

**Key Action 2: Cooperation for innovation and the exchange of good practices - Capacity-building projects in the field of higher education**

**FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS  
Selection -1st Call 2015 (EAC-A04-2014)**

## **INTRODUCTION**

The following "questions and answers" on aspects related to the action "Capacity building in the field of higher education" (CBHE) are published as a source of information for applicants intending to submit a project proposal under the Erasmus+ 2015 Call for Proposals in the frame of this programme action.

The FAQs should help applicants find a quick answer to general matters relating to the preparation of their CBHE project proposal. The document addresses both enquiries received by the Executive Agency and issues which the Agency considers useful to make clear to potential applicants in order to avoid misunderstandings.

Please note that the primary sources of information remain the **Call for Proposal 2015** (EAC/A04/2014), the **Erasmus+ Programme Guide** (esp. Part B, Key Action 2: "Capacity building in the field of higher education", incl. Annex I on CBHE, as well as Part C, Information for Applicants), and the **Instructions for Applicants**. These information sources constitute your first reference to guide you through your CBHE application; they can be consulted in the CBHE Call section at the following Agency website:

[http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/erasmus-plus/funding/key-action-2-capacity-building-in-field-higher-education-2015\\_en](http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/erasmus-plus/funding/key-action-2-capacity-building-in-field-higher-education-2015_en)

The Erasmus+ Programme Guide specifies key terms, explains the nature and functioning of CBHE, presents the funding scheme, and outlines the application/selection procedures in the context of this action. Most of the answers to questions which may arise for CBHE applicants can be obtained from a close reading of the Guide, for instance:

- the eligibility criteria for potential applicants (e.g. is my organisation eligible, how many organisations does a consortium need to comprise at application stage, etc.),
- the award criteria that applicants need to address in their proposal,
- Special Mobility Strand
- Financial rules

Please note that the current version of the Erasmus+ Programme Guide (version 3 of 14/11/2014) features some differences compared to earlier versions.

If you have specific enquiries where you consider that further explanations and/or clarifications by the Agency are needed for a more complete understanding of the CBHE rules, then you can send an email to the following Agency mailbox and you will receive an answer as soon as possible from our staff:

[EACEA-EPLUS-CBHE@ec.europa.eu](mailto:EACEA-EPLUS-CBHE@ec.europa.eu)

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### Updates in version 2 (30/01/2015):

- Update of FAQ 3 ( Validation of PIC in Participant portal) and FAQ 6 (Staff costs for Ministries)
- replacement of broken links
- numbering of the main sections titles

## 1. eForm – ECAS account

*In which language can we complete the eForm and annexes? Can we fill in all documents in Spanish or should we complete them all in English?*

The eForm and its annexes have been released in English, French and German languages, but they can be completed in any of the EU's official languages, provided that all the project partner institutions can communicate in the language used in the project. So you can fill in all the documents in Spanish. (cf. [Erasmus+ Programme Guide](#), p. 239).

*Do individuals from a university have to register individually to access the application forms? My university has a PIC code. I am confused as to how individual academics can apply using ECAS?*

The PIC is managed at the level of the University. Only one PIC must be created by organisation/university.

It is however different from the ECAS (European Commission Authentication Service) which is a personal account needed to access several services from the European Commission, such as PIC creation in the Participant portal or eForm creation from the EACEA website.

Therefore if a staff member from a university is in charge of an application using the eForm, he will need to register first in ECAS, to access the eForm creation web tool (<https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/PPMT/>).

**The PICs will be needed to encode the organisation's data in the eForm.** PICs should be provided by the organisation's main institutions (**at the administration level**) or can be found using the "Search organisation" function in the Participant portal.

