMJMD is transnational and involves partner HEIs from at least three different Programme Countries.

Number of participants

The EMJMD grant will finance a maximum of 60 student scholarships for the four intakes. In addition, EMJMD consortia can apply for up to 28 additional student scholarships for the four intakes for targeted regions/countries of the world.

Venue(s)

The EMJMD study period must take place in at least two of the Programme Countries represented in the consortium (i.e. at least two mobility periods for all students, different from the country of residence of the student).

Depending on the duration of the EMJMD (1 to 2 academic years) and whether the consortium chooses to undertake a preparatory year, the consortium will receive a grant agreement for a minimum duration of 4 and a maximum of 6 academic years to finance 4 consecutive student intakes.

In exceptional cases, the duration of an EMJMD may be extended by up to 12 months, upon request by the applicant/coordinator and with the agreement of the Executive Agency. In such a case, the total grant will not change.

Optional preparatory year: 1 academic year.

Duration of project

Implementation of the EMJMD programme: 4 consecutive intakes of 1 to 2 academic years (60/90/120 ECTS credits).

Duration of activity

To the Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency, located in Brussels.

Where to apply?

Applicants have to submit their grant application by **13 February at 17:00 (Brussels time)** for projects starting between 1 August and 31 October of the same year.
How to apply? Please see Part C of this Guide for details on how to apply.

Applicant organisations will also be assessed against exclusion and selection criteria. For more information please consult Part C of this Guide.

Additional eligibility criteria for students

Eligible participants

Students at Master level who have obtained a first higher education degree or demonstrate a recognised equivalent level of learning according to national legislation and practices in the degree awarding countries are eligible. Students who have previously obtained an EMJMD scholarship or an Erasmus Mundus Master Course/Joint Doctorate scholarship are not eligible to apply for an additional scholarship under the EMJMD action. EMJMD scholarship holders cannot benefit from another EU funded scholarship scheme to follow the same EMJMD course and this for the entire period of the course.

A minimum of 75% of EMJMD scholarships will be earmarked for candidates from Partner Countries.

Students will apply for a scholarship directly to the EMJMD consortium of their choice and go through a competitive selection process organised by the consortium HEIs. The selection, recruitment and monitoring of individual students fall under the responsibility of the EMJMD consortium.

Duration of activity

The student scholarship is awarded exclusively for a full-time enrolment in one of the Master courses and will cover the entire duration of the EMJMD study programme.

Venue(s)

Study periods (e.g. teaching, research, placement, thesis preparation) beyond the minimum required can take place in other participating organisations from Programme or Partner countries, under the condition that the activities concerned are implemented under the direct supervision of one of the consortium partner HEIs.

Students will have to acquire the entirety of ECTS credits covered by the EMJMD (60, 90 or 120). Moreover, for each of their mandatory study period in at least two Programme Countries, they will have to acquire at least 20 ECTS credits (for study programmes of 60 ECTS credits) or 30 ECTS credits (for study programmes of 90 or 120 ECTS credits).

Mobility periods cannot be replaced by virtual mobility (distance learning), which implies physical presence of the students is required during the entire Master programme. In addition, they cannot take place in institutions outside the EMJMD consortium (i.e. partners and/or associated partners).

Additional eligibility criteria for staff/scholars/guest lecturers

Eligible participants

1) Staff of the participating organisations;
2) Invited scholars / guest lecturers from Programme and Partner Countries. At least 4 invited scholars/guest lecturers per intake must be engaged in the EMJMD activities for at least 8 weeks in total. The invited scholars/guest lecturers must be selected in accordance with the consortium’s specific selection criteria for scholars and bring concrete added value to the delivery of the EMJMD.
Award criteria

Projects will be assessed against the following criteria:

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<th>Relevance of the project (maximum 40 points)</th>
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<td>• The proposal's elements of &quot;jointness&quot;/integration, design and structure are tailored and effective for achieving the EMJMD aims and objectives;</td>
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<td>• The proposal describes how the EMJMD is integrated within the degree catalogues of partner and defines the degree(s) intended to be delivered, especially the award of an EMJMD joint degree, if national legislation allows;</td>
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<td>• The proposed EMJMD responds to clearly identified needs in the academic field;</td>
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<tr>
<td>• The proposal defines how the EMJMD aims to increase the attractiveness of the European Higher Education Area, and to foster excellence, innovation and competitiveness in terms of the academic fields/subjects targeted;</td>
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<tr>
<td>• The proposed EMJMD consortium is highly relevant with regard to internationalisation in higher education and has been designed to maximise the benefits of student and staff mobility.</td>
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<th>Quality of the project design and implementation (maximum 20 points)</th>
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<td>• The proposal defines the academic programme and the learning outcomes and details how the excellence in the academic content will be ensured;</td>
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<td>• The proposal describes a set of internal and external evaluation methods of the EMJMD, how they will be put into practice and used to monitor, upgrade and improve the quality of the course;</td>
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<td>• The proposal defines how the student mobility is organised and is instrumental to the course objectives, and presents a draft strategy/planning for an effective involvement of invited scholars/guest lecturers;</td>
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<td>• The proposal explains in detail all relevant information provided to the students/academic staff prior to course enrolment, and the services offered in terms of support for accommodation, language training, administrative formalities (e.g. visa support), and insurance;</td>
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<tr>
<td>• The proposal clearly outlines the course rules, student rights and obligations concerning the academic, administrative and financial aspects of EMJMD implementation;</td>
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<tr>
<td>• The proposal describes the envisaged activities/facilities to ensure the effective integration/networking of the EMJMD students within their socio-cultural and professional environment;</td>
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<tr>
<td>• The proposal clearly outlines the interaction between the EMJMD and non-educational actors in course implementation.</td>
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Quality of the project team and the cooperation arrangements (maximum 20 points)

