

**Erasmus+: Higher Education - International Capacity Building**

Brussels,
EACEA.A.4/ARES(2020)

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Programme	EPPKA2 - Cooperation for innovation and the exchange of good practices
Action	CBHE-JP - Capacity Building in higher education - Joint Projects
Proposal	Call for Proposals 2020 - EAC-A02-2019-CBHE
Application No	618290-EPP-1-2020-1-ZA-EPPKA2-CBHE-JP
Title	Higher Education Reform Experts South Africa
Decision	ACCEPTED

Dear Applicant,

You have submitted an application to the Erasmus+ programme, 2020 call for proposals of the action specified above. The call for proposals closed on 05/02/2020. The Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA) received 1005 eligible applications for this call.

I am writing to inform you about the selection decision taken by the Head of Department of the Agency, acting in her capacity as authorising officer, based on the recommendations of an Evaluation Committee assisted by external experts.

In addition, and in line with the provision of the Programme Guide regarding the definition of the list of projects recommended for funding, the Evaluation Committee has also taken into account the results of the consultation with the EU Delegations in the Partner Countries. On the basis of the information provided by the EU Delegation(s), the Evaluation Committee confirmed the feasibility of your project in the local contest.

The selection decision is based on the quality of the application, its relative position in comparison to the other applications submitted and the budget available. Applications were assessed on a scale from 0 to 100 and were ranked by Region according to merit.

Lastly, the selection decision took into account the geographical balance within a Region in terms of the number of projects per country (within the limits of the available budget), the need to ensure that the overall results of the selection guarantees a sufficient coverage of the priorities of the Action and the respect of the condition that an applicant organisation cannot receive more than three grants under a CBHE call.

I am pleased to inform you that your application has been selected for EU co-funding.

The maximum amount of funding to be awarded to your project is 754,834.00 Euro.



The table below provides you with an indication where your proposal was situated. Your application was considered as Group I.

Groups		Number 1005 (100%)
I	Applications of very good quality (score higher than 75 points out of 100)	132 applications (13,13%)
II	Applications of good quality (score between 60 and 75 points out of 100)	539 applications (53,63%)
III	Applications of weak quality (score less than 60 points)	334 applications (33,24%)

For your information, out of the 1005 applications submitted 164 have been selected for funding and 20 have been placed on a reserve list.

The list of all selected projects and success rates by Regions will be published on the website of the Executive Agency when all applicants have been notified about the selection results.

http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/erasmus-plus/selection-results_en

Attached to this letter you will find an evaluation report drawn up by the Evaluation Committee (Annex 1)

On behalf of the EACEA, the Research Executive Agency Validation Services (REA Validation Services) may contact you via the messaging system embedded in the [Participant Register](#), requesting you to submit certain documentation within a specified deadline.

- This is in order to prove – in the event that your PIC number (Participant Identification Code) has not yet been validated – the legal existence and status of your organisation. In case of a multi-applicant proposal, each applicant will be contacted individually.
- The REA Validation Services may also contact your organisation requesting documentation to assess the financial capacity of your organisation.

Please ensure that your bank account is registered in the new bank account section of the [Participant Register](#).

This new functionality will allow you to see the bank accounts registered through the new bank account section for your organisation and the status of the validation.

During the registration process, you will have to enter your data in a wizard and upload relevant supporting documents. The preferred option is to upload a bank statement or equivalent document. As a last resort, you can also download a pre-filled Financial Identification Form to be stamped by the bank.

You will be guided through the registration process. If you need further support, please have a look at the [IT manual](#) or contact the [IT helpdesk](#) in case of technical issues.

If you have any question on the validation process, please refer to the Research Enquiry Service and [Participant Validation](#) webpage.



The process of awarding a grant can only be finalised once the Executive Agency has received and analysed the additional documents that will be requested by the Agency in a separate email that you will receive shortly. The documents specified in the email must be submitted within a period of 10 working days from the date of receipt of the email. Should the period for submission fall within the holiday period of the Applicant Organisation, the deadline will be extended until the Applicant Organisation is open. Please inform the Agency as soon as possible about the date you will be able to submit the requested documents. However, all the requested documents/information needs to be received by the Agency no later than 10 September 2020.

