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FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

I. Higher Education Institution (HEI)

A) HEI Applicants

1. Who can act as “coordinating institution”?

EMA2-Strand 1:

Proposals can be submitted by Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) settled in any of the 27 European Union Member States of the European Union also referred as "European countries". Third-country HEIs can participate as active members of the partnership in the same actions as European HEIs but they cannot submit a proposal as coordinating institution.

Other countries, as candidate countries with a pre-accession strategy (Croatia, Turkey, FYROM), potential candidate countries (Western Balkans and the Swiss Confederation) or EEA countries (Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway) cannot apply on the same footing as Member States **unless**, and in accordance with Article 9 of the Programme Decision, **an agreement has been signed on participation in the programme** between the EU and the country concerned at the time of drafting the Erasmus Mundus 2009-2013 Programme Guide document.

EMA2-Strand 2:

Proposals can only be submitted by Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) settled in the 27 European Union Member States.

2. What is an Erasmus Charter?

In order to be eligible Applicants must have obtained an Erasmus University Charter before the date of publication of the Call for proposals.

The Erasmus University Charter (EUC) provides the general framework for the European co-operation activities for sending and receiving students and teaching staff on mobility assignments, as well as for carrying out intensive programmes and coordinating multilateral projects and networks.

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More detailed information can be found at the following address:
http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/llp/erasmus/erasmus_en.htm

3. How many proposals can be submitted by an applicant or partnership?

EMA2-Strand 1:

An applicant can submit one proposal for any specific lot. The same European partnership may submit proposals to a maximum of four lots.

EMA2-Strand 2:

An applicant can submit one proposal for any specific lot. The same European partnership may submit proposals to a maximum of two lots.

4. Which third-country HEIs are eligible to participate?

In order to be eligible under Action 2, Higher Education Institutions must be registered in one of the third-countries targeted by the Call for proposals. In addition, third-country HEIs must be fully accredited by the Ministry of Education of the respective country and the degrees issued must be fully recognised by the national authority and in line with the national system of education.

5. What should a third-country HEI do to participate in a partnership?

Universities from countries outside the EU may not submit an application to Erasmus Mundus Action 2 partnerships. However, they may be involved as full partners within a Partnership.

You may therefore wish to contact HEIs who have the intention of creating a partnership related to your region or country or to the coordinators of existing partnerships, who are planning to include new third country HEIs in the context of the running call or following call for proposals.

Therefore, if you are interested in making contacts with a view to taking part in a project, you can provide details of your institution and interests in the Erasmus Mundus partner search tool:
<http://erasmusmundus.teamwork.fr/>

You may also review some of the websites of the existing partnerships here:
http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/erasmus_mundus/results_compendia/selected_projects_action_2_en.php

If possible we strongly recommend you attend or follow via webstream the yearly Infoday that is organised in Brussels shortly after the publication of a new call is published. This may also will enable you to meet EU HEIs looking for third-country partners

The National Structures of the EU Member States can also be contacted to search for partners from certain EU countries – link.

6. What is a geographical window and a geographical lot?

A geographical window refers to the geographical regions targeted by the programme and by specific cooperation instruments. Each window is divided into geographical lots, which represent either a group of third countries or, in some cases, one single country.

7. What is a partnership?

A partnership is a group of higher education institutions (from European and third country HEIs) that intends to implement the mobility scheme within one geographical lot concerned by the call for proposals. In order to be considered as eligible for funding, a Partnership needs to be constituted of:

EMA2-Strand 1:

- A minimum of five European HEIs from at least three European Union Member States
- HEIs from third-countries included in the corresponding individual geographical lot. The minimum required is established for each lot within the Guidelines to the Call for Proposals.

The maximum size of the partnership is limited to 20 partners.

Depending of the specific geographical lot, partnerships should include third-country universities, either private or public, settled in less developed targeted regions. This is not an eligibility requirement however, their presence is strongly encouraged.

EMA2-Strand 2:

- A minimum of five European HEIs from at least three European Union Member States
- HEIs from third-countries present in the corresponding lot. The minimum number required is

established by each lot within the Guidelines to the Call for Proposals.

The maximum size of the partnership is limited to 12 partners.