- The proposal clearly shows how the fields of expertise of the involved partners/staff are complementary and of added value for the EMJMD implementation. Where applicable, the proposal describes how existing cooperation agreements have been enhanced to meet the EMJMD’s objectives;
- The proposal describes the institutional commitment of each partner, specifies their role and tasks in the EMJMD implementation, and outlines the working mechanisms of the governing bodies and management tools in place;
- The proposal describes, *inter alia*, the joint criteria, principles and requirements for student application, selection and admission requirements, student examination and performance evaluation;
- The proposal explains how the student participation costs have been calculated, and provides a description on how financial resources including complementary funding will be mobilised, allocated and managed within the partnership.

Impact and dissemination (maximum 20 points)

- The proposal offers a convincing mid/long-term development/sustainability strategy and makes realistic projections beyond the EU funding period, and the ways to mobilise other funding sources for scholarships and self-funded students;
- The proposal explains how the EMJMD will generate impact at institutional level (faculty/university), and how it enhances the internationalisation strategy of the consortium partners towards relevant stakeholders at national/European/international level;
- The proposal describes how the proposed EMJMD encourages entrepreneurship and a sense of initiative, describes how employers will be involved in course implementation in order to improve student competencies and skills and thereby enhance the employability of graduates;
- The proposal describes the types and methods of promotion/dissemination mechanisms, its target groups, and the concrete tasks of the partners in the awareness-raising strategy of the EMJMD. It explains how it plans to attract excellent students worldwide;
- If relevant, the proposal describes how the materials, documents and media produced will be made freely available and promoted through open licences, and does not contain disproportionate limitations.

To be considered for funding, proposals must score at least 70 points out of a total of 100. Furthermore, they must score at least 75% of the maximum allocated points under the award criterion "Relevance of the project" (i.e. minimum 30 points out of 40). In case of *ex aequo*, priority will be given to projects scoring highest under the criterion "Relevance of the project".

Additional scholarships for students from targeted regions of the world

The applicants may apply for additional scholarships for regions of Partner Countries of the world financed by the following EU external funding instruments:

- Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA)
- Development Cooperation Instruments (DCI)
- European Neighbourhood Instrument (ENI)
EMJMDs proposed for funding may receive up to 28 additional student scholarships for the entire duration of the Master course (four intakes). These additional scholarships are offered to respond to the external policy priorities of the EU with regard to higher education and take into consideration the different levels of economic and social development in the relevant Partner Countries. They are funded on the basis of the nine regional envelopes below:

- Western Balkans (Region 1);
- Eastern Partnership countries (Region 2);
- South-Mediterranean countries (Region 3);
- Asia (Region 6) with a specific scholarship allocation to the Least Developed Countries;
- Central Asia (Region 7) with a specific scholarship allocation to the Low or Lower Middle Income Countries;
- Latin America (Region 8) with a specific scholarship allocation to the Lower Middle Income Countries and a maximum allocation to Brazil/Mexico;
- South Africa (Region 10);
- African, Caribbean and Pacific countries (Region 11); and
- Gulf Cooperation countries (Region 12).

Scholarships will be allocated to the EMJMD selected for funding according to their ranking in descending order, and taking into account the available budget. Starting from the first ranked proposal, the requested total number of additional scholarships will be allocated pro-rata the regional budgetary envelopes and within the limit of the available funds.

**Additional award criterion**

Proposals that pass the minimum threshold under the award criterion "Relevance of the project" and obtain a total of at least 70 points (overall threshold for funding) will be assessed to receive additional scholarships for targeted regions against the following additional criterion.

**Relevance of the project in the targeted regions (Yes/No)**

- The proposal describes the methods used to attract highly talented students from the targeted regions
- The proposal encourages cooperation with HEIs and/or other eligible participating organisation from Partner Countries in the targeted regions. The added value of such cooperation to the EMJMD is clearly explained.

**What else should you know about this Action?**

More compulsory criteria and additional useful information relating to this Action can be found in the Annex I of this Guide. The Annex includes:

- conditions relating to the design of the Erasmus Mundus Joint Master Degree;
- conditions relating to Master students;
• conditions relating to monitoring and quality assurance;
• selection procedure of EMJMD consortia.

