



Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency

Erasmus Mundus and External Cooperation

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Brussels, 13/08/2010
EACEA/P4/JF/SM/dm D (2010) 303678

**Re: Erasmus Mundus Action 1.A - Joint Masters Courses – Call for Proposals
EACEA/29/09**

Title: European Masters in Lifelong Learning: Policy and Management

Ref.: 512107-1-2010-1-DK-ERA MUNDUS-EMMC

(Please quote this number in all correspondence)

Dear Sir/Madam,

You have submitted a proposal under Action 1.A in the framework of the Erasmus Mundus Call for proposals EACEA 29/09.

I am pleased to inform you that your above-mentioned proposal has been selected.

The Agency received 181 proposals under Action 1.A – Joint Masters Courses. 29 of these proposals were selected for funding, and a further 3 are on the reserve list.

All proposals were assessed with the assistance of independent academic experts. Enclosed you will find the consolidated version of the experts' assessments of your proposal. Please take account of the fact that most of the assessments were written by non-native speakers and that the Agency cannot comment on these independent assessments.

The selection decision is based on the quality of the proposal, its relative position in comparison with the other proposals received, the budget available as well as the extent to which it addresses the priorities indicated in the Call for proposals.

As mentioned in our email of 13 July, a description of your project will be published on the Erasmus Mundus website. This description will correspond to the summary sheet of your project as provided in your application or amended as a result of our 13 July email.

EACEA – "Education, Audiovisual and Culture" Executive Agency
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A Framework Partnership Agreement will be sent to you by separate mail in the course of September. If you have not done it yet, please complete a "Legal Entity" form (http://ec.europa.eu/budget/execution/legal_entities_en.htm) and a "Financial Identification" (http://ec.europa.eu/budget/execution/fliers_en.htm) form. Originals signed by your institution's legal representative should be returned as soon as possible to the Agency.

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

Sincerely Yours,



Joachim Fronia
Head of Unit

Annex: Comments and recommendations from the academic experts who assessed your proposal.

Proposal number:	512107-EM-1-2010-1-DK-ERA MUNDUS-EMMC
Proposal title:	European Masters in Lifelong Learning: Policy and Management
Coordinator:	Dr.Phil.h.c. Arne Carlsen
Applicant organisation:	Aarhus Universitet

Award Criteria
<p>A.1 Academic quality - Course content (30 % of the max. score)</p> <p>The objectives of the Master in Lifelong Learning; Policy and Management are clearly explained, focusing on the need for developing educational reforms and quality management within LLL and they support recognition of prior learning. The applicant has conducted an appropriate needs analysis based on a stakeholder questionnaire, graduate student feedback and analysis of existing Master programmes within the field. Reference to the analysis is made through relevant concrete examples to support the argument that the programme has special features and matches the needs of employers. The needs for the EMMC are defined on the basis of the experience of partners with the existing EMMC in the field and clearly linked to the relevant documents and social-economic development in real economies.</p> <p>The applicant shows awareness of other similar Master programmes offered at European level and provides convincing arguments as to the uniqueness of this proposal. Nevertheless, the reasoning would have been more complete had the European dimension of LLL been highlighted against the background of trends in other parts of the world (since the third country dimension is included through a partner and participating academics). The effort to contribute to the university excellence, innovation and European competitiveness is a positive feature.</p> <p>The detailed structure, brief content of individual modules and the fit of the mobility components are sufficiently elaborated to provide a concise picture on the course and options available to students with respect to their specialization and available mobility tracks. Clear module descriptions and learning approaches focus on strong interaction, critical thinking and independent study. Students will be exposed to the study of LLL systems in many regions in the world.</p> <p>Learning outcomes are accurately presented through knowledge and understanding, intellectual as well as practical competencies. Future academic opportunities and professional prospective of the graduates are well elaborated. Reference is made to the positioning of alumni from the current Erasmus Mundus programme, which is positive.</p> <p>The employability of graduates is targeted with respect to their doctoral studies, but also to their employment in academic, government and non-governmental organizations. As documented by the experience of previous graduates from the programme, currently there is the need for graduates with described profile and competences in the systems of the European higher education. The key academic staff involved in the course have well documented background and experience to ensure the academic standards of the provision of the course. More details should be provided on the involvement of the third country visiting scholars throughout the course.</p> <p>This partnership consists of well-established HEIs, holds sound international academic expertise, and is strongly linked to several high-quality research institutes in each of the partner countries. Partners have had close cooperation in international projects including Tuning Educational Structures in Europe, ASEM Education and Research hub for LLL, International Alliance of Leading Education Institutes. The close links to research institutes provide access to a wide range of thesis supervisors, which is positive. However, it would be advisable to involve some of the non-educational actors mentioned in the proposal as associated partners into the consortium. The concrete methodology and extent of their involvement should be specifically elaborated in the proposal and steps to be taken to ensure these interactions explained.</p> <p>The interaction with relevant socio-economic actors is done through site visits to formal and non-formal adult education institutions, associations and private-sector training providers. Students are also offered summer internships, even though it remains unclear how many places are available and whether there are other options for placements. From the academic year 2010-11 students will be</p>

