



## European Project Planning for Transnational Research

Elisabetta Delle Donne<sup>1</sup>

### Abstract

*This paper presents and describes the funding opportunities in the field of research and innovation managed by the European Commission.*

*The paper starts with an introduction to most important funding Programmes that can be interesting for researchers and higher education institutions to finance their researches, their mobility and their career development, Erasmus+ providing funding opportunities in the field of Education, Training, Youth and Sport and Horizon 2020, providing funding opportunities in the field of Research and Innovation*

*The paper presents each of the mentioned Programme's main objectives, funding schemes and budget.*

*Then issues related to quality project planning are addressed together with an overview of the main quality and assessment criteria used to select successful project proposals.*

*Finally some examples of initiatives, already funded by the European Commission for are provided.*

### Introduction to funding opportunities

Europe 2020 is the growth strategy of the European Union that aims to creating the conditions for a smarter, sustainable and inclusive growth.

The Europe 2020 strategy includes seven flagships initiatives to achieve the above mentioned objective, such as innovation, the digital economy, employment, youth, industrial policy, poverty, and resource efficiency.

Within the Europe 2020 strategy, two funding programmes make available resources to strengthen research and innovation and to reinforce the effectiveness and inclusiveness of Higher education. These funding programmes are Erasmus+ and Horizon 2020.

Erasmus+ is the EU programme providing funding resources for education, training, youth and sport. Erasmus+ Programme aims to foster quality improvements, innovation and internationalization of education and training institutions. Also Erasmus+ improves the level of key competences and skills, with particular regard to their relevance for the labor market. Finally Erasmus+ promotes the emergence of a European lifelong learning area supporting the modernization of education and training systems.

Horizon 2020 is the programme that finances research, development and innovation activities.

Horizon 2020 aims to raise the level of excellence of Europe's scientific research through the support to researchers in order to explore and implement their innovative ideas.

Horizon 2020 also intends to make Europe a more attractive location to invest in research and innovation by promoting activities where businesses set the agenda and providing major investment in key industrial technologies.

Finally Horizon 2020 focuses on bringing together resources and knowledge across different fields, technologies and disciplines to support initiatives building a bridge from research to market with a new focus on innovation-related activities, such as piloting, demonstration, test-beds, and market uptake.

### Erasmus+

The Erasmus+ Programme provides funding opportunities for different types of activities and is structured in three Key Actions dedicated respectively to Mobility, Cooperation for Innovation and Policy reforms and two specific actions dedicated to Sport and European Studies.

**Key Action 1** is dedicated to finance mobility projects and is organised according to the different target groups.

Mobility of learners and staff provides opportunities for students, trainees, young people and volunteers, as well as for professors, teachers, youth workers, staff of education institutions to undertake a learning and/or professional experience in another country.

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<sup>1</sup> Pixel, Italy



The Erasmus Mundus Joint Master Degrees support high-level integrated international study programmes delivered by consortia of higher education institutions worldwide. Finally Erasmus+ Master Degree Loans offers loans guarantee schemes backed up by the Programme to be used by students to follow abroad for a full Master Degree.

**Key Action 2 – Cooperation For Innovation And The Exchange Of Good Practices** aim to develop innovative approaches to make education more attractive and in line with individual needs and expectations of learners. The KA 2 action also promotes ICT based methodologies and new or improved processes of recognition and validation of competences.

Special focus is also given to the needs of disadvantaged groups and to deal with differences in learning outcomes linked to the geographical and socioeconomic disparities.

Key Action 2 is based on enhancing synergies between organisations active in different fields and socio-economic sectors

Key Action 2 foresees four different funding tools: Strategic Partnership, Knowledge Alliances, Sector Skills Alliances and Capacity Building.

**Strategic Partnerships** focus on the promotion of innovation, exchange of experience and know-how between different types of organisations involved in education, training and youth.

**Knowledge Alliances** promote the cooperation between higher education institutions and enterprises to foster innovation, entrepreneurship, creativity and multidisciplinary teaching and learning;

**Sector Skills Alliances** provide support to VET systems and the Business sector to jointly design and delivery of vocational training curricula, programmes and teaching and training methodologies, drawing on evidence of trends in specific economic sectors;

Finally **Capacity Building** are addressed to enhance the cooperation between European and Non European Higher education institutions and systems for their modernization and internationalization.

**Key Action 3 – Support For Policy Reforms** through meetings, conferences, consultations and events promoting the active participation of young people in democratic life in Europe.

There are also two other action included in Erasmus+, **Jean Monnet** supporting excellence in teaching and research in the field of European Union studies worldwide, **Sport Actions** finance through **Collaborative Partnerships**, prevention of doping, fight against match-fixing, containment of violence and also tackling racism and intolerance in sport.