The information specified in the list of documents to be submitted should be sent to the following address by email:

EACEA-EPLUS-CBHE-PROJECTS@ec.europa.eu

This letter does not represent a financial or legal commitment of the Executive Agency. The offer of an award is confirmed only when the legal representative of the Executive Agency signs the Grant Agreement associated with this application.

Please do not hesitate to contact us should you have any further questions.

Yours sincerely,

Ralf RAHDERS

Head of Unit

Contact: eacea-eplus-cbhe-projects@ec.europa.eu

Appendix: Annex 1 - Evaluation report



Annex 1

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	Award Criteria	Comments
1	Relevance of the project	<p>This well-constructed proposal clearly responds to the Capacity Building Action in respect of the needs of the Partner Country technical universities to transform their approaches to teaching and learning and to develop an improved capacity at all levels for strategy management, and to open up the institutions to the labour market and society at large. The proposal is fully in line with the Region Ten priority of modernisation of governance, management, and the functioning of higher education institutions, with a specific focus on the strategic planning of the institutions concerned.</p> <p>The proposal has clear initiatives aimed at the key target groups. The proposal demonstrates how each of the target groups will be variously affected by the activities and expected results of the project. The proposal argues convincingly for the relevance of the project to modernise, develop, and internationalise the partner institutions. Since the institutions concerned already serve varied and largely socio-economically disadvantaged communities, the project will address the needs of largely rural populations and students from the poorest communities. The objectives of the proposal clearly respond to an understanding of the needs of the Partner institutions. The needs analysis identifies a necessity to re-shape learning strategies and improve university-society relationships, along with the development of leadership capacity.</p> <p>The proposal is innovative, especially with its focus on the technical universities. Certain individual aspects are new initiatives: for example, the selection of persons from the institutional leadership of the institution for job shadowing and mentoring visits, guarantees ownership in the project. It is the extension of a project that was run successfully in Europe and is a feature of that project's dissemination policy. The project also builds on other projects related to the harmonisation of quality assurance and curricular design. The proposal demonstrates the relevance of the European institutions and argues for the lack of national funding for such an extensive international proposal.</p> <p>The proposal does not provide specific information regarding the ways in which it will enhance diversity or gender balance within the institutions concerned. Although the proposal has identified broad institutional needs, it does not contain a precise quantitative needs analysis. The proposal does not demonstrate successfully whether it could have looked to other South African institutions and business schools for examples of best practice or the extent to which there funding was not available at the local, national, or regional level, especially as major higher education networks in South Africa are involved in the project organisation.</p>
2	Quality of the project design and implementation	<p>The project activities, which have an emphasis on their potential impact on policy, are generally very clear and of high quality. They show some degree of novelty. The main activities will revolve around the preparation and implementation of a training programme which will address the needs of the target groups concerned and are usefully intended to project concrete improvements in teaching. Activities surrounding dissemination and exploitation of the project seem appropriate to develop the project's potential. The methodology is standard and has a clear trajectory from preparatory phases through to dissemination and exploitation. The proposal demonstrates that there is a certain cost-effectiveness to the project. Staffing numbers and lengths of stay are kept to a minimum and the majority of the face-to-face meetings appropriately take place in South Africa. Costs are fairly evenly divided between participants. The proposal makes a good case for exceptional allowances for flight costs. There is consistency between the project objectives, methodology, activities, and overall budget proposed. The Logical Framework Matrix and work packages demonstrate logical planning for the different phases of the project from preparation to the dissemination of results. There are detailed descriptions of work package outcomes with clearly identified milestones. The assumptions and risks are clearly articulated with suitable mitigating actions. Some indicators to measure the outputs and outcomes of the action are offered, internal quality control mechanisms are clearly described, and responsibilities shared among the different institutions. External quality controls are also planned during, and at the end of, the project.</p> <p>It is unclear why one of the activities is devoted to generating knowledge across the network and generating consensus on the project's direction. The proposal does not explain how equipment could be purchased before the detailed preparation of the training programme. It is not apparent why one partner in charge of dissemination and exploitation receives almost double the amount of funding in comparison to the other institutions. Equipment purchases do not appear to be based on a relevant needs analysis, and lack sufficient details regarding the hardware, software, or learning management system to be purchased. The work plan fails to give exact figures for the number of weeks worked in Programme or Partner countries and there are some inconsistencies. Verifiable indicators for assessing the progress of the project are inconsistently applied, for example, certain work packages have no indicators of progress in the Logical Framework Matrix.</p>