offered job shadowing opportunities.

A.2 Course integration (25% of the max. score)

The proposed EMMC is the continuation of the existing EMMC course. The curriculum was developed jointly by European partner universities, which is a positive feature and documents the integrated nature of the course. Continuous up-grading of existing modules has been done, and there is a concrete example of this, which is positive. There is also a common set of relevant pedagogic practices in place to support student learning: i.e. a personal tutor, an academic tutor for each assignment, a joint seminar to present dissertation plans. There is a balanced academic involvement of all European partners.

The course is based on the award the double, or multiple degrees from 3 EU partner institutions depending on the mobility track of a student. The possibility to progress to the joint degree is explained to be conditioned by appropriate adjustments in the national legislation of respective EU member countries. To explain the jointly delivered programme, a joint Diploma Supplement is delivered, according to the model of the Council of Europe/UNESCO. The more active role of the Australian partner and the possibility of the award of a double/joint degree with this partner would enhance the potential of the program to promote the European higher education outside Europe.

The joint student application, selection and admission processes have been streamlined during the previous phase of the Mundus programme and there is a fair and transparent system in place. Complementary information could be included on the weight of each criterion in the final selection decision, as well as a description of the process to follow in case of a student complaint on the selection decision. The gender issue and the issue of the applicants with special needs are addressed in the proposed application procedures. Attention should also be paid to the applicants from ethnic minorities (e.g. Roma applicants - the life long learning of this minority should be promoted and it might be most efficiently accomplished by the graduates of the same origin).

The information on the common student assessment system is provided in a satisfactory manner. There is a joint programme examination board, monitoring progress in all student assessment. Local grading, as well as a common ECTS grading scale is in use. Two of the partners have obtained the ECTS label, which gives evidence of proper understanding of the system. The joint MA seminar provides an excellent forum for ensuring coherence in thesis evaluation.

Students' participation costs are different for category A and B students, even though as identified in the proposal they are used to cover equal services for all students. It is understandable that administrative cost for both categories of students may vary, but it can hardly provide sufficient explanation why category A participation cost are double of the amount for the category B. The participation costs are set at EM maximums. The reasons for this should be better documented, since the EMMC is in the lower cost scientific area.

A.3 Course management, visibility and sustainability measures (20 % of the max. score)

The cooperation mechanism and the division of tasks among partners are explained in detail in the proposal. A student representative is appropriately present in the Steering Committee. It is positive that the consortium arranges also a regular meeting of module coordinators across the three partners, which has proven efficient in terms of ensuring coherence of the academic output. The LLL Marketing group is appointed to ensure joint promotion measures.

The responsibilities of partners are set out in the existing Consortium Agreement concluded in the course of the previous EMMC. The revision of the Agreement should be considered to reflect changes and modification under the new EMMC. The mechanisms of cooperation with various actors should be better elaborated. The ways of involvement of students' associations and professionals should be defined.

The endorsement letters declare general commitment of partner institutions to the project; it would be helpful, if they were elaborated so as to include specific forms of this commitment. Partner institutions contribute to the smooth running of the programme with various administrative support; but no concrete reference is made to the input of teaching resources financed by the partner universities themselves.

The management of financial resources is explained in the proposal. The ways of the utilization of the lump sum of the grant under the previous EMMC are explained. However, it is not clear, if the same strategies are to be applied for the new project.

The partners have tested the sustainability of the course on the basis of the interest of applicants in the previous course, which proved to be satisfactory even among self-financing students. Also, the employment opportunities of past program graduates indicate its sustainability potential. The

development and sustainability plan shows a strong awareness among the partners to keep the programme always academically up-to-date, and there is evidence of developments with the inclusion of the well-established Australian partner and the relevant added module.