Links to ECAS, Participant portal and EACEA eForms are accessible from the footer of each page on the [EACEA website](#) :



Programmes	Online application tools	Our partners	About
<a href="#">Erasmus +</a> <a href="#">Creative Europe</a> <a href="#">Europe for Citizens</a> <a href="#">EU Aid Volunteers</a> <a href="#">Eurydice</a> <a href="#">Programmes 2007-2013</a>	<a href="#">e-Forms</a> <a href="#">Participant's portal</a> <a href="#">ECAS</a>	<a href="#">DG EAC</a> Education and Training <a href="#">Creative Europe</a> <a href="#">DG COMM</a> Europe for Citizens <a href="#">DG ECHO</a>	<a href="#">About EACEA</a> <a href="#">Document register</a> <a href="#">Working for EACEA</a> <a href="#">Working as an expert</a> <a href="#">Calls for tenders</a> <a href="#">Visual identity</a> <a href="#">Contacts</a>

You can also find further clarification in the CBHE Instructions for Applicants:

[https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/sites/eacea-site/files/instructions-for-applicants-cbhe-en\\_cbhe-2015.pdf](https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/sites/eacea-site/files/instructions-for-applicants-cbhe-en_cbhe-2015.pdf)

## 2. Number of applications by applicant organisation

*Can you clarify whether one applicant can submit several project proposals under different regions in the EAC/A04/2014 Call for Proposals?*

As regards the KA2-Capacity Building in Higher Education (CBHE) action, there are no restrictions concerning the number of proposals submitted by the same institution.

However, at the final stage of the selection process, **a maximum of three project proposals per applicant organisation will be recommended for funding** (cf. [Erasmus+ Programme Guide](#), page 153).

### **3. Participant portal – PIC reference**

*Do private companies and associations who will be partner in the project need a PIC number like the universities to be able to participate?*

It is necessary to insert the PIC into the eForm not only for the full partners but also for the associated partners; the organisations' data will be pre-filled from the Participant portal/ PIC reference account. The records will be used further on for analysis or statistics purposes. Therefore, it is important that any partner (public/ private bodies, universities or companies, etc. or any eligible participating organisation under CBHE (listed in page 149 of the Erasmus+ Programme Guide) creates a PIC reference and uploads their legal entity form in the database.

**NEW** *Do we need to have the PICs under "Validated" status in order to submit our Eform application?*

For the applications under the Erasmus+ programme, it is imperative to have a PIC reference in order to transfer the organisation's data in the EForm. **No matter if the organisation's status at the time of the submission is "declared" or "validated"**. The validation of the organisation is mandatory only for the beneficiaries of an EU grant before the signature of the grant agreement (i.e. for all co-beneficiaries organisations who have signed a mandate).

As you may know, the Participant portal is managed by another service from the European Commission (PIC Validation Service) and has been introduced to the applications managed by the EACEA in January 2014. Due to the high number of organisations registered in the Participant portal last year, a priority is given for the moment to those who are selected for funding. **So it is normal to have organisations with a status "declared" and a status "validated"** ( when the legal documents have been checked by the Validation service).

The status "**sleeping**" means that the Validation Service has contacted the organisation for further clarification with the documentation submitted but they have not received any answer. In such case, the responsible person should check her emails/ contact the validation service.

As regards the CBHE applications submitted at the EACEA, **we will check the information transferred from the PIC database to the EForm (Part A)**. We assume that the information provided by the organisations in this database is correct, and will be confirmed by the validation process, before the signature of the Grant agreement.

You should therefore ensure with your partners that the data transferred in the Eform from the Participant portal database is correct.

In anycase, the partners don't have to send to the applicant organisation the legal entity form nor sent it to the EACEA as attachment to the Eform.

**NEW** *I have lost my access to our PIC account, I don't know which documents to upload as annex to my legal entity, I found two PICs for my organisation, I would like to contact the validation service, etc...*

All these issues are clarified in the Participant Portal FAQ:

<http://ec.europa.eu/education/participants/portal/desktop/en/support/faq.html>

*Do organizations outside EU need to attach: 1. Legal entity form and 2. Financial Identification form?*

**The legal entity and its annexes** have to be provided by all the organizations registering in the Participant portal, even for Partners Countries: these supporting documents are necessary for the validation of the information provided in the database.

The **financial identification form** should be provided **only for the applicant organization**, but is not required for the partner organizations.

