

EUROPEAN COMMISSION

CALL - EAC/A01/2015

Erasmus+ Vocational Education and Training Mobility Charter 2016-2020

1. Introduction

This specific Call is based on Regulation (EU) No 1288/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 December 2013 establishing 'Erasmus+': the Union programme for education, training, youth and sport repealing Decisions No 1719/2006/EC, No 1720/2006/EC and No 1298/2008/EC with EEA relevance.

The Work Programme for Erasmus+ for 2016 C(2015) 6151 as adopted by the Commission foresees a "VET Mobility Charter" for the accreditation of bodies with a strong record of successfully organising high-quality mobility for VET learners and staff.

2. Background

One of the objectives of the 'Erasmus+' Programme is to increase quality mobility within vocational education and training (VET) and support the European internationalisation of VET organisations in the Erasmus+ Programme countries.

The Copenhagen Process has, since 2002, strived to modernise vocational education and training, make it more attractive and develop Europe-wide approaches such as increased transnational mobility, better transparency and recognition of qualifications and general internationalisation in the sector, thus contributing to the creation of a genuine European labour market.

3. Objectives and description

The Erasmus+ VET Mobility Charter is intended to encourage organisations that have track records of proven quality in organising VET mobility for learners and staff to further develop their European internationalisation strategies. European internationalisation is not just the furthering of learning in another Erasmus+ Programme country by embedding high quality mobility activities into curricula. It also involves developing international approaches throughout the sending organisation, for example by networking with bodies in other countries, promoting the learning of foreign languages and looking beyond national VET approaches.

The acquirement of the VET Mobility Charter will give the VET Mobility Charter Holders the possibility to apply in a simplified way under the Erasmus+ Key Action 1 mobility for VET learners and staff as of 2017. It aims also to support the capacity building of sending organisations to organise quality mobility for learners and staff, whilst at the same time rewarding, promoting and further developing quality in mobility.

The VET Mobility Charter is awarded for the full duration of the Erasmus+ Programme and is subject to monitoring as mentioned later in the call.

Note that the award of the VET Mobility Charter does not imply any direct funding nor any guarantee for funding under the Key Action 1 mobility for VET learners and staff.

The VET Mobility Charter holders will be identified on the Erasmus+ website, in order to make more visible to companies in Europe the sources of trainees coming from an organisation of a high qualitative background.

The 2017 Erasmus+ Programme Guide will be published in the autumn of 2016.

The non-award of the Charter does not preclude the right of the VET organisations to submit a full application under subsequent application deadlines for VET mobility as indicated in the Erasmus+ Programme Guide.

The VET Mobility Charter is not obligatory for participation in Erasmus+ VET Mobility. VET mobility in the Erasmus+ Programme is also open to new bodies and smaller institutions and indeed other applicant bodies which may not wish to be accredited with the VET Mobility Charter, but which nevertheless would like to participate in transnational VET mobility. These organisations can submit applications for mobility project funding in the usual way under the Key Action 1 mobility for VET learners and staff as indicated in the Erasmus+ Programme Guide.

4. Eligibility criteria

4.1. Eligible applicants

Applications for the VET Mobility Charter can be submitted either by a single VET organisation or by a national mobility consortium, provided that:

- for an application as individual VET organisation: the applicant must be a VET organisation established in a Programme Country, sending its own learners and staff abroad;
- for an application as national mobility consortium: the applicant must be the coordinator of the national mobility consortium. Any member of a national mobility consortium can be the coordinator. A consortium must comprise at least 3 members, i.e. participating organisations. All members of the consortium must be from the same Programme Country and need to be identified at the time of applying. Amongst the members of a national mobility consortium, the sending organisations must be organisations providing vocational education and training and sending their own learners and staff abroad.

Consortia might be either already legally or informally established or they can be new ones.

Each sending VET organisation remains responsible for the quality, the contents and the recognition of the mobility periods. Each member of the consortium is required to sign an agreement with the consortium coordinator to specify the roles and responsibilities and the administrative and financial arrangements; the modalities of cooperation shall specify matters like the mechanisms for preparation, quality assurance and follow-up of mobility periods.

4.2. Eligible participants

A participating organisation can be:

- any public or private organisation active in the field of vocational education and training (defined as a VET Organisation); or
- any public or private organisation active in the labour market.

For example, such organisations can be:

- a vocational education school/institute/centre;
- a public or private, a small, medium or large enterprise (including social enterprises);
- a social partner or other representative of working life, including chambers of commerce, craft/professional associations and trade unions;
- a public body at local, regional or national level;
- a research institute;
- a foundation;
- a school/institute/educational centre (at any level, from pre-school to upper secondary education, and including adult education);
- a non-profit organisation, association, NGO;
- a body providing career guidance, professional counselling and information services;
- a body responsible for policies in the field of vocational education and training.

