



Brussels,  
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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 2019 - EAC-A03-2018
Application No	609743-EPP-1-2019-1-SE-EPPKA2-CBHE-JP
Title	Strategic Environmental Assessment for Capacity Development in Higher Education (SEA-ASIA)
Decision	ACCEPTED

Dear Applicant,

You have submitted an application to the Erasmus+ programme, 2019 call for proposals of the action specified above. The call for proposals closed on 07/02/2019. The Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA) received 833 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.

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.

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.

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 999,945.00 Euro.**



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

Groups		Number 833 (100%)
I	Applications of very good quality (score higher than 75 points out of 100)	133 applications (16%)
II	Applications of good quality (score between 60 and 75 points out of 100)	475 applications (57%)
III	Applications of weak quality (score less than 60 points)	225 applications (27%)

For your information, out of the 840 applications submitted 163 have been selected for funding and 19 have been placed on a reserve list.

The list of all selected projects 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](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.



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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 2019.

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](mailto: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**

Appendix:

Annex 1 - Evaluation report



Annex 1

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	Award Criteria	Comments
1	Relevance of the project	<p>This proposal, a multi-country project that targets Bangladesh, Vietnam and Laos, is well aligned with the selected Capacity Building in Higher Education (CBHE) objectives in its attempt of enhancing integration of environmental consideration in planning and decision-making processes. This is operationalised through the development of a Master course which addresses one of the aims and one of the actions of CBHE in a convenient manner.</p> <p>Creating a new Master makes this Category 1 proposal be considered as a Curriculum Development activity and adequately addresses the regional priorities for Region 6 - Asia, where Bangladesh, Vietnam and Laos are located. The participation of the three Partner Countries is duly justified by the implementation of the same policy in situations with similar characteristics and needs.</p> <p>There is a dearth of expertise in Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) that can offer quality courses in Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) in the Partner Countries. In response to the current professional issue, the proposal specifically targets two main groups: teachers and students in higher education institutions and government officials. Proposal involves pertinent and realistic action of training the students and improving capacity of the academic staff, as well as the non-higher education institution individuals. Furthermore, the proposal contributes to develop high quality SEA courses to equip students and staff with skills and competences needed by government agencies and HEIs to increase their professional interaction within the decision-making and policy sphere, and to some extent with the private sector and other stakeholders. Therefore, the proposal convincingly explains why the planned activities and expected results meet the needs of the target groups in the best way.</p> <p>The impact of the proposal in the modernisation of the higher education institutions is clearly over-estimated. The upgrade of teaching abilities and techniques in one concrete field of study does not represent a promotion of excellence. This requires an intention of extending the activities to other areas of the universities, but this feature is not sufficiently considered in the proposal. In that sense, the project can support the aims of the universities, but does not guarantee a successful process to modernise and internationalise the institutions.</p> <p>The main objective of the proposal is to create the capacity for the use of SEA in the Partner Countries. To achieve this aim, specific objectives are also presented covering the necessary aspects from a higher education perspective. Increasing academic quality and improving exchange at regional level and research policies are expected to be the means to achieve the expected results. Those are comprehensively described with indication of the needs that the project will be covering in each of the institutions involved related to the national situation in the three Partner Countries concerned. However, although the proposed objectives and activities are designed to cater the needs of the identified target groups, it is unclear how the project will manage the issues of inclusion and diversity (e.g. ethnic minorities and gender issues).</p> <p>The proposal builds on a previous project led by the applicant organisation that involves all the Partner Countries participating in this initiative. The target of that project are government agencies and its results show the need for training of the staff at the higher education institutions, responsible for capacity building of future graduates and the current professionals. The innovation comes from the implementation of new methodologies and the opening of new opportunities for synergies between SEA practitioners in governmental agencies and the educators at the universities.</p> <p>National or regional initiatives do not seem to be able to support a project of these characteristics. In addition, the knowledge transfer from European institutions brings the expertise that is not available in the Partner Countries.</p>



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	Award Criteria	Comments
2	Quality of the project design and implementation	<p>The activities planned are adequate to develop a course, although the results described by the proposal do not match the implementation expected at the participating institutions. Several partners will only create some of the modules to upgrade their current academic portfolio. No reasons are given for that distinction, only understandable for current differences in the delivery of courses. The proposal does not sufficiently clarify the accreditation of the courses for their integration in the curricula or the implementation of a new degree or the piloting phase of the new courses. Despite that, the activities show a good level of quality and are capable of achieving the expected results according to the plan established by the partnership.</p> <p>Methodological aspects are related to the different activities. Problem-based learning is mentioned as the main tool for the new courses, shared with an intention to develop train the trainer activities. However, the methodology is also conditioned by the evident transfer from the European Union that represents a leading role for the Programme Countries in the organisation of the activities and their development. Nevertheless, no convincing reasons are given to justify the location of the trainings at the European Union representing large cohorts of professionals travelling for periods not excessively long. As such, the methodology is not particularly innovative, but can be effective to achieve the expected results.</p> <p>In general, the resources allocated to the activities correspond to the descriptions provided of the tasks to be performed by the partnership. However, they tend to be low, possibly to save costs for staff days. Travel costs are not always justified on their destination, but follow the descriptions provided. The equipment to be purchased seems personalised to each of the institutions according to their needs, but there is no indication of the location decided for the new equipment. Several translations are required as sub-contracting costs, where a high amount is included for quality reviews. Despite these shortcomings, the budget submitted shows cost-effectiveness efforts.</p> <p>The objectives and methodology are well described, whilst the activities and the budget reduce the consistency of the project.</p> <p>The work plan presented shows a good level of activities with many of them running simultaneously. Most of the activities refer to the development of the courses and training for staff to prepare the future implementation of the courses. Despite some mentions in other sections of the application, accreditation and piloting are not included in the plan, despite the latter being conveniently described as lasting for a third of the length of the project life, as required for Curriculum Development proposals. The plan is organised in eight work packages with good descriptions provided to explain the activities planned in each of them and adequate definition of the phases for the implementation of the project, especially for preparation and development.</p> <p>Some challenges and risks are identified, with mitigating measures foreseen and mainly based on a closer coordination between the partners, a solution not always sufficient to, for example, compensate for the lack of motivation of stakeholders. Quality assurance is the responsibility of the Steering Committee under the leadership of the applicant organisation. Two levels of monitoring are conveniently presented through the activities of the project and in a final evaluation of outcomes and impact.</p>



