



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

ENTERPRISE AND INDUSTRY DIRECTORATE-GENERAL

Preparatory Action
‘ERASMUS for young entrepreneurs’

Call for Proposals
ENT/ERA/09/311
Grant Programme 2009

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1.	BACKGROUND	3
2.	OBJECTIVE OF THE CALL FOR PROPOSALS	3
3.	TIMETABLE	13
4.	FINANCING	14
4.1.	Co-financing and joint and several responsibility	15
4.2.	Contracting and delegation of implementation	16
4.3.	Payment arrangements.....	16
5.	ADMISSIBILITY	16
6.	ELIGIBILITY	16
6.1.	Geographical eligibility	17
6.2.	Legal status eligibility	18
6.3.	Exclusion criteria.....	18
6.4.	Eligible proposals	19
7.	SELECTION	19
7.1.	Applicants' financial capacity to complete the proposed action.....	19
7.2.	Applicants' technical capacity to complete the proposed action	20
8.	AWARD	20
9.	SUBMISSION OF PROPOSALS	21
9.1.	Preparing the proposal.....	21
9.2.	Sending the proposal	22
10.	QUESTIONS FROM APPLICANTS	23
11.	EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES.....	23
12.	PERSONAL DATA	23
13.	RECOMMENDED MONTHLY ASSISTANCE TO NEW ENTREPRENEURS.....	24
14.	ANNEX 1 SUBMISSION SET.....	25
15.	ANNEX 2 GUIDE FOR SUBMISSION.....	25

1. BACKGROUND

In June 2008 the Commission adopted the ‘Small Business Act’ for Europe (SBA)¹, recognising the central importance of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in the EU economy. Now for the first time we have a comprehensive SME policy framework for the EU and its Member States. The SBA aims to improve the overall approach to entrepreneurship, to irreversibly anchor the ‘Think small first’ principle in policy-making from regulation to public service, and to promote the growth of SMEs by helping them tackle the remaining problems which hamper their development.

One aim of the SBA is to create an environment in which entrepreneurs can thrive and entrepreneurship is rewarded. As a concrete follow-up to this aim, in 2008 the Commission organised a call for proposals under the pilot project ‘ERASMUS for young entrepreneurs’ (ENT/ERA/08/311). Of the projects proposed, 25 were selected for awards: 24 are European partnerships to encourage exchanges (mobility) of new entrepreneurs and one project delivers support, coordination and networking of the European partnerships and their activities.² The projects started in December 2008 and will end in 2010.

Building on the pilot project in 2008, Commission Decision C(2008) 8067 of 3 December 2008 provides a budget of €4 300 000 to be granted to bodies in the Member States active in supporting enterprises and organising, on the basis of a grant agreement, exchanges between new and potential entrepreneurs and existing entrepreneurs in another Member State.

2. OBJECTIVE OF THE CALL FOR PROPOSALS

2.1 Objective

This call for proposals aims to help new EU entrepreneurs enrich their experiences, learning and networking by spending periods in enterprises run by experienced entrepreneurs in other EU Member States. The overall objective of the preparatory action is to enhance the entrepreneurship, internationalisation and competitiveness of potential start-up entrepreneurs and newly established micro and small enterprises in the EU.

By awarding grants to promote the mobility of new entrepreneurs, the Commission’s specific objectives are:

- On-the-job-training for new entrepreneurs in small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) elsewhere in the EU in order to facilitate a successful start-up and development of their business ideas.
- Sharing of experience and information between entrepreneurs on the obstacles and challenges of starting up and developing their businesses.

¹ COM (2008) 394 of 25/6/2008.

² The list of projects has been published at http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/entrepreneurship/support_measures/erasmus/erasmus_2008_awarded_projects.pdf.

- To enhance market access and identification of potential partners for new and established businesses in other EU countries.
- Networking by building on knowledge and experience from other European countries.

The following types of action will be supported:

- Lot 1: European partnerships and national and regional public authorities enhancing and facilitating the mobility of new entrepreneurs

The purpose of this lot is to select a number of projects submitted by European partnerships composed of at least two entities from different EU Member States or by individual national or regional public authorities exercising State authority either directly or under delegation of power given by a national or regional government, ministry or administration.³ They will be required to cooperate with all other organisations and authorities involved in the pilot project and the preparatory action, enabling new entrepreneurs to take part in mobility activities as agreed. They will receive support from the support office selected under Lot 2 (see below).

- Lot 2: Support, coordination and networking linked to the activities mentioned in Lot 1

The purpose of this lot is to select a single body that will coordinate the activities of the bodies funded under Lot 1. This support office will be required to cooperate closely with the European Commission and the European partnerships and public authorities selected under Lot 1 (see above).

The expected outputs of the preparatory action are:

- support for a limited number of European partnerships and national and regional public authorities
- around 1200 new entrepreneurs will stay with a host entrepreneur in another EU Member State
- creation of new businesses and spin-off companies
- further development of a network of new entrepreneurs, host entrepreneurs and intermediary organisations.

The Commission will monitor and evaluate the results of the preparatory action to decide whether to continue with it in future years.

2.2. Description of activities envisaged

The Flash Eurobarometer survey⁴ and the feasibility study⁵ on the 2008–2009 pilot project ‘ERASMUS for young entrepreneurs’ analysed what the main stakeholders would like to get

³ The definition of ‘public authority’ is given below in chapter 6 on eligibility.

⁴ The results of the survey can be downloaded at http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/entrepreneurship/support_measures/erasmus/eurobaro.htm.

out of the mobility scheme. They revealed that the core work to be done is relationship building between new entrepreneurs (NE) and host entrepreneurs (HE).