Each organisation must be established in a Programme Country:

- a) the Member States of the European Union,
- b) the following EFTA-EEA countries: Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway
- c) the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Turkey

4.3. Additional Eligibility Criteria

- a) The application is submitted to the National Agency of the country in which the applicant organisation/consortium is established;
- b) The application is made using the official electronic application form;
- c) The application form is completed in full, including annexes where necessary;
- d) The application form is filled in one of the official EU languages, with the exception of applications submitted to National Agencies in the EFTA/EEA and candidate countries. These applications may be drafted in the national language of the applicant;
- e) The application is submitted by the deadline.

5. Exclusion Criteria

The purpose of exclusion criteria is to eliminate from participation and award those applicants who are in situations that may give rise to doubts about their future

existence and actual ability to successfully and regularly implement the mobility activities for which the Erasmus+ VET Mobility Charter will be awarded.

Applicants must therefore, after having completed the application, sign a declaration on their honour certifying that they are not in one of the situations referred to in articles 106(1) and 107 to 109 of the Financial Regulation¹, signing the relevant form that is part of the application form accompanying the Call for the Erasmus+ VET Mobility Charter and available at http://ec.europa.eu/education/calls/0514_en.htm

The successful applicants shall provide the valid documentary evidence demonstrating that they are not in one of the situations of exclusion referred to in the call by the deadline set up by the relevant national agency.

If the valid documentary evidence confirming the declaration of honour is not sent by the deadline, the National Agency may refuse to award the VET Mobility Charter.

6. Selection Criteria, Award Criteria and Assessment

6.1. Selection criteria:

- a) Applicants must have completed at least 3 VET Mobility projects under the Lifelong Learning Programme 2007-2013 and /or Erasmus+ Programme.

In a consortium, either the consortium as a whole or each individual organisation must have completed at least 3 VET Mobility projects under the Lifelong Learning Programme 2007-2013 and /or Erasmus+ Programme.

- b) The budget consumption rate on average for the last 3 completed projects must be at least 80%.

¹ REGULATION (EU, EURATOM) No 966/2012 OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL of 25 October 2012 on the financial rules applicable to the general budget of the Union and repealing Council Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 1605/2002

6.2. Award Criteria:

Applications for the VET Mobility Charter will be assessed against the following award criteria:

6.2.1. Relevance of the experience in transnational VET mobility related to the objectives of the call – 30 /100 points

N.B. In case of an application by a national mobility consortium, the consortium as a whole or each individual member of the consortium will be assessed on this criteria.

- a) The extent to which the applicant organisation has experience in transnational VET (Leonardo) mobility projects and the extent to which the previous transnational mobility projects are proportionate to the organisation's size and show a strategic approach to international activities.
- b) The extent to which previous projects demonstrate an appropriate level of implementation in terms of quality of management, satisfaction of participants, recognition of competences, use of previous LDV Certificate, etc.)
- c) The extent to which the previous VET mobility activities and strategies demonstrate a commitment to quality and long-term development.

6.2.2. Relevance of the European Internationalisation strategy: institutional strategy, developments and commitment to transnational VET mobility – 40/100 points

N.B. In case of an application by a national mobility consortium, the consortium as a whole and each individual member of the consortium will be assessed on this criteria.

- a) The extent to which a clear, genuine and qualitative approach to developing sustainable European internationalisation has been instigated, including transnational mobility.
- b) The level of clarity, consistency and relevance when proposing long term strategy in developing transnational mobility activities.
- c) The extent to which the operating environment, curricula developments and relevant future skills demands in working life are taken into account in the institutional strategy.
- d) The level of quality of the action plan to achieve the aims of the internationalisation strategy
- e) The extent that outgoing and incoming learner and staff mobility is structurally embedded and where possible linked to the curricula.
- f) The extent to which development plans over the next five years are realistic in the light of the track record in previous projects in transnational VET mobility?

6.2.3. Organisational issues and quality management - 30/100 points

N.B. In case of an application by a national mobility consortium, the consortium as a whole and each individual member of the consortium will be assessed on this criteria.

- a) To extent to which the application organisation shows high quality levels of general management of mobility, including internal management structure, human resources and mobility organisation from preparation through to recognition and dissemination and evaluation
- b) The extent and the duration of a clear long-term commitment to the complete cycle of organising mobility ;
- c) The extent of the commitment to quality management, with emphasis on human resources, sustainable structures and cooperation and communication between the participating organisations;
- d) The extent to which the envisaged organisational and mobility developments are explained clearly and are consistent with the overall nature and quality of the European internationalisation strategy.
- e) The appropriateness of measures envisaged to undergo periodic self-assessment and improve the quality management of mobility over time.