8. What are the roles of the institutions participating in the partnership?

Action 2 partnerships comprise an applicant/coordinator, partners and - if applicable - associates.

Applicant: the institution that submits the application on behalf of the Partnership will act as the unique interlocutor and is legally responsible for the partnership vis-à-vis to the Agency.

Partners: all institutions participating in the Partnership must have an active and clearly-defined role within the Partnership and, for higher education institutions, be in the position to send and host students and staff in line with the guidelines and the agreement.

The application form has to be accompanied by the partnership statements by all participating partner institutions (Annex 3 of the grant application form). Each partnership statement has to be signed by the relevant authority of the partner institutions involved, confirming its agreement with the application submitted.

The roles will be also reflected in a later stage during the organisation of the mobility scheme, where the applicant and its partners will draw up a Memorandum of Understanding defining the academic, administrative and financial rights and obligations of each member of the partnership.

Associated partner: Associated partners are not entitled to benefit financially from the EU grant. Further details see FAQ number 9.

9. What is an associated partner?

An "associated partner" is any other type of organisation or institution from the eligible countries that plays an active role in the action but is not entitled to benefit directly from the grant. Associated partners do not have to sign the "partnership agreement". NGOs, regional institutions of higher educations, research centres, enterprises and chambers of industry and commerce can be an example of associates. Their role will be to facilitate and contribute to the transfer of knowledge, innovation process, promotion, implementation of the individual mobility for instance by identifying and/or, preparing third-country mobility candidates, by assisting incoming students of staff members in their host country(ies), by identifying and providing placement facilities to incoming students, or by playing a role in evaluation and sustainable development.

10. Do the partners have to sign any kind of agreement between them?

There are two kinds of documents the partners must elaborate during the different stages of submission and implementation of their projects.

- Before the submission of the application/proposal:
 - A Partnership Statement must be signed by the appropriate authorities of each institution participating in the project, confirming their agreement with and endorsement of the project, to be annexed to the application form.
- During the organisation of the mobility scheme: once a partnership is selected and before the selection phase of candidates:
 - A Memorandum of Understanding must be drawn up among the partners with the objective to reach a sound management of the partnership and address all aspects linked to the management of the partnerships and organisation of the mobility scheme, such as the role and responsibility of the partners concerning mobility activities. This might include for example the communication strategy, the procedure and criteria for the selection of candidates and specific programme objectives such as recognition, quality assurance, prevention of brain drain and sustainability. It must also contain clear financial arrangements among the partners regarding the organisation costs and the management of scholarship.

11. What is an individual mobility flow?

Each mobility scheme is composed of individual mobility flows whose minimum number, types and conditions are indicated in specific sections of the Guidelines to the Call for Proposals.

12. Who can benefit from an individual mobility grant?

EMA2-Strand1:

- Students and staff who are nationals of the European countries and are registered in one of the European HEIs member of the partnership
- Students who are nationals of the third countries concerned by the geographical lot (EMA2-Strand1)

EMA2-Strand2:

- Students (masters students, doctorate and post-doctorate candidates) who are nationals of the

European countries. For masters and doctorates students they need to be registered in a HEI within the partnership, and for post-doctorates being supported by an HEI within the partnership.

- Staff who are nationals of the countries/territories represented in the partnership and employed by one of the HEIs of the partnership.

13. How long does a mobility flow last?

The duration of the mobility depends on the type of mobility and the target group (please refer to the Programme Guide, Action 2, Duration).

14. What is a target group and how many target groups exist?

EMA2-Strand1:

A target group is a group of students/academic staff having the same characteristics regarding the institution/country of origin and/or personal situation.

There are 3 target groups:

- Target group 1: nationals of the third countries concerned by the geographical lot and nationals of European countries registered in one of the universities that is a member of the Partnership
- Target group 2: nationals of the third countries concerned by the geographical lot and currently not registered at any third-country HEIs participating as a partner in the partnership.
- Target group 3: nationals of the third countries concerned by the geographical lot who are in particularly vulnerable situations for social and political reasons (refugees, asylum seekers, indigenous population etc).

EMA2-Strand2:

- Target group 1: individuals registered in one of the HEIs that is a member of the partnership.