A NE is defined as someone in the early stages of becoming an entrepreneur. This definition means that the preparatory action should be targeted primarily at new entrepreneurs (i.e. ‘would-be entrepreneurs’ or ‘wannabes’) intending to set up an enterprise, without excluding those who have already started their own one — but no more than three years ago.⁶ The planned or existing enterprises can be in any sector. They must comply with the EU-level definition of a micro or small enterprise.⁷ NEs should strengthen their entrepreneurial skills by learning, through a relationship with a host entrepreneur in another country, from the development of an existing enterprise, and enhance their own business project on this basis. They must demonstrate a sound educational/vocational background and a viable, documented business idea. They need to show the specific ‘entrepreneurial’ characteristics of someone who seeks to capitalise on new and profitable endeavours or business — usually with considerable initiative. The NE should also demonstrate vision, commitment and an appetite for risk when embarking on this stay and finding the funds to cover the associated costs.

The HE should be a successful entrepreneur (preferably the owner of a micro or small enterprise, or someone directly involved in entrepreneurship at SME board level)⁸ with an ambition to share his/her entrepreneurial experience and gain from the contribution that a NE from another country can make to their business. HEs should be very experienced with SMEs and be committed to developing NEs’ entrepreneurial skills.

The relationship between NE and HE — each from a different Member State⁹ — is meant to be a period of contact and collaboration founded upon mutual interests and benefits. An eligible relationship will involve a stay of between one month and six months with the HE. The total stay may be spread over a longer overall period of no more than 12 months. Within this time span the relationship may well be activated over a number of shorter time slots (minimum 1 week per slot) during which the actual visit of the NE to the HE takes place (maximum six months). This should leave both NE and HE enough flexibility to manage their needs in terms of time and resources.

The European partnerships and the public authorities selected under Lot 1 have the task of organising these relationships. If a relationship between a NE and a HE takes place within a European partnership, it is called an ‘intra-consortium relationship’. If a relationship between a NE and a HE takes place between different European partnerships, it is called an ‘inter-consortia

⁵ The results of the study have been published at http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/entrepreneurship/support_measures/erasmus/feasability.htm.

⁶ The 3-year limit on the existence of an enterprise does not apply to a new entrepreneur who has taken over a family business. However in this case the transfer of the family business to the new entrepreneur must have taken place no more than three years ago.

⁷ As defined at http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/enterprise_policy/sme_definition/index_en.htm.

⁸ See previous footnote.

⁹ In case of the selection of entities from EFTA/EEA and/or candidate countries, NEs and HEs from those countries can in principle participate in a relationship. The funding of NEs from those countries is subject to the conditions mentioned in chapter 6.1. At least one member of such a relationship must come from an EU Member State.

relationship'. If a relationship between a NE and HE has been organised with the involvement of at least one public authority it is called an 'inter-institution relationship'.

Relationships will be arranged by one or more Intermediary Organisation(s) (IOs) which are part of one or more European partnership(s) or are individual public authorities. IOs will have proven expertise and responsibility in enterprise support and will be in close contact with NEs and HEs. The IOs' main task is to arrange successful matching between NEs and HEs and to ensure that the necessary services are provided (such as promotion, information, induction, validation of applications, arranging contracts, logistical support etc.). Furthermore the NE's IO has the task of ensuring that the NE receives advice on financial assistance for the stay and help in accessing it.

A successful relationship is defined as a relationship between a NE and a HE arranged with the help of one or more IO(s), which has received approval by the Commission and has fulfilled all the requirements agreed by HE, NE and IOs. Commission approval does not imply acceptance of the expenditure required to implement the relationship.

The Support Office (SO) selected under Lot 2 will contribute to the overall coherence and consistency of the work done by the IOs. It will help the mobility scheme to develop a real pan-European scope. If possible, the SO should be set up at European level to work in close cooperation with the Commission, the IOs and the existing Support Office for the 2008 pilot project. Its main tasks include guidance and assistance to IOs, maintaining and updating the central website¹⁰, coordinating information and publicity. It should also safeguard the quality of the mobility scheme.

The procedure for setting up an eligible relationship will be as follows:

- (1) Within one month after entering into force of the grant agreement IOs register the staff responsible for the implementation of the project in the online Erasmus for Young Entrepreneurs IT tool.¹¹
- (2) Using the online Erasmus for Young Entrepreneurs IT tool, a NE will submit an application to an IO (normally the IO of their home region or country, but other eligible IOs are not excluded). NEs will provide evidence of their entrepreneurial characteristics (entrepreneurial profile, CV, educational/vocational background, business plan, language skills etc.) and motivation to complete a period abroad with another entrepreneur.
- (3) Within a maximum of 14 calendar days applications are checked and validated by the NE's IO.
- (4) Either spontaneously or in response to an invitation from an IO, HEs send a submission, using the online Erasmus for Young Entrepreneurs IT tool. In their submission they demonstrate their willingness and capability to receive a NE, and to share information and experience with the NE.

¹⁰ See www.erasmus-entrepreneurs.eu.

¹¹ The IT tool is accessible via www.erasmus-entrepreneurs.eu.

