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Item 6

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Erasmus+ call for proposals 2016 – What's new?

I. KEY ACTION 1: VET MOBILITY FOR LEARNERS AND STAFF

This call is the first one under which the new VET charter holders can apply. We will monitor how this works.

With a view on the challenges of the refugee influx mobility for VET staff can now also be organised to improve teachers' and trainers' intercultural classroom skills, their capacity to teach/train people in their second language, and to learn about migrant issues.

It is also possible to organise incoming VET staff mobility. For example, a VET school that is as usual sending out its learners and staff, can now also include in their application "incoming staff", ie trainers from a company that can come and teach in their school for a week, to bring for example latest skills from the world of work and a company perspective from another country. This possibility already existed for higher education, and the Erasmus+ National Agencies ask for the extension of this option to the other educational fields.

II. KEY ACTION 2: COOPERATION FOR INNOVATION AND THE EXCHANGE OF GOOD PRACTICES

II.A STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS

The VET-specific priorities for this action are literally taken from the recently adopted Riga conclusions except for the fifth mid-term deliverable, the *professional development of VET teachers ,trainers and mentors*. This mid-term deliverable became a priority in a separate call for proposals for policy experimentation under Erasmus+ KA-3 Support for Policy Reform.

In follow-up of a request of several National Agencies Strategic Partnerships were split into two types: in (1) *Strategic Partnerships supporting exchange of good practice*, which are activity-oriented, which can last only 12 months, and are not possible in higher education, and (2) *Strategic Partnerships supporting innovation*, which are result-oriented, where the grant beneficiary receives additional funding for intellectual outputs & multiplier events, and which are possible in all educational fields.

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Activities of Strategic Partnerships that take place at the seat of an EU institution are eligible now; the term *EU institutions* does not include the EU agencies (see footnote in the Programme Guide).

Field specific priorities

<u>In VET:</u>

1. Promoting work-based learning in all its forms, with special attention to apprenticeship-type training, by involving social partners, companies and VET providers, as well as stimulating innovation and entrepreneurship.

2. Further developing quality assurance mechanisms in VET, in line with EQAVET recommendation, and establishing continuous information and feedback loops to I-VET and C-VET systems, based on learning outcomes as part of quality assurance systems.

3. Further strengthening key competences in VET curricula and providing more effective opportunities to acquire or develop those skills through I-VET and C-VET.

4. Enhancing access to training and qualifications for all through C-VET, in a life-long learning perspective, notably by increasing the quality, supply and accessibility of C-VET, validation of non-formal and informal learning, promoting work-place learning in companies for the working population, providing for efficient and integrated guidance services and flexible and permeable learning pathways.

<u>In adult education:</u>

1. Improving and extending the offer of high quality learning opportunities that are tailored to individual adult learners' needs, including through innovative ways of validation, guidance and delivery to groups most in need

2. Extending and developing educators' competences, particularly in the effective use of IT in adult learning, for better outreach and improved learning outcomes.

3. Designing and implementing effective provision for enhancing the basic skills (literacy, numeracy and digital) and key competences of specific adult target groups that are currently not well served.

II.B SECTOR SKILLS ALLIANCES

Stakeholders from all economic sectors (NACE) are eligible to apply.

Also this action has been split into two types, or *Lots*. Both lots have digital skills and green skills as transversal components.

Lot 1: identification of skills gaps and demand
Activities under this lot correspond to the activities of the previous Sector Skills <u>Councils.</u> Sector Skills Councils can apply if they want to continue their activities. This lot is not VET specific: activities shall identify skills gaps of, and skills demand for, professional profiles - no matter by which educational field these skills are covered!
The gathered skills intelligence shall be delivered in open data format for feeding into Skills Panorama.

Lot 2: developing & delivering vocational education & training content
Activities under this lot correspond to previous Sector Skills <u>Alliances</u>. This lot is VET specific but that includes "higher VET": our understanding of the scope of VET goes beyond the upper-secondary level and covers the post-secondary, non-tertiary level but also the tertiary level **provided** the curriculum includes a **strong work-based** learning component. In Germany, for example, universities of applied sciences offer dual bachelor courses that we consider as "higher VET". Our understanding of work-based learning is laid out in chapter 1 of our publication "Work-based learning in Europe" (http://ec.europa.eu/education/policy/vocational-policy/doc/alliance/work-based-learning-in-europe_en.pdf). Under Lot 2 Alliances shall develop and deliver trans-national VET content for European professional core profiles.

The eligibility, required numbers & profiles of participating organisations are different for lot 1 and 2. In any case, to have an entity with regulatory function in the Alliance is no eligibility criteria anymore. The details can be consulted in the chapter on Sector Skill Alliances in the *Erasmus+ Programme Guide 2016*.

