

Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency

Erasmus Mundus and External Cooperation

UNIVERSITA' DEGLI STUDI DI FERRARA
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Brussels, **15. 07. 2009**
EACEA/P4/JF/cg/ D(2009) 303765
2009/EM Selection

Subject: Erasmus Mundus Action 1 – Joint Masters Course
Title: International Master in Quaternary and Prehistory Master International en Quaternaire et Préhistoire
Reference: 159730-1-2009-1-IT-ERA MUNDUS-EMMC
(Please quote this number in all correspondence)

Dear Prof. Patrizio BIANCHI,

You have submitted a proposal in the framework of the 2009 Erasmus Mundus Call for Proposals (EAC/04/09) for the Action mentioned above.

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

The corresponding framework partnership agreement and other relevant information will be sent to you by separate mail.

All proposals were assessed with the assistance of independent academic experts. Enclosed you will find for your information a summary of the experts' assessments of your proposal.

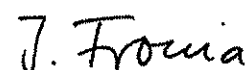
We will publish a description of your Masters course on the Erasmus Mundus website. For this purpose you will shortly receive an e-mail including an electronic template for your consortium to complete.

For the preparation of the five-year Framework Partnership Agreement, you will need to 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 that you will find in the above-mentioned web pages. The original copy of these documents, duly signed by your institution's legal representative, should be returned to the Agency by 15 September.

Finally, we are pleased to inform you that we will shortly be organizing our annual Erasmus Mundus Conference that will bring together all the Erasmus Mundus coordinators and a number of their partners. This will take place in Brussels on 21 (afternoon), 22 and 23 October. We invite you to block these dates in your diary and we will provide you with further information during the summer.

Should you require any further information, please contact Corinne Lévêque, Programme Manager: Tel: +32/2/296.37.47 - corinne.leveque@ec.europa.eu or José Gutierrez, Deputy Head of Unit, Tel: +32/2/296.78.09 jose.gutierrez@ec.europa.eu.

Yours faithfully,



Joachim Fronia
Head of Unit

Annexes: - Comments and recommendations from the two independent experts who have assessed your proposal

Proposal number:	159730-EM-1-2009-1-IT-ERA MUNDUS-EMMC
Proposal title:	International Master in Quaternary and Prehistory Master International en Quaternaire et Préhistoire
Coordinator:	Mr Carlo PERETTO
Applicant organisation:	UNIVERSITA' DEGLI STUDI DI FERRARA

Award Criteria	
A.1	Course content (25% of the max. score)
<p>Based on a past successful Master experience, the proposal aims at promoting a two-year joint Master degree program in Quaternary and Prehistory, with the final objective of providing high quality academic education and professional competencies for personnel working or intending to work in this specific research area. The proposal is very well structured and detailed in each part: the background, and the rationale are clearly presented, and the project results show appropriate scope, and are timely and relevant. The added value of this new application in respect to the previous master course is clearly explained and is convincing: the enlarging of the partnership with the inclusion of University of the Philippines Diliman as partner institution to improve the visibility of the master in the Asian area and, at the same time, to give to the EU students the opportunity to study in an important region for this specific field of studies.</p> <p>The consortium is composed by six HEI, with a well documented teaching and research experience in the field of Prehistory and Quaternary. Moreover, an interesting aspect in this MA course structure is the strong partnership with the Muséum National d'Histoire Naturelle and with highly valued associated member institutions which will provide additional expertise and technical support for this EM course.</p> <p>The mobility is an integral part of the project and can offer relevant extra knowledge, not easily obtainable with courses developed in only one location. In fact, the objectives of this EMMC can be described as an interdisciplinary research based on an approach encompassing geology, prehistoric and earth sciences. More specifically, the EM master is addressed to an inter- and multi-disciplinary approach where biodiversity, and ecological thinking play an increasingly important role in the human-nature relationship. This EM master will also strive for a solid academic education in conjunction with field practices at one of the many associated institutions. The academic quality of the staff involved shows excellent credibility, documented by the scientific publications and contributions delivered by the consortium members.</p> <p>The learning outcomes are convincingly outlined with a clear reference to the contents, knowledge, skills, research methodologies, competences, tools and professional applications. The predictable new competencies can have a positive impact on the academic/professional career perspectives of the students, as demonstrated by the statistical data of the previous edition of the master course.</p> <p>Another positive note concerns the professional experience, considered an essential part of the curriculum, and well documented by the list of already established professional internships where students can gain a placement.</p>	
A.2	Course integration (25% of the max. score)
<p>The structure of the Master, based on already accredited courses, presents an integrated program, jointly designed and fully recognised by all the consortium institutions. The same structure has been adopted by all partners; it is based on five curricula, developing different courses based on the respective expertise, and in Annex 8 a detailed major and minor course structure is provided in which there is a fair distribution of workload among the institutions.</p>	