- (5) Within a maximum of 14 calendar days submissions are checked and validated by the IO(s) active in the geographical area of the HE (normally an IO for the HE's home country, but other eligible IOs are not excluded). Suitable HEs will be invited to join a network of successful entrepreneurs.
- (6) Suitable NEs and HEs are matched by the IOs responsible, using the online Erasmus for Young Entrepreneurs IT tool. The matching process includes ensuring that the NE receives advice on financial assistance for the stay and help in accessing it. After this matching and advice on financial feasibility, the relationships are provisionally agreed and submitted to the Commission for acceptance before being formally initiated.
- (7) Within a maximum of 7 calendar days the selected NE, HE and the IOs responsible are invited to sign online the Erasmus for Young Entrepreneurs commitment.¹² It specifies the duration and objectives of the stay, the description of the work/learning project, the plan of activities and the expected outcome. The NE's IO and the NE define in a separate agreement the financial conditions and legal implications. This will stipulate that the NE cannot make any profit from the financial assistance, which is intended simply to cover the travel, accommodation and subsistence costs which the NE incurs for this mobility action. As such, the NE will need to declare their real expenditure as well as any third party contributions to the travel and subsistence costs of the stay abroad. Such third party contributions will be taken into account when determining the financial assistance paid to the NE under this project. The NE's IO is responsible for keeping evidence of the NE's real expenditure incurred for their stay abroad and providing effective control and management mechanisms to enforce the no-profit rule. Under no circumstances can the financial assistance paid to the NE be higher than the NE's real costs for travel, accommodation and subsistence when staying with the HE. The financial assistance paid to NEs is independent from the compensation that the HE might pay to the NE for the work the latter has done when staying with the HE.
- (8) The NE participates in a pre-departure induction course providing information on the mobility scheme, inter-cultural learning and relevant EU-level information on topics such as the internal market, European law issues, the European Enterprise Network (EEN), SOLVIT etc. The NE's IO will organise this induction course using general modules produced by the SO, tailored to the specific needs of each relationship. The IOs assisted will contribute to ensure that any obstacles to the mobility of the new entrepreneurs are minimised in the territory for which they are responsible.
- (9) The NE's IO will be responsible for delivering the financial assistance paid from the Commission grant to the NE. The NE's IO is responsible for ensuring that the financial assistance together with any third party support for travel, accommodation and subsistence costs is based on real expenditure incurred by the NE and does not generate a profit for the NE.
- (10) Upon arrival and during the stay abroad the NE will receive support and advice from the IO responsible on the HE's side.

¹² The Erasmus for Young Entrepreneurs commitment is annexed to the Users' Guide that can be downloaded at http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/entrepreneurship/support_measures/erasmus/ and is part of the Erasmus for Young Entrepreneurs IT tool.

- (11) After completion of the period abroad, the NE and the HE submit reports on standard forms to the IOs responsible, which will evaluate the reports and forward them to the SO. In their activity reports to the SO IOs will identify obstacles to the mobility of new entrepreneurs and make suggestions on how to reduce them.. The SO will be responsible for the analysis of IOs' reports, the monitoring and quality control of the preparatory action and for informing the Commission.

As a minimum requirement, we expect the project proposals submitted under this call to describe the following activities in detail:

- Lot 1: European partnerships and national and regional public authorities enhancing and facilitating the mobility of new entrepreneurs

(a) Informing and screening NEs

Sufficient interest is expected from potential NEs, but it will still be necessary to raise awareness, provide promotional information to specific target groups and give general guidance to applicant NEs. Furthermore, it will be necessary to screen and advise applicants to ensure a high quality of applications and, in particular, to gauge how committed the applicants are to setting up a business (entrepreneurial motivation, business plan).

(b) Promotion and engagement of HE

Applicant consortia and public authorities (as defined in Chapter 6 below, on eligibility) need to describe the proposed communication and promotion measures, particularly among relevant business organisations and other bodies that are active in the field of business support and start-ups, to effectively raise awareness, disseminate information on the mobility scheme and reach a maximum number of potential HEs who can be convinced to take part in the action. The EU sponsorship of the project should be made clearly visible.

(c) Collating applications from NEs and HEs

The Commission has developed the online Erasmus for Young Entrepreneurs IT tool whereby NEs and HEs can apply for the action. Applicant consortia and public authorities are invited to describe how they would check the quality and eligibility of applications and arrive at a relatively equal number of eligible NEs and HEs.

(d) Matching the relationships

The process of successful matching of NEs and HEs will be a key element of the mobility scheme and will be helped by using the online Erasmus for Young Entrepreneurs IT tool. Matching will be considered successful if it leads to a 'successful relationship' as defined above (see point 2.2). Applicant consortia and public authorities are invited to describe how they plan to identify the best matches, support contacts and monitor relationships before and during the stay abroad. Applicant consortia should also describe how they intend to ensure that around 50% of the matches are inter-consortia or inter-institution relationships.

Applicant consortia and public authorities also need to describe how they would help NEs gain access to sources of financial assistance to cover costs related to a stay with a HE (indicating such sources where possible, and providing details of them) and how they would go about advising NEs on such sources.

(e) Information and induction

Applicants are invited to describe what kind of information and induction they would organise and offer to NEs and how they intend to deliver this information and induction.

(f) Management of contracts and commitments

Once the relationship has been agreed, the IOs concerned have to ensure that all parties involved (NE, HE, IOs) sign the Erasmus for Young Entrepreneurs Commitment. In addition, the sending IO and the NE must sign an agreement specifying the tasks, responsibilities, financial conditions and legal implications.¹³ Applicant consortia and public authorities should describe how they would arrange this in an efficient and effective way, allowing for potential amendments, compliance with the no-profit rule and the handling of payments and reports.

(g) Logistical support

IOs are expected to offer local assistance to visiting NEs during stays with HEs. Applicant consortia and public authorities are invited to describe what services they plan to offer to address practical questions (housing, transport, insurance, etc.) and what mechanisms will be put in place to avoid problems and potential conflicts.

(h) Financial assistance

The purpose of the financial assistance issued to NEs by the sending IOs is to support the cost of their stay. The IO to which the NE applied is expected to give the NE financial assistance paid from Commission grants, provided that the NE + HE relationship has been accepted by the Commission. The IO will be responsible for correct management of this financial assistance, including verification of the NE's expenditure on travel, accommodation and subsistence, and compliance with the no-profit rule. Further details will need to be given in the agreement mentioned above (see item (f)).

The Commission recommends monthly amounts of financial assistance as set out in Table 1 (see Chapter 13 below). To calculate the grants, it will set a ceiling of €1 000 of monthly financial assistance paid to the NE by the IO. Applicant consortia and public authorities should describe how they intend to organise the management and control of this financial assistance in an efficient and effective way, including avoidance of any financial abuse.