The consortium holds a wide international network of contacts and presents convincing future plans for including also Korea and Latin America in the partnership. Scholarships have already been provided to some students, and student cohorts are big (50 students), which gives concrete evidence of the attractiveness of the study programme. There will also be small-scale scholarship programmes with governments in third countries, since LLL policies are growing in importance. The strengthening of the cooperation with non-educational institutions in the context of the current proposal would be beneficial.

Various standard and new channels are envisaged to promote the course, based on a recent Marketing group seminar indicating clear action items. The deepening of planned promotional strategies in Europe would be beneficial, with governmental, non-governmental and educational institutions as future employers to be targeted. This could lead to the increase of the number of employer-supported students and contribute to the desirable changes in LLL in the European Area of Higher Education. All existing networks will be efficiently used to promote the programme, and a clear strategic touch is present through a clear focus on certain regions.

A.4 Students' services and facilities (15% of the max. score)

There is an active approach to providing service and quick response to students contacting the Master programme, which is positive. Prior to their enrolment the information to students will be provided via the consortium website. The opportunity to provide personalized information to potential students is also available. After being accepted students are provided with further assistance. A student agreement, outlining all relevant aspects of student and consortium obligations is in use.

The consortium presents a coherent overview of services provided to host students and scholars. It is positive that accommodation is guaranteed, families will be provided with suitable accommodation and childcare facilities, students with special needs will be taken into account (there is a concrete example of a blind student successfully completing the course), mentoring is provided, psychological counseling is offered, as well as academic counseling. The centrally administered system of insurance coverage is to be adopted by the consortium respecting the minimum requirements of EACEA.

The opportunity to attend additional language courses is envisaged. However, the language training availability varies across partner institutions. Courses in Spanish and Danish will be provided, but it remains unclear whether they are free of charge (in Spain) or whether they could be integrated in the curricula and count for ECTS. The joint strategy should be adapted in this respect among partner institutions. It would be beneficial, if the language training became an obligatory part of the curriculum (with credits awarded).

Networking opportunities within the Erasmus Mundus programme are offered through organizing a joint MA seminar annually, where students from all three partner universities meet. Furthermore, an alumni association has been created and a Facebook Community. Nevertheless, it remains unclear whether Erasmus Mundus students will have natural forum to meet with local students, for example whether the course modules will be available also for national students (since many partners run national similar Master programmes simultaneously). Thus, the networking opportunities with other students from the partner institutions should be planned in a more concrete manner.

A.5 Quality assurance and evaluation (10 % of the max. score)

An integrated approach to the internal quality evaluation is planned to be utilized for the EMMC, which is positive. This consists of individual interviews with students to monitor progress after each semester, module evaluation using common questionnaires, as well as feedback at the end of the programme. The Steering Committee will make adjustments to the curricula if necessary. Teachers provide feedback for improvement in connection with the annual joint seminar. However, the internal quality evaluation procedures for the mobility component at the Australian partner institution should be more specifically tackled. The quality assurance processes are also explained from the perspective of each partner institution.

The involvement of an external evaluator is a positive component of external evaluation processes. However, it should be explained how the post will be commissioned, and it should be rotated and/or include more evaluators from different backgrounds to obtain more complex and diverse assessment of the program. The systematic tracking of graduates and the feedback from the members of the alumni association would also provide useful information on the external quality assurance.

Accreditation is further accomplished by national authorities and Quality Assurance agencies according to national practice.

Global comments

The objectives of the current proposal in Lifelong Learning; Policy and Management is supported by a convincing needs analysis and a survey carried out among relevant stakeholders. It has the potential to contribute to the development of the European Area of Higher Education.

The partnership is built around well-established universities, academic staff hold strong international academic experience and direct link to several high-quality research institutes in Europe and elsewhere. The consortium offers integrated mobility to the Australian partner university. The partnership shows a wide network of relevant international contacts through board memberships, consultancy and expert work.

There is a dynamic approach to development of the course content to match requirements, and to respond to feedback received. There is also a joint quality assurance strategy, which is positive. Furthermore, the partnership has invested resources in elaborating a very convincing marketing and promotion plan including concrete action lines. Services to host students and scholars are comprehensive.

There is small space for improvement within some aspects of the proposal. The involvement of the associated partners from a non-education sector would be beneficial. The more active involvement of the Australian partner should be foreseen. The progress towards the joint degree should be ensured and facilitated in the context of national frameworks. The jointness of some aspects of the course should be strengthened (e.g. the calculation of the participation costs, joint approach to external quality assurance, common standards for language policies and language training facilities, networking opportunities).