15. Is it a formal requirement that applications address all three target groups?

EMA2-STRAND1:

In general all three Target Groups should be presented in any mobility scheme. However, depending o

the specific Third-Country needs, there could be explicit requirements concerning the exclusion of one target group.

Target group 1 refers to European and third-country individuals. You may refer to the specific lot in the section of the Guidelines to the Call in order to know the distribution established for Target Group 1 in terms of percentage of the European and third-country individual mobility covered by the project.

Target Group 2 and 3 only covers third-country mobility to the EU. Refer to the specific lot to know what percentage of the total individual mobility of the project must be provided by third-country students' mobility.

In their project, applicants shall describe the target groups that will benefit from their mobility scheme.

Considering the benefits that this Programme can provide, it is strongly recommended that Partnerships establish appropriate measures in order to give the opportunity to individuals from Target Group 2 and 3 to participate in the mobility scheme.

EMA2-STRAND2:

Under Strand 2, students and staff must be registered at one of the partner institutions (or – in the case of post-doctorate candidates – supported by one of the partner institutions. This applies to both European and third-country individuals. Refer to the specific lot to know percentage of the total individual mobility of the project must be provided by European and third-country mobility.

16. How many types of individual mobility flows are targeted?

There are 5 types of individual mobility:

- Undergraduates (not applicable for EMA2-Strand2)
- Masters
- Doctorates
- Post-doctorate fellowships
- Staff

These types of mobility are targeted depending on the specific geographical window concerned.

17. Are Partnerships obliged to include mobility proposals for each of the five types of mobility (i.e. undergraduate, masters, doctorate, post-doctorate and academic staff)?

It will depend of the geographical windows or lots concerned. See specific related requirements for

each lot in the Guidelines to the Call for proposals.

18. How should we distribute the types of mobility?

Applicants must reflect the distribution according to the percentages established in the respective window/lot. The distribution by type of mobility proposed must be respected, otherwise your proposal will not be considered as eligible for a grant.

The distribution of the mobilities is calculated on the basis of the total number of mobilities and not on the budget foreseen to implement the mobilities.

19. Which disciplines or subject areas are covered by Erasmus Mundus Action 2?

Erasmus Mundus Action 2 covers a wide range of thematic fields of studies and disciplines which are defined in line with the regional needs under the individual geographical windows.

20. What kind of academic recognition is expected at the end of an individual student mobility flow?

Based on the Memorandum of Understanding, Partnerships must provide the student at the end of each mobility period with the appropriate academic recognition.

Credit transfer and accumulation are facilitated by the use of the ECTS key documents, such as the Learning Agreement and Transcript of Records as well as the Diploma Supplement.

Before starting an individual mobility, a learning agreement has to be signed between the student, the home and host institution. Any changes during the mobility must be agreed by all three parties.

If the mobility period is covering only part of a curriculum, the student must be provided by his/her host institution with a transcript of records specifying the marks obtained for each of the courses attended. This transcript must be used by the home institution for recognising the study period abroad as part of the general curriculum required for obtaining the final degree. In addition, a Diploma supplement could be issued at the end of his/her studies identifying the courses followed and the marks obtained during the student's study period abroad. Exchanges which will lead to the award of double diplomas or joint diplomas are strongly encouraged.

For individual mobility flows covering the totality of the curriculum required for obtaining a degree, this latter will be issued by the student's host institution.

21. Does Erasmus Mundus Action 2 use the ECTS credit system?

The individual student mobility flows between European and third-country universities should be implemented in the spirit of the ERASMUS Higher Education mobility programme. In this respect, they have to ensure the academic recognition of the studies carried out in the host country of the mobile students. In order to fulfil this condition, the use of the ECTS or other similar credit transfer system is highly recommended.

22. What language requirements are there for an individual mobility flow?

Students must have sufficient knowledge of the language of the course or of one of the languages currently spoken in the hosting countries.

The Partnership must ensure that clear information on the language of tuition is provided in advance to the candidate students or teaching staff member, and that selected individuals have the required knowledge to follow (or give) courses in the languages concerned.