(i) Quality control and evaluation

The aim is to achieve a mobility scheme of high quality. Applicant consortia and public authorities should describe the measures they would take to ensure high quality, ensuring compliance with the Erasmus for Young Entrepreneurs commitment as agreed by all parties involved, fulfilment of reporting requirements and evaluation of the relationships created.

¹³ An agreement template can be downloaded at www.erasmus-entrepreneurs.eu .

(j) Active networking

Applicants and, in the case of consortia, partner bodies should describe how they would actively contribute to the networking of the European partnerships and public authorities assisted under Lot 1, which will include taking part in three network meetings in Brussels (travel and accommodation costs will need to be covered by each consortium and public authority).

(k) Reducing obstacles to the mobility of new entrepreneurs

Proposals need to specify the measures that will be taken to analyse and assess the situation with regard to cross-border mobility to and from the territory for which the applicants are responsible, when new entrepreneurs are matched with host entrepreneurs in that territory. Applicants should say how they plan to use the results of this analysis / assessment and propose concrete recommendations / measures to the SO.

(l) Reporting

The European partnerships and public authorities selected under Lot 1 are expected to report regularly to the SO on their activities, matching relationships, problems encountered and solutions implemented. The applicant consortia and public authorities should describe how they intend to organise this reporting in an efficient and effective way.

- Lot 2: Support, coordination and networking linked to the activities mentioned in Lot 1

(a) Marketing and promotion

Proposals should give details of the actions envisaged to ensure effective marketing and promotion of the mobility scheme, particularly at European level. Proposals should mention which communication channels will be used and what kind of cooperation is envisaged with existing actors and networks, in particular with the existing Support Office for the 2008 pilot project. Furthermore, the SO should help coordinate the publicity activities of the European partnerships and public authorities. This publicity should make the EU support for the project clearly visible.

(b) Guidance and support

Proposals should give details of how the applicants plan to develop the existing guidance material and other standard documentation (such as agreement template, tools for quality commitment, translations) for the European partnerships and public authorities under Lot 1, including any other relevant support services (such as help desk, frequently asked questions, support for solving problems and conflicts etc.).

(c) Coordination and quality control

Applicants should describe how they intend to contribute to the coordination of the activities assisted under Lot 1 at a European level and to ensuring their quality. The aim is to implement the action in a coherent and consistent way and make sure that mobility activities between the various European partnership and public authority projects are possible. Three network meetings are planned in Brussels allowing contact and exchange of information and experience between all participating European partnerships and public authorities assisted under Lot 1.

(d) Updating of central website

Proposals need to provide detailed information on the maintenance and updating of the multilingual central website www.erasmus-entrepreneurs.eu that will help promote the mobility scheme, attract interested NEs and HEs and allow them to make online applications and submissions. The proposal should include input on how the existing online Erasmus for Young Entrepreneurs IT tool can be developed further and become a central management tool for IOs and the Commission.

(e) Development of online training material

Since training of NEs is an important quality element, proposals need to contain detailed information on the action that the applicant intends to take to develop attractive and user-friendly high-quality training modules on important EU-related business subjects (such as the internal market, European standards, EU commercial and contract law, EU-level business support tools, inter-cultural learning etc.) that can be used by the IOs for the pre-departure induction courses and online by NEs before or during their stay abroad.

(f) Networking

One of the expected outputs of the preparatory action is the creation of a network of intermediary organisations. Applicants should describe what assistance they intend to provide to help create such a network and, in particular, to three network meetings scheduled to take place in Brussels in February and September 2010 and in February 2011 (travel and accommodation costs must be covered by each consortium and participating public authority).

In addition applicants should make suggestions for a conference on the results of the mobility scheme and the preparation of a possible permanent EU Action Programme. The Commission has scheduled this conference for the second half of 2010 or the first half of 2011, involving a total of around 180 representatives from IOs, including participating public authorities and other relevant stakeholders as well as NEs and HEs matched in the pilot project and the preparatory action (the participants' costs for travel and accommodation will be covered by the Commission).

(g) Reducing obstacles to the mobility of new entrepreneurs

Proposals need to specify the measures that will be taken to support European partnerships and national and regional public authorities in their efforts to analyse and assess the situation with regard to cross-border mobility in Member States. Applicants should say how they plan to use the results of these analyses / assessments and draft an action plan that contains concrete recommendations and measures, particularly addressed to political decision-makers at EU level, on how to reduce mobility obstacles for new entrepreneurs.

(h) Reporting and monitoring

IOs will be obliged to report on a regular basis to the SO on their activities, matching relationships, problems encountered and solutions implemented. Applicants are invited to describe the reporting mechanism (i.e. compilation of reports, analysis, feedback, proposals for solutions, involvement of the Commission in case of major difficulties etc.) that will enable stakeholders and the Commission to monitor progress and make any adaptations that prove necessary.

2.3 Deliverables

This call for proposals is expected to result in around 1200 successful relationships between NEs and HEs.

This implies the following deliverables:

- Lot 1: European partnerships and national and regional public authorities enhancing and facilitating the mobility of new entrepreneurs
 - approximately 35 to 50 successfully matched relationships per European partnership or individual public authority involving a relatively equal number of NEs and HEs per European partnership and public authority. Regarding European partnership projects, around 50% of those relationships should be in cooperation with another European partnership or public authority project; such ‘inter-consortia’ or ‘inter-institution’ relationships must involve the sending and hosting of a NE in order to count as a full relationship;
 - offering assistance and support to approximately 35 to 50 NEs who are visiting a HE covered by the European partnership or the national/ regional public authorities, including the financial assistance as referred to in 2.2. (h) above;
 - participation in three network meetings in Brussels (each European partnership and public authority must cover the travel and accommodation costs for its representative(s));
 - reports based on standard forms for each NE and HE who has participated in a relationship;
 - a comprehensive final implementation report, describing the work undertaken and the obstacles encountered, and making recommendations on how to improve the mobility scheme for new entrepreneurs in the future. In order to facilitate and speed up validation by the Commission, this final implementation report, if it is not written in English, French or German, should be accompanied by a summary in one of these three languages.
- Lot 2: Support, coordination and networking linked to the activities mentioned in Lot 1
 - tools, material and events for marketing and promotion, coordination and quality control, and reporting;
 - an attractive, updated and user-friendly website on the mobility scheme for new entrepreneurs (with a link to the Commission’s online Erasmus for Young Entrepreneurs IT tool);
 - attractive and user-friendly high-quality online training material;
 - participation in three network meetings in Brussels involving representatives of all selected European partnerships and public authorities (travel and accommodation costs to be covered by the European partnerships and public authorities);