Please also refer to [Erasmus+ Programme Guide](#) pages 232- 233 and to the [Participant Portal FAQ#37](#).

**NEW** *As private applicant organisation we are required to submit a "financial capacity form" in the participant Portal but we cannot find a template form in the website.*

Indeed, there is no template for financial capacity. You need to upload the **Profit and Loss Accounts** and the **Balance Sheet** for the last two approved accounting periods.

These are documents that each institution can provide according to their internal models or rules.

#### **4. PARTNERSHIP**

##### **Partnership composition**

*Can a regional ministry participate under the category of "national authorities"?*

As for the regional ministries, any type of national authorities can be involved in a project (if relevant for the topic and a suitable role is explained in the partnership).

*Is there a maximum number concerning the participation of non-HEI partners?*

The Call requirements for the composition of the consortium concern only the minimal number of HEIs from the respective countries (Programme and Partner Countries), but there is no limitation for the maximum number of partners, including the non-academic partners.

##### **Associations in the field of Higher Education**

*The Programme Guide states that a HEI or an association/organisation composed of HEIs are allowed to apply for the grant. The whole part of the Guide about eligibility mentions only HEIs. Can we consider an Association of HEIs as one HEI?*

Higher Education Institutions and Association/organisation composed of HEIs are two distinctive types of organisation.

Although the associations of higher education institutions can be applicant organisations for a CBHE project, **they are not delivering higher education degrees and therefore cannot be considered as a HEI**. Therefore, they should not be considered as such in the calculation of the minimum number of higher education institutions in the consortium composition as described in Programme Guide, page 150.

As a general rule, regarding the participation of **Associations of Higher Education** in CBHE projects:

- They can be an applicant, partner or associated partner;
- "An association ... will count as **one legal entity/partner institution** and will act on behalf of its members": the PIC reference of the organisation is linked to the specific country indicated in the legal entity and therefore the association will represent the respective country in the partnership.
- Amongst the different countries represented by the association, "**only those members which are established in the Programme or eligible Partner Countries, and which are official members of the Association, can benefit from the grant**" even if their country is not represented in the project's consortium.

- So, it is possible to invite a staff member of one of the member universities to participate in one of the activities of the project (covering travel and subsistence), even though that institution is not a partner institution in the project.
- The costs are eligible provided that a contractual link between this participant and your organisation can be demonstrated, i.e. membership agreement between the institution where the participant member is employed and the Association (this is very important in case of an audit of the project).

## Associated partners

*I looked for information about associate status in the guides but I don't see it anywhere.*

*As far as I could see, associate partners won't be able to get a part of the subsidy. But my question is, whether there is an associate official status? As a matter-of-fact, I don't find it clearly into the guide but while looking at detailed project description document, I can see a part dedicated to associate partners.*

You can find the reference to the Associated partners in the *Erasmus+ Programme Guide*, section WHAT IS THE ROLE OF ORGANISATIONS PARTICIPATING IN A CAPACITY BUILDING PROJECT?, page 148.

*"Associated partners" to the project are intended to be a different category, compared to "full partners of the project". Associated partners must also be registered in the Participant Portal and consequently included in the application form with their PIC, but selecting "role" in the category of "associated".*

This means that they can be involved (though marginally) in the project without receiving any funding. A mandate for this type of partners is not required as they cannot receive a share from the project grant. Example of associated partners: an enterprise, an intergovernmental organisation, an organisation etc. that may bring an added value to the project by their strong potential for dissemination, expertise etc., but without being paid from the project.

## Eligible /ineligible Partner Countries

*We represent Georgia. In the Programme Guide, it was mentioned that Region 2 can be an applicant. My question is whether an NGO established in Georgia can apply for a capacity-building project in higher education?*

NGO (from Programme or Partner Countries) can be partners in a CBHE project but not an applicant organisation. Please refer to the list of eligible participating organisations in page 150 of the Erasmus+ Programme Guide.

