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(Announcements)

ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES

EUROPEAN COMMISSION

CALL FOR PROPOSALS — EACEA/35/12

Tempus IV — Reform of higher education through international university cooperation

(2012/C 375/07)

1. Objectives and description

The fourth phase of the Tempus programme covers the period from 2007 to 2013.

The overall objective of the programme is to support the modernisation of higher education in the EU's surrounding area. The Tempus programme promotes institutional cooperation and focuses on the reform and modernisation of higher education systems in the partner countries. It contributes to an area of cooperation in higher education involving the European Union and partner countries in its wider proximity. In particular, the programme will promote voluntary convergence with EU developments in the field of higher education, deriving from the 'Europe 2020' strategy, the strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training ('ET 2020') and the Bologna process.

The purpose of this call for proposals is to promote multilateral cooperation among higher education institutions, authorities and organisations from EU Member States and partner countries, with the focus on the reform and modernisation of higher education.

The Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency ('the Agency'), acting under powers delegated from the European Commission ('the Commission'), is responsible for the management of this call for proposals.

2. Eligible applicants

In order to be eligible for the award of a grant, applicants must be legal persons ('legal entities'), legally established for more than five years in the EU or Tempus partner countries.

Applicants for Joint Projects must be State-recognised, public or private higher education institutions or associations, organisations or networks of higher education institutions dedicated to the promotion, improvement and reform of higher education.

Applicants for Structural Measures must be legal entities as stipulated above for Joint Projects or national or international rector, teacher or student organisations.

Institutions and organisations which may participate as partners/co-beneficiaries in the Tempus programme range from higher education institutions and organisations through to non-academic institutions and organisations such as non-governmental organisations, companies, industries and public authorities.

These institutions and organisations have to be based in the following four groups of eligible countries:

— 27 Member States of the European Union and Croatia ⁽¹⁾,

⁽¹⁾ Croatia is expected to become a Member State of the European Union on 1 July 2013. The participation of Croatia in the present call for proposals is subject to the entry into force of the Accession Treaty by the date of the award decision.

- 4 countries of the Western Balkan region (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Serbia) and Kosovo (*),
- 16 countries in the Southern and Eastern neighbouring area of the European Union (Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, the occupied Palestinian territory, Syria, Tunisia, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova, Ukraine) and the Russian Federation,
- 5 Central Asian Republics: Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan.

3. Eligible actions

The two principal instruments for cooperation through this Tempus call for proposals are:

- Joint Projects: projects with a 'bottom-up' approach aiming at modernisation and reform on an institutional (university) level. Joint Projects aim at transferring knowledge between universities, organisations and institutions from the EU and from the partner countries as well as between partner country entities as appropriate.
- Structural Measures: projects seeking to contribute to the development and reform of higher education systems in partner countries, as well as to enhance their quality and relevance and to increase their voluntary convergence with EU developments. Structural Measures will be interventions designed to support structural reform of higher education systems and the strategic framework development at national level.

Under this call, national and multi-country projects can be financed:

National projects must adhere to national priorities which are established in close dialogue between EU Delegations and the relevant authorities in the partner countries.

- For national projects, proposals must be submitted by groupings of institutions involving:
 - at least three higher education institutions from a partner country (in the case of Montenegro and Kosovo, due to the small size of the higher education sector, one university will be sufficient),
 - at least three higher education institutions from the EU, each from a different EU Member State.

Multi-country projects must comply with regional priorities which are based on the EU's policy for cooperation with the partner countries' regions as identified in its strategic documents concerning the neighbouring countries ⁽¹⁾, those for pre-accession to the EU ⁽²⁾ and those in Central Asia ⁽³⁾. They are common to all partner countries within a specific region or they address a national priority which is common to each of the participating partner countries.

- For multi-country projects, proposals must be submitted by groupings of institutions involving:
 - at least two higher education institutions from each of the participating partner countries (minimum two partner countries) involved in the proposal (with the exception of Kosovo and Montenegro where the requirement is one higher education institution from each),
 - at least three higher education institutions, each from a different EU Member State.