- organisation of a conference in the second half of 2010 or the first half of 2011 involving IOs, including participating public authorities, NEs and HEs from the pilot project and the preparatory action, to enable the Commission to consult stakeholders and draw conclusions for a potential future programme;
- draft an action plan recommending ways to reduce mobility obstacles for new entrepreneurs;
- a comprehensive final implementation and evaluation report: describing the work done and the obstacles encountered, and suggesting how to improve the mobility scheme for new entrepreneurs in the future. To make it easier and faster for the Commission to validate the final implementation report, it should be accompanied by a summary in English, French or German if it is not written in one of those three languages.

3. TIMETABLE

Scheduled start-up date for activities: 1st January 2010.

The maximum duration of activities is:

Lot 1: 18 months

Lot 2: 22 months

No applications will be accepted for projects scheduled to run for a longer period than that specified in this call for proposals.

The intention is to inform applicants of the outcome of the award procedure no later than the month of November 2009.

The period of eligibility of costs will start on the day the grant agreement enters into force.

The indicative calendar for projects co-financed under this call for proposals is as follows:

Information, promotion, and website update	January 2010 –March 2010
1 st network meeting	February 2010
Assembling applications, matching relationships and signing agreements and quality commitments	March–September 2010
2 nd network meeting	September 2010
Induction, start of NE's period abroad and of logistical support to NE/HE	May–December 2010
3 rd network meeting	January 2011
End of placements	June 2011

Submission of final implementation reports of Lot 1	September 2011
Submission of final implementation report of Lot 2	December 2011

4. FINANCING

The maximum budget of Community funding allocated for the operation is € 300 000.

Number of projects:

- Lot 1 on European partnerships and national and regional public authorities: an estimated 25 to 30 projects.

Up to € 000 000 will be given to European partnerships and national and regional public authorities that have one or several partners located in an EU Member State not yet involved in the mobility scheme as a result of the 2008 project (see also Chapter 6.1 below on ‘geographical eligibility’).

- Lot 2 on support, coordination and networking: one project.

Community co-financing rate of eligible costs for both lots: maximum 90%.

Community co-financing ceiling:

- Lot 1 on European partnerships and public authorities:

The maximum funding by the Commission will be up to €140 000 per assisted project. The maximum amount of financial support that may be paid to third parties from a European partnership or public authority project is €100 000, with a maximum of € 600 per third party (i.e. per NE). The Commission recommends using Table 1 (see Chapter 13)¹⁴ as a guide for setting monthly assistance to be paid to NEs. Under no circumstances will the Commission accept an amount beyond the eligibility ceiling of € 100 for monthly financial assistance paid to the NE by the IO.

The direct financial assistance paid to the NE must be justified by proof of his/her expenditure for travel, accommodation and subsistence for staying with the HE. Each European partnership is responsible for checking such proof of expenditure and keeping evidence of it. The Commission will calculate the European partnership’s grant on the basis of real costs incurred by the NE for which the European partnership can provide sufficient evidence.

The maximum amount of eligible expenditure which the Commission will accept for information, induction, matching, management, logistics, quality control, evaluation, assessing obstacles to the mobility of new entrepreneurs and participation in networking events will be equal to 50% of the eligible financial assistance paid to the NE, however with an absolute ceiling of €900 per successfully matched relationship within a European partnership (‘intra-consortium relationships’). In cases of relationships involving different

¹⁴ The use of the amounts mentioned in Table 1 is optional and does not constitute an award criterion (see Chapter 7 below).

European partnerships ('inter-consortia relationships') or at least one public authority ('inter-institution relationships') the eligible EU funding per successful relationship will be divided according to the following ratio: €600 for the European partnership or public authority project that provides the HE and €300 for the European partnership or public authority project that provides the NE.

These amounts apply provided that the reports of NE and HE have been accepted by the Commission as part of the acceptance of the final technical implementation report and financial statement to be submitted by the beneficiaries after the closing of the action. If, however, after the Commission has given approval to an 'intra-consortium relationship' between a NE and a HE, the European partnership concerned can not provide sufficient proof of the successful implementation of that relationship, the maximum amount of eligible expenditure which the Commission will accept for information, induction, matching, management, logistics, quality control, evaluation, assessing obstacles to the mobility of new entrepreneurs and participation in networking events is €60. In case of an 'inter-consortia relationship' or 'inter-institution relationship' where the two European partnership(s) and/or public authority/ies involved cannot provide sufficient proof of the successful implementation of that relationship', the maximum amount of eligible expenditure which the Commission will accept for information, induction, matching, management, logistics, quality control, evaluation, assessing obstacles to the mobility of new entrepreneurs and participation in networking events is €280 for each of them.

- Lot 2 on support, coordination and networking: €300 000

Important note on eligibility of the costs for the permanent staff concerning both lots: applicants should be aware that EU grants should not in principle cover the cost of permanent staff of public bodies, so as to avoid a double burden on Member State taxpayers. An exception to this rule may be possible if it is shown that the public body in question will, as part of the EU-financed project, carry out activities additional to its routine activities. In such cases, the cost of permanent staff paid from the public budget can be considered as part of the co-financing provided by the applicant organisation and, where relevant, by its partner organisations. The cost of temporary staff hired specially to implement the project described in the proposal can be covered by an EU grant.