If applicable, participating HEIs must cover the language courses costs which is considered as participation costs. If the language of the hosting country is different to the tuition language, it is recommended to offer an introductory course in the relevant language.

23. What does the EU grant cover?

A grant is a financial contribution to cover the different activities necessary to attain the objectives of the action. The grant does not finance the entire operating expenditure of the beneficiary. The grant will be calculated on the basis of:

- A lump sum for the organisation of the mobility incurred by the HEIs will correspond to EUR 10 000 per institution within the partnership for the whole project duration
- Unit costs amounts for individual scholarships to cover the travel expenses, subsistence costs, insurance costs and participation costs for mobile students and staff.

In accordance with the principles applicable to lump sums and unit costs, these have been calculated as maximum amounts allocated to the project in order to cover only part of the real costs of the activities they correspond to. As a result, any expenditure incurred by the partnership beyond these unit costs/lump sums may not be covered by the EU grant.

24. What kind of agreement will the selected partnerships be offered and for which duration?

Following the decision to award a grant, the selected partnerships will be offered a grant agreement covering the financial contribution for the organisation of the mobility scheme as well as the expenses for the individual scholarships allocated to students and staff as reflected in the proposal submitted under the corresponding call for proposals. The duration of the grant agreement will vary up to 48 months.

25. How are the submitted proposals selected?

During the selection processes the Agency is responsible for performing the eligibility check, and for verifying whether a proposal fulfils the selection criteria. Proposals are selected through a competitive system based on their academic quality, and all candidates are subject to the same award criteria.

Independent academic experts will assess all eligible applications on the basis of the award criteria defined in the Programme Guide. For EMA2-Strand 1 these are specified under section 6.1.3 and for EMA2-Strand2 under section 6.2.3. On the basis of the academic experts' assessment and their final score awarded to each application, a Selection Committee composed of officials from the Commission and the Agency will draw up a list of partnerships to be selected. The Agency consults the EU Delegations in third countries with regard to the eligibility of HEIs and the relevance of the proposals to the objectives. Once the official decision on the selection of partnerships is taken by the Authorising Officer, the results will be communicated to all applicants.

B) HEI Beneficiaries

26. Under which criteria do partnerships select students and staff?

Each Partnership has to identify its own common set of criteria in compliance with the principle of transparency and equal treatment to select students and staff. The aspects to be evaluated in the applicants can comprise CVs, study and exam results, specific requirements for language skills, relevant work experience, letters of motivation and letters of recommendation. The Agency reserves the right to verify if the selection of the students and staff has been carried out in respect of the principle of transparency fair and equal treatment. Candidates not fulfilling the eligibility criteria are automatically disqualified. Only candidates fulfilling the established selection criteria should be included on the main and/or reserve lists. All other candidates should consequently be considered as non-selected.

The Partnership must provide the Agency the signed document of "**Minimum requirements for the selection procedure**" - which have been uploaded on the "Action 2 Beneficiary Space" of the Erasmus Mundus website (http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/erasmus_mundus/beneficiaries/beneficiaries_action_2_en.php) to show that the procedures described in this document have been implemented, to guarantee the **transparency** of the **selection process** and an **equitable treatment** of individual applications.

27. What is the Erasmus Mundus Mobility Database (EM MD) and how to use it?

The EM MD is a tool to keep track of the students and staff selected by each Partnership.

The purpose of this EM MD is to maintain information on the selected candidates activities, mobility tracks, credits earned, amounts received etc. and to provide the coordinators with automated reports, which they need to send to the Agency regularly.

It is available at the following address (log-in page): <https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/erasmus-mundus/index.cfm>

For having access to the tool, a personalised e-mail with username and password will be provided to each Partnership to encode the name of the selected candidates. To help you with this exercise, the "Erasmus Mundus Mobility Database – User manual" are currently available on the EM MD log-in page.

28. Who is responsible for the management of the EU grant within the partnerships?

The coordinating institution is responsible for the distribution of the total amount received from the EU grant for *the organisation of the mobility* scheme as well as the management of *the individual scholarships* allocated to students and staff.

The coordinating institution, in accordance with the partners, decides and agrees on the internal arrangements and distributes the part of the EU grant for *the organisation of the mobility*, which covers the costs of organisational activities incurred by the HEIs, accordingly.