6.3. Assessment

The threshold for award of the VET Mobility Charter is scoring at least 50% for each of the three award criteria and scoring an overall mark of 70 / 100. Failure to reach these scores will result in the non-awarding of the application.

7. Procedure for the Submission of Applications

Applicants are required to submit their applications online to the National Agency of the country in which the applicant organisation is established and using the correct electronic form and including all requested annexes.

For more information and access to the application form:

<http://ec.europa.eu/erasmus-plus/na>

8. Information on the selection results

All applicants will be informed by the relevant National Agency on the success or non-awarding of their application.

Successful applicants will receive the VET Mobility Charter awarded by the National Agency. The applicant will have to sign it and publish it on the website of the organisation.

Indicative Timetable

Stages	Date and time or indicative period
Publication of the call	October 2015
Deadline for submitting applications	19 May 2016 12hr CET
Evaluation period	June – August 2016
Information to applicants and awarding of the VET Mobility Charter at the latest	end-September 2016

9. Publicity

The Commission and National Agencies will publish on their websites the following information about accredited holders of the VET Mobility Charter:

Name of the Charter holding organisation, including consortia members, and its (their) website(s) and the sectors involved in the organisation's(s') mobility where relevant.

10. Processing of personal data

Any personal data shall be processed by the national agencies pursuant to the Regulation (EC) No 45/2001 of the European Parliament and of the Council on the protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data by the European Union institutions and bodies and on the free movement of such data; and where applicable, the national legislation on personal data protection of the country where the application has been submitted.

11. The VET Mobility Charter

After the selection and awarding process is completed, a VET Mobility Charter is awarded and signed by both the applicant organisation and the National Agency.

11.1. Reporting

In the mid-term of the Charter and at the end of the last mobility contract, the holders of the VET Mobility Charter will be asked to report on the development of the European internationalisation strategy and the impact of the Charter.

11.2. Monitoring

Quality standards have to be adhered to by organisations holding the VET Mobility Charter and will be monitored by the Erasmus+ National Agencies during the Programme. These can be found in the Erasmus+ VET Mobility Quality Commitment that is annexed here to the Call and that has to be signed for every subsequent grant agreement for VET mobility. Principles as set out in the European Quality Charter must also be adhered to and can be found at the following link: <http://qualityinternships.eu/>

In terms of monitoring, holders of the VET Mobility Charter may be subject to monitoring/ on-the spot checks / system checks by the National Agencies for the following:

- a) the operational side of the management;
- b) the quality of the mobility;
- c) the development of the international strategy.

During the lifecycle of the VET Mobility Charter, the Erasmus+ National Agencies may organise thematic monitoring visits and may invite VET Mobility Charter holders to meetings with National Agencies and other stakeholders.

11.3. Modification of a Consortium holding a VET Mobility Charter

Any proposed modification to the composition of a consortium must be signalled in writing and requires prior approval by the relevant National Agency which awarded the VET Mobility Charter to the consortium. The legal instrument for including any modification to the composition of a consortium is an amendment to the VET Mobility Charter, which has to be signed by both parties before its entry into force. Following requirements are necessary:

- The addition of a new member requires a mandate signed between the co-ordinator and the new member and acceptance letters from all other members signed by the contact persons. These should be forwarded by the co-ordinator with the request.
- The addition of a new member is of course subject to the agreement of the relevant National Agency after verification of compliance with the eligibility criteria, of non-exclusion, with the selection and award criteria published in this call.
- The withdrawal of a member requires written explanation from the co-ordinator and a withdrawal letter from the withdrawing co-beneficiary, signed by the legal representative. Where the minimum requirements published in this call are no longer fulfilled, the relevant National Agency reserves the right to decide on the continuation/termination of the VET Mobility Charter.

An amendment may not have the purpose or the effect of making changes to the VET Mobility Charter which would call into question the decision awarding the Charter or be contrary to the equal treatment of applicants.

11.4. Termination of the VET Mobility Charter

The VET Mobility Charter commits holders to carry out mobilities of quality and will be valid until the end of the ERASMUS+ programme. National Agencies are responsible for ensuring that VET Mobility Charter Holders respect the qualitative standards on a continuous basis.

Poor quality, bad financial management, fraud, low mobility numbers, or no progress/ declining focus with the internationalisation strategy could be reasons to withdraw the Charter. Failure to keep complying with the initial exclusion, selection

and award criteria of this Call could also be a reason to withdraw the Charter. In this event, the organisation could still be eligible to apply in the usual way under the Key Action 1 mobility for VET learners and staff as indicated in the Erasmus+ Programme Guide.

In case of conflicting meanings between language versions, the English version prevails.