The consortium has agreed to award a joint degree, already accredited (2006) and recognised by all the institutions, flanked by a Diploma Supplement (a draft of the Diploma Supplement is attached in Annex 2). The different procedure and condition of the degree awarded by the Philippines University are clearly detailed, and are convincing.

The ECTS mechanism is used by all participating institutions and a common system of transfer of credits has been set up, and is adopted also by the TC partner.

The consortium has agreed to follow common standards for the application, selection, admission and examination of students. The procedure is clearly presented, is detailed, and sounds fair. No specific measures are taken to promote equity issues, but some measure has been adopted in favour of promising young students.

The same tuition fee (1000 Euros per year) is charged to EU and TC students, and the covered costs are clearly detailed. For the students enrolled in the Philippines the tuition fee is reduced to 500 USD and this is in line with the promotion policy of the consortium directed to reach a large number of students, also without scholarship.

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

The cooperation mechanism of the consortium is detailed and validated by a Joint Agreement signed by all the institutions conferring the joint degree (a copy is included in Annex 3). It is based on an established organisational structure, where all partners co-operate closely together, implementing different aspects of the project. This close cooperation is strengthened by the technical support set up to enlarge communication and collaboration over distance using video conferencing and other synchronous online communication tools.

Concerning the management of the scholarship, it is adequate and clearly presented. It is centralised and the coordinating institution is in charge of that, but each partner manages autonomously the administrative aspects connected to its own institution. Moreover, in addition to the teaching and research staff, the consortium provides additional administrative personnel, laboratory assistance, and a tutor for each student, plus an administrative office taking care of all study related matters.

The promotion measures appear clearly presented: a comprehensive set of promotion activities are scheduled, and they are appropriate. As added value, the collaboration and involvement of the TC institutions in the partnership (Philippines, Brazil) can increase, and strongly support, the visibility of the program towards potentially interested candidates.

Considering the general structure of the project, the good integration of the programme, the low cost of the tuition fee and the number of the students enrolled, the Master in Quaternary and Prehistory has good chances to be sustainable after the Community funding. However, reinforcing the partnership with inclusion of the associated partners as full partners can improve sustainability of the master, as well as the policy to find some other complementary funding for supporting the mobility of the students without scholarship.

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

The consortium offers a whole set of services targeting at students and scholars well-being (cf. table 11), including specific services offered to the third-country students and scholars.

The insurance scheme is in line with the EMM guidelines, and an example of the insurance policy is included in the Annex 5.

The consortium has agreed a common language policy: the minimum requirement is two languages (English and French), used as principal teaching languages, but for promoting consortium national languages, language courses are offered free of charge by the partner institutions. Specific courses are foreseen for the TC students for facilitating their acclimatization before their arrival in Europe.

The structure of the Student Agreement is presented in a general way, but appears fair.

The measures taken to facilitate the networking among EM students are detailed and convincing: a variety of successful activities is already in place and can promote contacts and sharing of knowledge between students inside and outside the network.

A.5 Quality Assurance and evaluation (15% of the

max. score)

The internal and external measures taken for ensuring the quality are well detailed and are adequate: a strong interaction between students and professors, and between professors and boards of the master has been set up to guarantee the internal quality, and the criteria adopted are listed (an example of a questionnaire is included in the annexes). The results of the internal surveys form the basis for the external quality evaluation, entrusted to an external evaluation Board, composed of three external experts; the criteria considered during the external evaluation are clearly described. Moreover, for guaranteeing the common standard of the consortium a specific control has been planned for the TC partner.

The consortium promotes a common gender balance, and some measures are foreseen for support of disadvantaged students. Concerning disabilities, the institutions are equipped with facilities to welcome people who are disabled.