Social partners, chambers, organisations representing professions or sectors, sector skills councils, VET providers and their associations, employment services, enterprises, authorities, economic development agencies, research, career guidance & professional counselling are typical partners in a Sector Skills Alliance.

III.   DEADLINE FOR THE SUBMISSION OF APPLICATIONS

All deadlines for submission of applications specified below end at 12.00 (noon), Brussels time.

Key Action 1	
Mobility of individuals in the field of education and training	2 February 2016

Key Action 2	
Strategic partnerships in the field of education, training and youth	26 April 2016
Knowledge Alliances, Sector Skills Alliances	26 February 2016
Capacity building in the field of higher education	10 February 2016

Please refer to the Erasmus+ Programme Guide for detailed instructions for the submission of applications. It is available on the Erasmus+ site: http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/index_en.htm.

IV. SPECIFIC CALLS UNDER ERASMUS+ KA-3 SUPPORT FOR POLICY REFORM

IV.A SUPPORT FOR SMALL AND MEDIUM-SIZED ENTERPRISES ENGAGING IN APPRENTICESHIPS

Increasing the supply of apprenticeships which is one of the 5 European priorities on VET for 2015-2020, and one of the main objectives of the European Alliance for Apprenticeships.
The objective of the Call is is **building the capacity of organisations to support small and medium-sized enterprises** (SMEs) in either newly engaging in, or substantially increasing their apprenticeships. Note: this call does not provide financial support to SMEs directly.

Grants will be awarded to
- Partnerships on building capacities for intermediary bodies or partnerships established by large companies to support SMEs (lot 1)
- European level networks and organisations supporting SMEs through their national members or affiliates (lot 2)

Eligible applicants are chambers of industry, trade and crafts, or similarly relevant sectoral/professional organisations, public or private enterprises, VET providers, other organisations with a role in supporting SMEs in increasing their offer on apprenticeships (lot 1), networks or organisations having members or affiliates in at least 12 Erasmus+ programme countries, ministries, social partners (employers' and workers' organisations), public or private companies, chambers of industry, trade and crafts, or similarly relevant sectoral/professional organisations (e.g. crafts organisations), public employment services, public regional and local authorities, VET providers, VET agencies/centres, schools or other educational institutions, higher education institutions, research centres, international organisations, non-profit organisations (NGOs), youth organisations, and parents associations (lot 2).

The call is published on the following EACEA website:
https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/erasmus-plus/funding/support-for-policy-reform-support-for-small-and-medium-sized-enterprises-engaging-in-apprenticeships_en

Related to this call there will also be a conference organised by Cedefop on 9-10 November:
http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/news-and-press/news/european-conference-engaging-smes-apprenticeship-still-time-register

IV.B POLICY EXPERIMENTATION PROJECTS IN EDUCATION, TRAINING AND YOUTH

These projects shall test theoretical models in real life situations and assessing the potential for promising measures to be replicated or scaled up as well as commit high-level authorities to the project and build partnerships with other peer authorities.

This call includes a priority (priority theme 5) on **VET teachers and trainers in work-based learning/apprenticeships**.
Projects shall assess national, bi- and multilateral models, tools and instruments for the development of the competences of VET teachers and trainers in WBL, promote innovation, scalability and effective systemic usage, establish effective partnerships of all relevant stakeholders including the cooperation between companies and VET providers, support profiling and professionalization of training specialists, work on validation of teachers'/trainers' competences, identify training needs, deliver flexible and targeted

provision, including work-based application of effective methods and technologies, and apply quality assurance systems.

This call also includes a priority (priority theme 6) on the **assessment of the effectiveness of adult learning policies**.

Adult learning policy requires a high level of coordination between different policy areas, providers and other stakeholders. A first step is for countries to assess the effectiveness and efficiency of their current policy and provision for adult learning, with a view to identifying opportunities for improving their coherence and effectiveness. The ET2020 Working Group on adult learning has developed a sophisticated tool for the analysis of adult learning policy. This call for policy experimentation provides an opportunity for countries to receive support to begin the analysis of their policy and provision, using this tool as a starting point.

In addition, the call also includes a priority (priority theme 2) on **validation of informal and non-formal learning**.

Projects shall work on the learning acquired through on-line courses and how Member States will link these courses to the formal qualification system, on the stages in the recognition & validation process such as identification, documentation, assessment and certification, on the outcomes of the validation process and what people do with the validation obtained, on the validation occurring in private companies when recruiting or in career assessment, which is very weakly linked to public validation initiatives, on quality assurance, and on transversal skills (including soft skills) such as leadership, entrepreneurship and risk taking, communication and collaboration, critical thinking, digital and media competence.

The call will be published on the following EACEA website:
http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/erasmus-plus/news/second-call-european-policy-experimentations-in-fields-education-training-and-youth-ka3-will-be_en