- Please note that one proposal may give rise to the award of only one grant from the Community budget to any one beneficiary.
- The Commission reserves the right to award a grant of less than the amount requested by the applicant. Grants will not be awarded for more than the amount requested.
- Publication (on the Internet site and/or in the Official Journal) does not guarantee the availability of funds for the above action.
- The Commission grant is a contribution to the financing of a project which requires additional funding from other sources. It does not have the purpose or effect of producing a profit for the beneficiary. Profit is defined as a surplus of revenue over costs. The amount of the grant will be reduced by the amount of any surplus.

4.1. Co-financing and joint and several responsibility

The beneficiary shall supply evidence of the co-financing provided, either by way of own resources, or in the form of financial transfers from third parties, or in kind. The Commission

may accept co-financing in kind if considered necessary or appropriate. In such cases the value of such contributions cannot cover all the necessary co-financing.

At least 5% of the total cost of the action must be covered by co-financing other than contributions in kind.

The applicants must provide an explicit undertaking from each co-financing organisation to provide the amount of funding stated in the grant application for the operation (signed Form C).

In the case of a consortium, its partners must agree on appropriate arrangements between themselves for the proper performance of the action. In particular, they must agree on joint and several responsibility for any amount due to the Commission by any one of them. The grant agreement shall be signed by each participating co-beneficiary unless a power of attorney is conferred to the appointed coordinator (Form A/4 of the Submission Set).

4.2. Contracting and delegation of implementation

Only a limited part of the project may be outsourced by awarding contracts, i.e. a maximum of 10% of the eligible costs within Lot 1 and a maximum of 30% of eligible costs within Lot 2. Moreover, public authorities funded individually under Lot 1 of this call for proposals may delegate a limited part of the implementation of the project to another public authority. In this case the part of the project outsourced by awarding contracts and the part of the implementation that is delegated to another public authority cannot be more than 90% of the total eligible costs.

Contracting and delegation of implementation does not limit the responsibilities of the beneficiaries.

Please refer to the Guide for Submission (page 10) for further details on contracting.

4.3. Payment arrangements

The draft grant agreements attached to the Submission Set (Form E) specify the payment arrangements.

5. ADMISSIBILITY

Applications must be submitted before the closing date given below (see Chapter 9). Applicants are responsible for providing sufficient proof to the Commission that the application was submitted in time. Applications that do not arrive in time will automatically be considered 'non-admissible'.

6. ELIGIBILITY

- Lot 1 for European partnerships and public authorities:

Applicants that are not public authorities must act in consortium (i.e. a European partnership) with at least one partner body from another EU country (i.e. a minimum of two bodies).¹⁵

¹⁵ However see also award criterion '1. Relevance' which includes geographical coverage (chapter 8 below).

They must be active in the field of fostering, promoting and/or supporting entrepreneurship. Participation in more than one European partnership is not possible.

Partners of applicants must satisfy the same eligibility criteria as those for applicants; the applicant will be the lead organisation and, if selected, the contracting party (the 'Beneficiary'). The European dimension of the proposed project must be demonstrated by submitting Form A/4 from the submission set duly filled in and signed by the partner organisation(s) in order to confirm its/their participation (original signatures required).

Public authorities are not required to apply in consortium. They can submit individual applications. They must be a national or regional public authority exercising State authority, i.e. government, ministry, administration or agency, or another public authority operating at national or regional level that is directly subordinated to a national or regional government, ministry or administration and exercises public functions under delegation of power given by this national or regional government, ministry or administration. They must have statutory responsibility in the field of fostering, promoting and/or supporting entrepreneurship.

An applicant or partner in one proposal submitted under this call may not apply a second time or be partner in a second proposal submitted under this call. Any proposal submitted by an applicant who has already submitted one or more proposals or involves one or several partner(s) already involved in one or more other proposal(s) will automatically be considered as 'non eligible'. Before submitting a proposal applicants must make sure that any partner organisation is involved in only this proposal and not in any other proposal(s) and/or has not submitted an individual application under this call.

The EU financing may be used to extend and/or strengthen already existing activities for the mobility of new entrepreneurs, provided that these activities and their implementation respect the above-mentioned eligibility criteria. The EU funding may be combined with non-EU funding, provided that the total operation complies with the rules stipulated by the Financial Regulation applicable to the general budget of the European Communities¹⁶ and its Implementing Rules¹⁷.

In the Submission Set applicants will find the grant agreement for reference.

- Lot 2 on support, coordination and networking:

Applicants must act individually. In the Submission Set applicants will find the grant agreement for reference.

Applicants must prove their capacity to coordinate projects at European level.

6.1. Geographical eligibility

Applications from legal entities established in an EU Member State are eligible. The Commission would like the total of all European partnerships and public authorities assisted

¹⁶ A consolidated version can be found at <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/site/en/consleg/2002/R/02002R1605-20070101-en.pdf>.

¹⁷ A consolidated version can be found at <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/site/en/consleg/2002/R/02002R2342-20070501-en.pdf>.

under Lot 1 to provide the widest possible geographical coverage of the EU. When assessing the geographical coverage the Commission will take into account the results of the previous call for proposals for the pilot project in 2008.¹⁸

Entities from EFTA/EEA¹⁹ and candidate²⁰ countries are admitted to Lot 1 for participating as project partners of a European partnership in the present call for proposals. This does not change the minimum requirement of two partners from different EU Member States as regards European partnerships. No grants can be awarded to partners in those countries in the framework of the present preparatory action.

However, the Commission may accept proposals from applicants in EFTA/EEA countries or candidate countries, provided that, on the date of selection, agreements have been signed setting out the arrangements for the participation of those countries in the programme established by the Decision referred to under point 1 of this call for proposals.