The partnership will decide and agree how to manage the EU grant for scholarships, which covers the costs related to the travel expenses, subsistence allowances, insurance costs and participation costs for mobile students and staff, in order to ensure its efficient and effective implementation. It is up to the partnership to define the procedure for the payment of these costs. For example, when it comes to management of travel, some Partnerships decide to assign all direct booking to one travel agency, while others decentralise this among the home institutions or to reimburse directly to the grantee's own travel arrangements.

29. Who pays the allocated amounts to students and staff and how?

The partnership is responsible for paying the scholarships to the students and staff. Partnerships are free to establish their own payment modalities provided they respect the full monthly amount to be paid out and that the payments are performed on time.

The participating HEIs must make an effort to ensure that each student/staff member has sufficient funds to start his/her mobility, especially during the first days of his/her stay at the hosting HEI. For this purpose, it is recommended to pay an advance of the scholarship.

30. What kind of services are partnerships expected to offer to incoming students and staff?

Partnerships are expected to offer practical information and assistance to welcome the incoming students/ staff, and to facilitate their introduction in the hosting HEI. These services may include linguistic support (language courses), housing facilities, coaching and counselling, welfare services, activities aiming at social integration, services for students with a family or special needs, as well as other support measures. Details can be obtained directly from the Partnership concerned.

31. How will the mobility scheme budget be calculated?

The budget form annexed to the application form intends to establish the provisional budget and grant requested for the preparation and implementation of the proposed mobility flows. In the budget form, 5 parts can be distinguished:

1. Organisation of the mobility: a lump sum of EUR 10 000 per eligible partner participating in the partnership.
2. Subsistence allowances: total subsistence allowances covering the period abroad of all individual mobility flows and calculated on the basis of the rates defined in the Programme Guide, section 6.3 (Financial Conditions).
3. Travel costs: total amount of travel costs calculated on the basis of the unit-costs defined in the Programme Guide section 6.3 (Financial Conditions), for each individual mobility flow.
4. Participation costs: total amount of tuition and/or registration fees, laboratory and library costs, language courses costs etc. for incoming students as charged to local and international students and in accordance with the maximum defined in the Programme Guide section 6.3 (Financial Conditions).
5. Insurance: total amount of insurance costs calculated on the basis of the rates defined in the Programme Guide section 6.3 (Financial Conditions), for each individual mobility flow.

32. What are the costs related to the organisation of the mobility?

There is a part of the EU grant awarded that can be used to cover these costs incurred by the HEIs – *for example the organisation of meetings including travel costs, staff costs, communications costs etc.* – and they are calculated on the basis of lump-sum amounts. For the whole duration of the project the lump sum amount will be equivalent to EUR 10 000 multiplied by the number of institutions within the partnership.

33. What are the costs related to the implementation of the mobility?

There is a part of the EU grant awarded to cover the expenditure incurred by the individual mobility of students and staff that covers the travel costs, subsistence allowances, insurance costs and participation costs for mobile students and staff.

These costs are calculated on the basis of unit-costs defined on the Programme Guide, section 6.3 Financial conditions.

34. How are travel expenses calculated?

For each individual mobility flow an amount is allocated for travel costs. This amount is based on a fixed sum depending on the distance ("as the crow flies") between on one side the location of origin (for Target Group 2), location of residence (for Target Group 3) or home HEI (for Target Group 1) of the student/ staff and on the other side the hosting HEI premises.

It is suggested to consult the web site www.mapcrow.info as the reference for calculating the distances.

A travel grant is calculated for each specific mobility flow, irrespective of the travel costs that will be finally incurred. It is up to the Partnership to define the procedure to be used for the payment of these costs (direct reimbursement to the grantee, direct booking by the partnership, etc).

Although the total mobility period can be divided in successive periods in the host institution, only one unit cost amount is calculated per individual student or staff.

If an individual mobility flow includes a stay in different hosting institutions, the partnership should use the longest distance to calculate the travel amount for the corresponding flow.

35. Can partnerships allocate to mobile individuals different subsistence allowances than those defined in the Programme Guide?