For Structural Measures, there is an additional condition: the ministry/ies responsible for higher education in the partner country/ies must be involved as partner/s in a Structural Measures project.

The maximum duration of projects is 24 months or 36 months. The period of eligibility of costs is expected to start on 1 December 2013.

(*) This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence.

⁽¹⁾ Regulation (EC) No 1638/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 October 2006 laying down general provisions establishing a European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument: http://ec.europa.eu/world/enp/pdf/oj_1310_en.pdf

⁽²⁾ Council Regulation (EC) No 1085/2006 of 17 July 2006 establishing an Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA): http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/site/en/oj/2006/l_210/l_21020060731en00820093.pdf

⁽³⁾ Regulation (EC) No 1905/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 December 2006 establishing a financing instrument for development cooperation (DCI): <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/lex/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2006:378:0041:0071:EN:PDF>

4. Award criteria

Eligible applications for Joint Projects and Structural Measures will be assessed by external independent experts according to the following award criteria:

- the clarity of the project objectives and their relevance with regard to the higher education priorities and labour market needs of each partner country, including synergy with any other initiatives and avoidance of duplication; the needs and constraints of each beneficiary institution; the participation of new higher education institutions; the impact of the project on the reform and modernisation of higher education systems in the partner country (maximum score of 25 points),
- the quality of the partnership: skills, recognised expertise and competences required to carry out all aspects of the work programme, suitable distribution of tasks, effective communication and cooperation (maximum score of 20 points),
- the quality of the project's contents and applied methodology including, amongst others, appropriateness of project outcomes and related activities in consistency with the project aim and specific objectives, demonstrated logical and sound planning capacity (logical framework matrix and work plan), anticipated quality control, monitoring and management of the project (indicators and benchmarks) (maximum score of 25 points),
- the sustainability or lasting impact of the project on the institutions, target groups and/or higher education system, including dissemination and exploitation of activities and project results (maximum score of 15 points),
- the budget and cost-effectiveness, including staff planning respecting the daily salary rates, appropriate equipment purchase, efficient use of mobility periods, fair distribution of the budget, feasibility of the action with the defined budget (maximum score of 15 points).

5. Budget

The total budget available for the co-financing of projects is estimated at EUR 129,8 million ⁽¹⁾.

The financial contribution from the European Union cannot exceed 90 % of the total eligible costs. A co-financing of a minimum of 10 % of the total eligible costs is needed.

The minimum grant for both Joint Projects and Structural Measures will be EUR 500 000. The maximum grant will amount to EUR 1 500 000. For national projects in Kosovo and Montenegro, the minimum grant for both project types is set at EUR 300 000.

The Agency reserves the right not to distribute all the funds available.

6. Deadline for submission of applications

Applications for Joint Projects and Structural Measures must be submitted to the Executive Agency (EACEA) no later than 26 March 2013, 12.00 (Brussels time).

Only electronic applications drawn up in English, French or German, submitted on the official application form, duly signed by the person entitled to enter into legally binding commitments on behalf of the applicant organisation and containing all the information and annexes specified in the full text of the call will be accepted.

This online submission is the master copy. Additional legal and administrative documents (see Application Guidelines) must be sent by post to the Agency by 26 March 2013 (date of postmark) to the following address:

Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency
Tempus & Bilateral Cooperation with Industrialised Countries
Call for proposals EACEA/35/12
Office: BOUR 2/17
Avenue du Bourget/Bourgetlaan 1
1140 Bruxelles/Brussel
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⁽¹⁾ An additional budget of EUR 11,11 million for the Western Balkans area might become available following the adoption of the relevant Commission's decision. Another amount of EUR 5 million for Tunisia might become available following the adoption of the relevant Commission's decision. The availability of these amounts will be announced on the Tempus programme website.

Applications sent by fax or e-mail will not be accepted.

7. Full details

The guidelines together with the application forms can be found at the following Internet address:

<http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/tempus>

Applications must comply with all the terms of the guidelines and be submitted on the forms provided.