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	Award Criteria	Comments
3	Quality of the project team and the cooperation arrangements	<p>The consortium is composed of nine well-established HEIs with pertinent expertise in environmental sciences. The three EU HEIs, with complementary skills and expertise in SEA from Sweden, Denmark, and Portugal have good history of scientific cooperation, with field experience in the region, including collaboration in some European projects related to this proposal. The six Asian HEIs represent three different contexts from Bangladesh, Laos and Vietnam, with expertise in environmental impact assessment. Thus, the project involves a strong and complementary partnership of HEIs and those from the Partner Countries show diversity in their geographical areas of origin.</p> <p>The staff included in the lists of experts appointed for the project shows good level of knowledge and experience. Those from European institutions have been working together in previous initiatives and bring the experience on the implementation of the SEA. The experts from the Partner Countries also show good level with specialisation in environmental issues. All partners have the resources to manage the project and it is reported that the majority also possesses experience in the management and/or participation in international projects.</p> <p>A non-academic associated partner is included in the proposal. Its role is related to training, although it is more oriented to the activities in Bangladesh. Dissemination is also mentioned as part of the involvement, but no sufficient details are provided about this involvement in the project.</p> <p>Responsibilities for the implementation of the project are distributed following clear criteria. The leadership of the work packages for development is conveniently co-led by one institution from the Programme and the Partner Countries. However, all the rest are the exclusive responsibility of the Programme Countries. Despite the arrangement decided, the distribution of tasks is much more balanced. In fact, an important share of the work is done by the Partner Countries, although the supervision is always present, as seen with the quality procedures. The contributions of all partners are relevant and show the commitment to the project beyond the roles played by each of the partners.</p> <p>A Steering Committee (with one representative from each partner) oversees the evolution of the project, including the quality procedures. Decision-making and other procedures are drafted and are adequate as they involve all partners taking decisions by majority. Communication procedures are effective with only four Committee meetings planned and regular communication between the partners and with the Project Coordinator.</p> <p>All participating HEIs from the Partner Countries contribute their experience and expertise in all components and stages of the proposed curriculum development project. They also co-lead several work packages. Thus, the participating organisations from Bangladesh, Laos and Vietnam are satisfactorily involved in the implementation of the action and decision making with a first draft of procedures for conflict resolution provided.</p> <p>The proposal states that all the institutions from the Partner Country have been involved in Capacity Building projects before this application.</p>
4	Impact and sustainability	<p>The impact of the project is defined in relation to the improvement of the capacity of the staff at the universities, as they are the agents for the implementation of the SEA at the Partner Countries. Increased knowledge is expected to represent better implementation, as those involved in environmental policies and activities will be better prepared. The universities will benefit from the expansion of their academic portfolio, as their professionals and students will. The link with the SEA practitioners and senior civil servants is guaranteed, but the proposal is not sufficiently explicit about the accreditation of the courses in all countries involved.</p> <p>Multipplier effects are not particularly described, as the proposal only refers to the implementation within the target groups defined at the participating institutions and, at a smaller scale, at the environmental authorities. The expected effect requires time and a large number of professionals and not much is said about the possibility of expanding the results of the project to other institutions in the Partner Countries.</p> <p>Impact indicators have been defined in a professional way, considering all impact expected for each of the target groups (students, staff, institutions and environmental agencies) and sufficient qualitative and quantitative indicators are included, and the estimation of beneficiaries also considered.</p> <p>Dissemination is designed with ambitious targets, as they include all those directly or indirectly related to the implementation of SEA, going from the HEIs to the national authorities. As it happens with other activities, dissemination is led by the Programme Countries exporting their knowledge and setting up the conditions for implementation, instead of by the Partner Countries with better knowledge of the field. The website developed will be the main and stable tool for the process, although other activities are expected, conveniently including presentations and national events.</p> <p>Once more, the plan for sustainability is led by a European partner. It is expected to be based on the continuity of the activities of the project. Thus, new resources will be required to expand the effect of the project in all three Partner Countries. However, the possibility of generating those resources is not sufficiently defined, and only expected to be developed during the project life. This does not offer guarantees of sustainability considering the high costs associated with new trainings and the implementation of policies required.</p>



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