No. The subsistence allowance calculated on the basis of the monthly allowance table included in the Programme Guide (see section 6.3) must be paid in full to the grantees. A part should be provided upon arrival to cover installation costs and the remaining part must be fractioned and disbursed on a regular basis, preferably every month.

36. What are the costs related to the participation costs?

The participation costs may cover tuition and/or registration fees, additional library, student union, laboratory consumables, residence permit, language courses costs etc. on an equal basis to that charged to local and international students.

Participation costs charged to EM Action 2 students should not exceed the amount charged to non EM Action 2 students, and in any case cannot exceed the maxima indicated in the Programme Guide.

36a.- Can partnerships charge tuition and registration fees directly to students?

No. Under no circumstances may participating higher education institutions claim these costs directly from visiting students.

Partnerships may use the participation costs budget item to cover tuition fee costs for incoming students. The corresponding amount depends on the duration of the mobility and it must be clearly indicated and justified in the application form. In case of approval of the proposal, the Partnership will receive this amount as part of the overall grant and fees costs should therefore not be charged to the incoming students. It is responsibility of the Partnerships to distribute to each hosting institution the tuition fees costs corresponding to the students hosted.

The amount of tuition fees that HEIs usually charge to students should be the same to students enrolled in the Erasmus Mundus Programme. In the same principle, no fees will be intended for universities who usually do not charge fees.

36b.- When and how much can a partnership requests for tuition fees costs?

In general terms this amount is limited to EUR 3.000 per academic year and per student.

However, the tuition fees costs cannot be charged for the mobility of students enrolled in one of the partner universities and undergoing a mobility period of less than 10 months in another partner HEI. These students from partner HEIs will continue paying their tuition/registration fees costs in their HEI of origin but the hosting HEI must apply a fee waiver policy.

Fees PC cannot be charged for the post-doctorate mobility for research purposes unless they concern specialized post-doctorate studies (as opposed to post-doctorate mobility for research purposes). In this case the fee covered by the grant can amount to EUR 5 000 maximum.

Please, note that these amounts are not a lump sum guaranteed per individual mobility flow. There are maximum amounts that can be reduced in the light of the practice of the hosting institution.

36c.- Can part of the grant awarded be used to finance language courses before the main courses start?

Yes. The participation costs can be used for this purpose by the partnership to finance intensive language courses at the start of project implementation, and independently of the duration of the mobility, in order to upgrade the language skills of the students/staff that are going to participate in the mobility scheme. This is possible only within the eligibility period.

37. How are insurance costs calculated?

The Partnership must provide full insurance coverage (health, travel, accident) to students and staff participating in an individual mobility flow.

See the minimum requirements for insurance cover on the Action 2 Beneficiaries space on the website:

(http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/erasmus_mundus/funding/2010/documents/minimuminsurance_en.pdf)

For each person, unit costs of EUR 75 per month are calculated, irrespective of the real insurance costs finally incurred.

In order to obtain economy of scale benefits, Partnerships are advised to subscribe a global policy for all the individuals involved in the mobility scheme.

38. Can HEIs claim visa costs from visiting students?

No. Under no circumstances may participating HEIs claim visa costs from incoming students.

Participating HEIs must cover costs related to the visa taking into account the fact that these costs cannot come from the organisational costs neither from subsistence allowances.

39. How will the final EU grant based on real cost be calculated?

At the time of submission partnerships present a budget based on an estimated mobility flow. The EU grant for selected partnership is calculated on this estimated budget which is annexed to the specific EU grant agreement.

At the end of the contractual period defined in the EU Grant Agreement, the coordinating institution will have to submit a final report based on the real mobility and the strict application of lump sums, defined in section 6.3 financial conditions of the Programme Guide. The financial part of this report will consist in an overview of the costs related to the organisation of the mobility and a detailed declaration of the individual mobility flows actually implemented. The final amount of the grant will be established after the evaluation of this final report by the Agency.

40. Where can I find further information on the management of the scholarship?

More details and accurate information are defined in the Administrative and Financial Handbook annexed to the EU Grant Agreement, a management tool that intends to provide practical information related to the various stages of the project in order to help Beneficiaries to run their

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project efficiently. The Administrative and Fin