Interested organisations are invited to read carefully the relevant sections of this Annex before applying for financial support.

**The Erasmus Mundus Joint Master Degree Catalogue**

In order to contribute to the promotion, visibility and accessibility of the Erasmus+ student scholarships that will be offered by on-going EMJMDs, to the best Master students worldwide, EMJMDs will be included in an online catalogue hosted on the Executive Agency’s website.

The EMJMD catalogue will advertise all the joint Master programmes offering Erasmus+ scholarships for the next academic year.

The catalogue will allow potential students to select the EMJMDs of their choice and to apply for an Erasmus+ scholarship directly to the consortia concerned.

**What are the funding rules?**

Selected EMJMDs will be supported through a grant agreement covering one preparatory year (if the applicant has opted to apply for the preparatory year) and four consecutive student intakes.

The EMJMD grant is calculated according to the following funding principles:

- a grant for the consortium management fees and the academic staff mobility;
- a variable number of student scholarships of 25 000 EUR maximum per year;
- a variable number of additional student scholarships of 25 000 EUR maximum per year for targeted regions of the world.

In detail, the budget of the EMJMD must be drafted according to the following funding rules (in euro):

**A) Erasmus Mundus Joint Master Degree management:**

- **Contribution to the consortium management costs and costs for invited scholars and guest lecturers**
  - 20 000 EUR for the optional preparatory year.
  - 50 000 EUR per intake of the EMJMD.

**B) Erasmus Mundus Joint Master Degree student scholarships:**

The EMJMD student scholarships will include student participation costs (including the tuition fees,
full insurance coverage and (i.e. 3 months or the equivalent of 15 ECTS credits) any other mandatory costs related to student participation in the course), a contribution to student travel and installation cost and a subsistence allowance for the entire duration of the EMJMD study programme. Details on the EMJMD student scholarship amounts are given in the table below:

**Contribution to the participation costs**

- up to 9 000 EUR per year per scholarship holder from a Partner Country
- up to 4 500 EUR per year per scholarship holder from a Programme Country

Any amount in excess of these maximum contributions must be covered by the participating organisations and cannot be charged to the scholarship holder.

- 1 000 EUR per year per scholarship holder resident in a Programme Country for travel costs

**Contribution to the travel and installation costs**

- 2 000 EUR per year for travel costs + 1.000 EUR for installation costs for a scholarship holder, resident in a Partner Country less than 4000 KM from the EMJMD coordinating HEI.
- 3000 EUR per year for travel costs + 1.000 EUR for installation costs for a scholarship holder, resident in a Partner Country 4000 KM or more from the EMJMD coordinating HEI.
- 1 000 EUR per month for the entire duration of the EMJMD study programme (24 months maximum). Contribution to subsistence costs will not be given to the scholarship holders for the EMJMD periods (study/research/placement/thesis preparation) spent in their country of residence, nor to scholarship holders from a Partner Country for the EMJMD periods exceeding one trimester (i.e. 3 months or the equivalent of 15 ECTS credits) spent in any Partner Country.

**Contribution to subsistence costs**

- 1 000 EUR per month for the entire duration of the EMJMD study programme (24 months maximum). Contribution to subsistence costs will not be given to the scholarship holders for the EMJMD periods (study/research/placement/thesis preparation) spent in their country of residence, nor to scholarship holders from a Partner Country for the EMJMD periods exceeding one trimester (i.e. 3 months or the equivalent of 15 ECTS credits) spent in any Partner Country.

**Grant award**

The actual amount of the individual scholarships, respectively the maximum grant amount awarded for selected projects, will depend on a number of elements:

1. the EMJMD length (60, 90 or 120 ECTS credits);
2. the EMJMD participation costs defined by the consortia
3. the implementation of the optional preparatory year;
4. the number of Programme/Partner country scholarships;

Based on these parameters, the EMJMD grant for the preparatory year and the four student intakes would amount to a maximum of **4.532 million EUR**.

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2. EMJMDs are expected to have set up a jointly designed and fully integrated academic curriculum with common implementation procedures, e.g. joint student application, selection, admission and examination rules, as well as with
shared quality assurance mechanisms.


4. This refers to the overall number of scholarships financed, including those made available for one or more priority regions/countries of the world.


10. Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, Nepal

11. Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan

12. Bolivia, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua

13. Costs incurred by associated partners may be reimbursed by the EMJMD consortium only from the EU "contribution to the consortium's management costs" (lump sum).

14. Students who are not residents nor have carried out their main activity (studies, training or work) for more than a total of 12 months over the last five years in a Programme Country. The five-year reference period for this 12-month rule is calculated backwards as from the submission deadline defined by the consortia of applying for a EMJMD student scholarship.

15. The theoretical maximum amount is obtained by applying the maximum rates for scholarships and assuming that a project would be awarded the maximum number of scholarships (e.g. 60 + 28).