*Regarding Russian participation, in the Erasmus Programme Guide V.2.2015 (23.10.2014) there are mentions to Russia being included in the programme. However, I can't find the National priorities for the Russian Federation.*

As indicated in the *Erasmus+ Programme Guide 2015*, Russian organisations are eligible to participate to the Capacity Building for HE action but under certain condition: as partner, in multicountry projects:

- Page 148 of the guide, in "**Eligible partner countries**": Russian federation is confirmed as eligible partner country from "Region 4";

- Page 150, in "**Who can apply**" you will find the notification for the exception of Russian HEIs who cannot be applicant;
- Page 150, in "**Number and profile of participant organization**" requirement to have a minimum of 2 partner countries for projects involving the Russian federation.

Therefore, the priorities established for Russian Federation should be addressed in conjunction with the regional priorities applying to countries from the region(s) involved in the project.

You can find the list of priorities for Region 4 (Russian Federation) in the Table "Budget allocation, Regional and National priorities on the section "Guidelines" from the CBHE funding webpages ([http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/erasmus-plus/funding/key-action-2-capacity-building-in-field-higher-education-2015\\_en](http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/erasmus-plus/funding/key-action-2-capacity-building-in-field-higher-education-2015_en)).

*Is a university from Hong Kong or from the United States eligible to be a partner in a CBHE consortium?*

Hong Kong and the USA are classified among the Industrialised countries in "Region 13" from the *Erasmus+ Programme Guide* (cf. p. 25). Only countries from the regions 1 to 4 and 6 to 10 are eligible under the CBHE action in 2015 (ACP countries-Region 11 can participate as from the 2016 Call for Proposals).

Therefore, a partner from an ineligible country in your CBHE project cannot be part of the project' partnership, **neither as partner nor as associated partner and should not have a major role in the implementation of the projects' activities** (the project should be able to be implemented without these "non-official" partners). However, **in the description of the project** (in particular parts D and E of the application form) you can still mention any activity involving an important/relevant actor from an ineligible institution along with the reasons justifying their participation. This can be considered as an added value to the project.

## Partner search

*Where can I find partners? Is there a partners' search tool for CBHE action?*

The CBHE action builds on the results of previous EU funded projects (such as those under the former Alfa, Edulink, Erasmus Mundus and Tempus programmes) and address a wide range of countries from the Eastern and Southern Neighbouring area, Central Asia, Asia, Russian Federation, Latin America, Gulf countries and South Africa.

There is no specific database for partner searches for CBHE action, but you can contact partners involved in projects selected in the above-mentioned former programmes.

For example, for a project involving partner countries from Regions 1, 2, 3, 4 and 7, you can check the [Table of projects selected under the Tempus programme \(2008-2013\)](#) (very similar to the new CBHE action) or contact the relevant National Erasmus+ Offices (NEOs) in these Partner Countries ([https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/erasmus-plus/contacts/national-erasmus-plus-offices\\_en](https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/erasmus-plus/contacts/national-erasmus-plus-offices_en)).

For a project involving the other regions: Asia (Region 6), Latin America (Region 8), Middle East countries: Iran, Iraq, Yemen (Regions 9) and South Africa (Region 10): you can find potential partners from the [Erasmus Mundus projects compendia](#) or from the other related programme webpages.

(The regions are detailed in page 24 of the [Erasmus+ Programme Guide](#))

Please note that the specificity of the Capacity Building in Higher Education action relies on the relevance of the projects with the national / regional priorities set by the national authorities of the



target countries. In order to be selected, the specific thematic of your project should above all comply with the national/ regional priorities set from your Partner Countries and this is an important aspect to check when establishing the country target group for your project. You can find the list of these priorities on the [Key action 2-Capacity building in field higher education 2015](#) Call web pages.