6.2. Legal status eligibility

Any public or private entity active in the field of business support can participate in this call for proposals. Applications must be submitted by a legal entity which is properly constituted and registered under the law.

This may include in particular:

- public authorities responsible for or active in the fields of economic affairs, enterprise, business support or related issues
- chambers of commerce and industry, chambers of handicrafts or similar bodies
- business support organisations and start-up centres
- business associations and business support networks
- public and private entities offering business support services.

6.3. Exclusion criteria

By using the 'Exclusion Criteria Form' (Form D attached to the Submission Set) applicants must declare on their honour that they are not in one of the situations referred to in Articles 93 and 94 of the Financial Regulation. In completing this form the applicant:

- states whether or not he/she/the company is in one or more of the situations described in the Exclusion Criteria Form; and
- undertakes to submit to the Commission any additional document relating to the exclusion criteria that the Commission may see fit to request.

¹⁸ The 2008 project left gaps (= no intermediary organisations) in Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Latvia, the Netherlands and Slovenia.

¹⁹ Republic of Iceland, Principality of Liechtenstein, Kingdom of Norway, Swiss Confederation.

²⁰ Croatia, Former Yugoslavian Republic of Macedonia, Turkey.

Where the proposal is submitted by more than one applicant, each applicant must complete the Exclusion Criteria Form (original signature/s required).

Please note that, according to Articles 96 and 114 of the Financial Regulation applicable to the general budget of the European Communities and according to Article 134b of Commission Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 2342/2002 of 23 December 2002²¹ laying down detailed rules for the implementation of Council Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 1605/2002 on the Financial Regulation applicable to the general budget of the European Communities²², administrative and financial penalties may be imposed by the Commission on applicants who are excluded in relation to points a) to h) of the form in question.

6.4. Eligible proposals

Applications must comply with the following conditions in order to be eligible for a grant:

- Applications must be signed (original signature/s required), dated and complete, using the standard Submission Set;
- Only projects that are strictly non-profit-making and/or whose immediate objective is non-commercial are eligible.

Applications that do not fulfil one or more of the above mentioned conditions will automatically be considered 'non-eligible'. In this context, any project directly or indirectly contrary to EU policy or against public health, human rights, citizens' security or freedom of expression will be rejected.

7. SELECTION

7.1. Applicants' financial capacity to complete the proposed action

Applicants must show they have sufficient and stable sources of funding to ensure the continuity of their organisation throughout the project and, if necessary, to play a part in financing it.

As such, applicants must complete and sign Form A/3 for the lead organisation, and Form A/4 for partner organisations, if applicable. The Legal Entity Form and Financial Identification Form must also be completed, signed and annexed to the aforementioned forms (including supporting documents).

For ease of reference, the applicants are further requested to complete the Financial Statement Form A/5 of the Submission Set. This form only applies to private organisations. Public organisations are only requested to indicate their annual revenue/resources in Forms A/3 and A/4.

Applicants must include in their Grant Application Form their annual accounts (i.e. profit and loss; balance sheet) for the previous financial year.

²¹ As amended by Commission Regulation 1261/2005 of 20 July 2005, Commission Regulation 1248/2006 of 7 August 2006 and Commission Regulation 478/2007 of 23 April 2007.

²² As amended by Council Regulation 1995/2006 of 13 December 2006.

Alternatively, a guarantee equivalent of all or part of the grant being sought may be provided in order to show the applicant's financial capacity.

Verification of financial capacity is not required for public bodies, nor for the international organisations referred to in Article 43 of the Commission Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 2342/2002.

7.2. Applicants' technical capacity to complete the proposed action

Applicants must demonstrate that they have the operational (technical and management) capacity to complete the operation and can manage an activity corresponding to the size of the project for which the grant is requested. In particular, the team responsible for the project/operation must have adequate professional qualifications and experience.

The Grant Application Form must be submitted with the curricula vitae of the staff that will actually be performing the work involved, with professional references and details of similar projects completed. For ease of reference, the curricula vitae should preferably be submitted in the Europass format which can be found at the following link:

http://europass.cedefop.europa.eu/europass/preview.action?locale_id=1

A substantial part of the networking between European partnerships and matching relationships is expected to be done using a common language, in particular English. Therefore, as part of their technical capacity, applicants will need to demonstrate that each proposed partner in the consortium is sufficiently competent in dealing with international files and communication, bearing in mind this language aspect. This can be done by including in CVs the language skills of the staff that will actually be performing the work involved.

Applicants must be directly responsible for the preparation, management and implementation of the project and not acting as an intermediary.

8. AWARD

An evaluation of the quality of proposals, including the proposed budget, will be carried out in accordance with the following award criteria:

1. Relevance (including geographical coverage²³ for Lot 1)	30
2. Visibility	15
3. Impact	20
4. Quality	20
5. Budget and Cost-effectiveness	15
Maximum total score	100

²³ As stated in Chapter 6.1. on 'geographical eligibility'.

Where the total score is lower than 60 points or below 50% for any of the above five criteria, the proposal will not be evaluated further.

In the case of Lot 1, the Commission will award grants to the highest scoring proposals.

In this framework up to €1 000 000 will be set aside for European partnerships and national and regional public authorities that have one or several partners located in an EU Member State not yet involved in the mobility scheme as a result of the 2008 project (see also Chapter 6.1 above on ‘geographical eligibility’).²⁴

The Commission will establish a merit list for the purposes of awarding the grants up to the maximum budget available for this action. The Commission reserves the right to constitute a reserve list of non awarded proposals that obtained a final score superior to the thresholds mentioned above. Applicants entered on the reserve list shall be deemed to have been rejected until the Commission notifies that a grant will finally be awarded or that the proposal is definitively rejected. Proposals on the reserve list will be considered definitively rejected if they receive no information before the 31 March 2010. Proposals on the reserve list may be awarded if a proposed for award proposal fails to accept the award or if the Commission decides to allocate extra funding to this action.