Annex 1

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	Award Criteria	Comments
3	Quality of the project team and the cooperation arrangements	<p>This consortium consists of Partner country institutions from several different provinces, representing all of the technical universities in the Partner country. The universities complement one another in terms of the size of the student body and, in terms of their essential ethnic and linguistic composition. The partnership will draw on a shared interest in the project with Irish universities and the experience of other European partners which can offer specific expertise relevant to the central aims of the project. It further includes partners who have previously collaborated. There is an impressive list of personnel involved in this project, the majority with higher level leadership positions. There is sufficient evidence of personnel both in the Partner country institutions and in the Programme countries with expertise relevant to teaching and education, including the use of information and communication technologies. The proposal also demonstrates that the staff from the umbrella organisations involved have sufficient experience in project management and European funding programmes to deliver this project successfully. One of the strengths of the proposal is that it includes both a Partner country and Programme country umbrella organisation with university associations. The project will also include a government mandated institution for higher education quality assurance and governance which will play an important role in the dissemination and sustainability of the project. Leadership roles within the project are equitably shared with Programme countries and Partner country institutions leading or co-leading work packages. Responsibility for training is largely in the hands of the Programme country institutions, although the Partner country institutions will play important roles throughout the course of the project. This demonstrates the commitment of all the partners in the project. The proposal indicates plans for a logical management structure, including a Project Management Team, and Quality Monitoring Committee. There is a process to organise regular meetings and feedback to discuss issues.</p> <p>It is unclear why the project would appoint the Portuguese umbrella organisation as an effective co-leader on the grounds that the lead applicant has never led such a project before. This organisation is led by individuals who have international reputations, worked in leadership roles at internationally ranked South African institutions, and contributed to international initiatives. Specific methods for communication within committees and work package structures are not developed in the proposal. It is implied that this will only happen in the context of the kick-off meeting. Likewise measures for conflict management are under-developed and do not provide precise methods to resolve conflict situations (for example, voting procedures). It is not clear which organisations have or have not received capacity building support in the past.</p>
4	Impact and sustainability	<p>The proposal is likely to have a long term impact on the capacities of the Partner country higher education institutions especially in the strategic development of different learning processes which should lead to more relevant curricula, connections to the wider labour market, and better internationalisation. The involvement of all the South African technical universities and their umbrella body plus the Council on Higher Education is a significant step forward towards the development and modernisation of education in these institutions. The proposal has a varied list of measures to assess its impact. The dissemination plan is assisted by the involvement of the Council on Higher Education which will assist with meetings, with the project network and help to shape policy relevant to the project. The issuance of policy briefs, the website, and various partner university networks all seem to be good strategies for disseminating the results of the project. The proposal rightly indicates that the involvement of university leadership will assist in the sustainability of the project and the realisation of its results. It is likely too that the shared objectives and outlook of the involved institutions will ensure a longer-term sustainability.</p> <p>The proposal indicates that only a small number of staff and faculty will be involved in the training; the impact of the webinars or strategic documents to be produced is unclear. Therefore, the impact of the project may be very limited during the project's lifetime. The proposal does not convincingly demonstrate how the project will have multiplier effects outside the participating organisation at local, national or regional level. For example, the proposal does not show how the project might be relevant to traditional South African universities or those which combine elements of academic and vocation oriented degrees. Unfortunately, the proposal does not provide quantitative figures for its anticipated impact. The proposal lacks details regarding the resources in the partner institutions which can disseminate the project results. For example, in the case of internal campaigns or webinars. The proposal hints at future sources of funding, for example, the universities' own resources, the Council on Higher Education, the South African Ministry of Education, or national development cooperation funding, but does not provide a targeted idea of the potential for these to provide the project with real sustainability.</p>