*Is there a local contact point in the Programme and/or Partner Countries?*

- In the programme countries, you can contact the **International Erasmus+ Contact point (ICPs)** in the National Agencies:  
[https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/erasmus-plus/contacts/international-erasmus-plus-contact-points\\_en](https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/erasmus-plus/contacts/international-erasmus-plus-contact-points_en)
- **National Erasmus+ Offices (NEOs)** are established in the Partner Countries from [Regions 1, 2, 3, 4, 7](#): The NEOs are responsible for the local management of the international dimension of the higher education aspects of the Erasmus+ Programme and can help potential applicants to identify HEIs that might be interested to cooperate with their country. The full contact details of the existing NEOs in the Partner Countries is available on our website:  
[https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/erasmus-plus/contacts/national-erasmus-plus-offices\\_en](https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/erasmus-plus/contacts/national-erasmus-plus-offices_en)

## **5. PRIORITIES:**

*I'm reading all the documentation about Capacity Building and I have a doubt about National Priorities. Some regions like 8 don't have National Priorities, is it right? We want to apply for Region 8. Do we have to develop just the Regional Priorities?*

Indeed, national priorities apply only to countries in regions 1, 2, 3 and 7 (former Tempus countries) and for Region 10 South Africa (which represents only one Partner Country).

For other regions which are eligible under the CBHE action (i.e. Regions 6, 8 and 9) only regional priorities have been established, applying to all the countries in that region, either for national or multi-country projects.

*In "Category A - Subject areas" (for curricula development) does it mean that only new curricular should be developed and no possibility will be to modernize the existing one?*

"Curriculum development" includes the creation of new curricula and the adaptation / revision / modernization of existing ones (e.g., by introducing new courses, restructuring the existing ones e.g. under modular form, etc.).

*In Category B 1<sup>st</sup> is Bologna Process, which was a 'crosscutting' priority for curricular reform before. Does it mean that there will be no such recommendations to follow the Bologna recommendations and instruments when develop/modernize new curricula?*

No. As correctly stated, curricular reform will have to be implemented in accordance with the Bologna recommendations for what concerns aspects such as the length, the allocation of transferable credits, the learning outcomes and the compatibility with the qualification framework(s). The proposal's adherence to or compatibility with these principles and recommendations will be assessed by the experts. This is part of the modernisation process which is valid all along the Erasmus+ programme period.

*What is better: to have regional or multiregional project?*

Regarding the implementation of a national, regional or multi-regional project, no choice is better than another. The choice depends on the project rationale and the need to implement the project objectives at national level (in one country) or at transnational level (regional level involving more

countries from the same or different regions). This goes in line with the choice of priority addressed to one country or more country (certainly, it must be a common priority to all Partner Countries involved in the project).

To increase the chances for success, the project should clearly respond to the award criteria, as described in page 151 and 152 of the [Erasmus+ Programme Guide](#). Following closely the guiding questions in the application form and replying directly to what is requested under different sections will help as well.

## **6. FUNDING RULES**

### **Co-funding by the project's consortium**

*Based on page 157 of the Programme Guide, it seems that applicants applying for capacity-building will have to indicate a contribution from other sources other than the EU-grant. Could you please confirm if the co-financing has to be indicated in the application and if there is any required percentage/amount for co-financing? Will applications be assessed taking into account the amount of co-financing declared in the Excel table that will be annexed to the application?*

Concerning the financial rules applicable to the new capacity-building action, the EU grant has to be considered as a contribution to cover part of the actual costs incurred by the partner institutions in carrying out the activities foreseen in the application/project. This is a new approach compared to the previous programme Tempus, where a fixed co-funding percentage was calculated according to the total of "real" costs incurred by the project.

The CBHE grant covers:

- Staff costs (unit costs, max. 40% of the grant)
- Travel costs (unit costs)
- Costs of Stay (unit costs)
- Equipment for the partner countries (real costs, max. 30% of the grant)
- Subcontracting (real costs, max. 10% of the grant)

Although the implementation of the project may require other types of expenditure (such as costs for dissemination, publishing, overheads costs), this expenditure will not be taken into account for the calculation of the grant proposed. **As a result, they will have to be covered by co-funding.**

However, in order to ensure that the consortium will effectively consider these other types of expenditures as part of their co-financing, they are requested to indicate them in a specific sheet in the Budget excel table, in line with the instructions given in page 157 of the [Erasmus+ Programme Guide](#). This information will support the assessment of the feasibility of the projects: i.e. a work package including the organisation of a conference or the publication of books should foresee the budget planned by the partnership for these activities, although they are not covered by the EU grant.