In the case of Lot 2, the Commission will award a single grant to the highest scoring proposal that can be implemented with this grant.

The complete selection and evaluation procedure is described in point II.3 of the Guide for Submission.

Please note that, in case of award, the beneficiary authorises the Commission to publish the following information in any form and medium, including via the Internet:

- beneficiary’s name and address,
- subject and purpose of the grant,
- amount granted and the percentage of the action’s total cost covered by the funding.

9. SUBMISSION OF PROPOSALS

9.1. Preparing the proposal

The proposal must be drafted in one of the official languages of the European Union, using the special Submission Set available for this call. For explanatory notes please refer to the Guide for Submission.

²⁴ The Commission will establish a separate merit list for the purposes of awarding the grants up to €1 000 000 to cover the Member States that are not covered as a result of the previous call for proposals for the pilot project in 2008 (see chapter 6.1 above).

The Submission Set can be:

- downloaded from the Europa web site:

http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/entrepreneurship/support_measures/erasmus/

- or obtained at the following address:

European Commission
Enterprise and Industry Directorate-General
Grant Programme 2009
Call for proposals No ENT/ERA/09/311 – ERASMUS for Young Entrepreneurs
Contact: Mr Reinhard KLEIN
Office address: BREY 6/284
B-1049 Brussels – BELGIUM
Fax: (+32-2)-296 62 78 – e-mail: entr-erasmus-call@ec.europa.eu

The proposal must be submitted, **in quadruplicate (one original + three photocopies, including an electronic version on CD-Rom or DVD)**, and placed inside **two** sealed envelopes, i.e. one envelope with the proposals placed inside another envelope. Both envelopes should be addressed to the department indicated above and should also be marked: **‘Call for proposals No ENT/ERA/09/311’** with the following note: **‘Not to be opened by the internal mail department’**. If self-adhesive envelopes are used, they must be sealed with adhesive tape and the sender must sign across this tape.

9.2. Sending the proposal

Proposals must be submitted on paper

a) either by registered mail, postmarked no later than 29 May 2009, to the address indicated above.

b) or delivered by hand, i.e. delivery in person or by an authorised representative (including courier service), no later than 29 May 2009, to the following address:

European Commission
Enterprise and Industry Directorate-General
Grant Programme 2009
Call for proposals No **ENT/ERA/09/311** – ERASMUS for Young Entrepreneurs
Directorate E – Promotion of SMEs’ competitiveness
Unit E.1 – Entrepreneurship, BREY 6/284
Service central de réception du courrier
Avenue du Bourget, 1
B-1140 Bruxelles, Belgique

How to get to Avenue du Bourget 1:
http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/calls/hand_delivery.html

In case of hand-delivery, a acknowledgement of receipt must be obtained as proof of submission, signed and dated by the official in the Commission’s ‘Service central de

réception du courrier' who took delivery. This department is open from 08.00 to 17.00 from Monday to Thursday and from 08.00 to 16.00 on Friday; it is closed on Saturdays, Sundays and Commission holidays.

Evidence of timely submission by post or courier service will be constituted by the date of dispatch, the postmark or the date of the deposit slip. In the case of hand-delivery, the signed and dated receipt will serve as evidence.

Applicants must observe the above instructions in order for proposals to reach their final destination on time.

Applicants should send a notification of submission to the e-mail address entr-erasmus-call@ec.europa.eu by 29 May 2009 at the latest.

10. QUESTIONS FROM APPLICANTS

All the information needed for preparing and submitting a proposal is given in the call for proposals and annexes. If any further questions arise, they can be submitted in writing by sending an e-mail to:

entr-erasmus-call@ec.europa.eu

Questions will be answered by the Commission in writing; no answers, explanations or clarifications will be given over the telephone. Applicants' questions and answers will be published in anonymised form as 'Frequently Asked Questions' which are accessible via:

http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/entrepreneurship/support_measures/erasmus/

11. EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

The European Community promotes equality between women and men and aims in all its activities to eliminate gender inequalities (Articles 2 and 3 of the EC Treaty). Women are particularly encouraged to submit proposals.

12. PERSONAL DATA

Your grant application will be processed by computer. All personal data (such as names, addresses, CVs, etc.) will be processed in accordance with Regulation (EC) No 45/2001 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 December 2000 on the protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data by the Community institutions and bodies and on the free movement of such data.²⁵

The replies to the questions in the Submission Set are necessary to assess applications. They will be processed solely for that purpose by the department responsible for the Community grant programme concerned. You may ask for personal data to be sent to you so you can correct or complete them. For any question relating to these data, please contact the Commission department to which the application has to be returned. Applicants may lodge a

²⁵ Official Journal L 8, 12.1.2001.

complaint against the processing of their personal data with the European Data Protection Supervisor at any time.

13. RECOMMENDED MONTHLY ASSISTANCE TO NEW ENTREPRENEURS

Table 1: Recommended monthly amounts of financial assistance paid by IOs to NEs²⁶	
Country where the HE stays	Recommended amount per month while staying in this country/ €
Belgium	830
Bulgaria	560
Czech Republic	610
Denmark	1100
Germany	830
Estonia	670
Ireland	1000
Greece	780
Spain	830
France	900
Italy	900
Cyprus	780
Latvia	610
Lithuania	560
Luxembourg	830
Hungary	670
Malta	720
Netherlands	830
Austria	900
Poland	610
Portugal	780
Romania	560
Slovenia	720
Slovakia	610
Finland	950
Sweden	950
United Kingdom	1000

²⁶ The amounts mentioned are gross amounts (= maximum 90% EU funding + minimum 10% co-financing by European partnerships or by national and regional public authorities).

14. ANNEX 1 SUBMISSION SET

15. ANNEX 2 GUIDE FOR SUBMISSION