## Staff costs

**NEW** *I can't find in the Programme Guide about staff costs for executives (staff members) of the Ministry of higher education in the partner countries. Is it the same Tempus approach applicable for Ministry people who can benefit of mobility but not staff costs?*

No. In the Erasmus+ Programme Guide, the staff from the Ministries are considered as other partners' staff and can receive staff costs under the CBHE action (contrary to the Tempus programme).

Therefore, the ministries:

- can be treated as full partners as any other non-academic partner,
- can receive funds from any budget line, except from equipment which is eligible only for higher education institutions in the Partner Countries.

## Travel costs

*Are future trainers from the Partner Institutions of the project in Colombia and Ecuador eligible to be reimbursed for their travel and subsistent expenses to attend such seminars and courses? Can we also select staff from other institutions in Colombia and Ecuador to attend such seminars and courses? Are these people eligible to be reimbursed for their travel and subsistent expenses even if they come from institutions that are not partners of the project?*

Indeed, Travel costs for staff from Partner Countries are eligible for training and retraining purposes. Please refer to the rule concerning staff costs, indicated in page 287 (Annex1) of the Erasmus+ Programme Guide.

However, as indicated in the Erasmus+ Programme Guide, staff from non-partner organisations is not covered by the CBHE EU grant.

## Subcontracting

*Could you please clarify if expenditure for dissemination can be covered by the grant budget if they are sub-contracted or whether these particular expenditures still have to be co-financed regardless of whether they are sub-contracted or not.*

**Subcontracting is limited to max 10% of the grant and for very specific, time-bound, project-related tasks which cannot be performed by the Consortium members themselves.** Furthermore, subcontracting is based on real costs and must respect a clear tendering procedure (see [Erasmus+ Programme Guide](#), Annex I on CBHE).

Consequently, dissemination costs can possibly account for "subcontracting" if they comply with the above-mentioned requirements. Otherwise, they will have to be covered by the consortium's co-funding.

## **7. Special Mobility Strand**

*Please could you let me know if the EACEA plans to open in future calls (ex. 2016) the Special Mobility Strand to other regions (ex. Latin America)?*

The special mobility strand is not foreseen to be extended to other regions in future Calls under the Erasmus+ Programme.

*Please could you advise me which programme(s) could cover the part of student mobility costs with Partner Countries not eligible under the CBHE Special Mobility Strand (ex. Latin America)?*

As a Programme country HEI, your university can apply for student mobility with Partner Country institutions from all over the world (except regions 5/9/12) under the **KA1 Credit mobility** action (cf. [Erasmus+ Programme Guide](#) p.35-50). Please contact your National Agency for further information.

## **8. Work packages**

*In annex 2. Budget tables Excel file there are five (5) fixed work packages (Preparation, Development, Quality, Dissemination/Exploitation and Management) in the Excel calculation forms.*

*Are we limited to have only these five (5) work packages with these titles also in other annexes like in a detailed project description.docx?*

There are 5 types of work-package:

- Preparation
- Management
- Development (or Implementation - the substance of the work planned including production, testing, etc.)
- Quality Assurance and monitoring (quality plan)
- Dissemination and Exploitation of results

At least one work-package must be elaborated for each of the 5 work-package types listed above. Applications that fail to present this minimum cannot be further considered.

In the Project description document, section H, it is mentioned that you can copy as many as necessary of the tables with these work-packages. However, whilst it is reasonable to have more packages of "Development / Implementation" type, it should not be necessary to include more work-packages of the Preparation type, Management etc. Normally, the project should have a structure easy to understand both by the project partners and the external experts who will evaluate it.

You can also find further clarifications in the Instructions for completing the Application Package ([https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/sites/eacea-site/files/instructions-for-applicants-cbhe-en\\_cbhe-2015.pdf](https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/sites/eacea-site/files/instructions-for-applicants-cbhe-en_cbhe-2015.pdf)).