The overall Budget of the Erasmus + Programme is 14.77 Billion Euro for the entire 7 years period, with KA1 being allocated around 63%, KA2 around 28% and KA3 around 4%, of the total budget

Further information on the Erasmus+ Programme is available on the European Commission's website at: [http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/index_en.htm)

## Horizon 2020

The Horizon 2020 Programme is organised in three Pillars: Pillar 1 - Excellent Science, Pillar 2 - Industrial Leadership and Pillar 3 - Societal Challenges

**Pillar 1 - Excellent Science**, aims to make the EU's research and innovation system more competitive on a global scale providing funding opportunities for individual and group researchers according to a science-driven and widely 'bottom-up' approaches.

**The European Research Council (ERC)** provides flexible funding opportunities to enable talented and creative researchers (individually and in teams) to pursue the most promising researches.

**Future and Emerging Technologies (FET)** supports collaborative research for advanced and paradigm-changing innovation. It finances scientific collaboration across disciplines on radically new, high-risk ideas to accelerate development of the most promising emerging areas of science and technology.

**Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions (MSCA)** finances opportunities for researchers' training and career development through their cross-border and cross-sector mobility. Resources are available both for individual researchers and for institutions to cooperatively set up mobility initiatives.

**Pillar 2 - Industrial Leadership**, aims to make Europe a more attractive location to invest in research and innovation by promoting activities where businesses set the agenda.

**Leadership in enabling and industrial technologies (LEIT)** provides support for research, development, demonstration, standardisation and certification of highly innovative products and services in three topic-based areas identified by the Horizon 2020 bi-annual Workprogrammes:



Information and communications technology (ICT), Nanotechnologies, advanced materials, biotechnology and Space.

**Pillar 2 also provides an innovative SME instrument** to stimulate all forms of innovation in SMEs, targeting those with the potential to grow and internationalise across the single market and beyond.

**Pillar 3 - Societal Challenges**, aims to address major concerns shared by modern societies through a challenge-based approach, bringing together resources and knowledge across different fields, technologies and disciplines.

Funding focus on topic-based challenges, already defined by the Horizon 2020's Workprogramme reviewed on a bi-annual basis:

- Health, demographic change and wellbeing
- Food security, sustainable agriculture and forestry, marine and maritime and inland water research, and the Bioeconomy
- Secure, clean and efficient energy
- Smart, green and integrated transport
- Climate action, environment, resource efficiency and raw materials
- Europe in a changing world - inclusive, innovative and reflective societies
- Secure societies - protecting freedom and security of Europe and its citizens

The total budget for the 2014-2020 period is 70 billion euros:

- Pillar 1 - Excellent Science: 24.4 Billion Euro
- Pillar 2 - Industrial leadership: 17 Billion Euro
- Pillar 3 - Societal challenges: 29.7 Billion Euro

Further informations on the Horizon 2020 Programme is available on the European Commission's website at: <http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/horizon2020/en>

## Quality in Project Planning

Usually there is an average of 3 months for presenting a project after a Call for Proposal is published. Given this limited time it is recommended to start developing a project idea before the Call for Proposal is published, based on what is foreseen in the program of reference.

The formulation of a project idea should arise from the analysis of the context at European level and on a clear and consistent identification and selection of the needs to be addressed.

The analysis of the context should include the understanding of community policies in the sector of reference, specific needs analysis and researches on the subject field as well as the evaluation of the current and past initiatives in the framework of interest

The project idea also has to be fully consistent with the specific priorities of the Call for Proposal.

The relevance of the project, its consistency with the programme's priorities, the European added value and its level of innovation are among the quality criteria that are considered in the project assessment and selection process.

Further assessment criteria are:

- The quality of the project structure and overall work plan that measures aspects such as: the completeness and the consistency of the activities with reference to the objectives identified; the feasibility of the planned activities and the of the expected results; the innovative potential of the methodologies adopted to carry out the activities; the effectiveness of the planned quality control measures; the cost effectiveness of the project budget.
- The quality of project partnership addressing different elements such as the complementarity and multi-sectoral dimension of the institutions involved, the capacity of the project partners to cover the relevant experiences and expertise and a balanced and appropriate representation of the different geographical areas and cultural backgrounds of Europe is an important matter.
- The potential impact of the project addressing issues as: the effectiveness of the communication plan, the measures that will be adopted to ensure the project results dissemination, sustainability and transferability the number of stakeholders benefiting from the project activities.



### Examples of successful projects

- **Med&Lang Palliative Care**  
The Med&Lang Palliative Care project, funded by the European Commission in the framework of the Erasmus+ Programme- KA2 Strategic Partnership in the field of Higher Education. The project focuses on communication skills in a foreign language for supporting the teaching processes of the medical lecturers at higher education level, with a specific focus on the palliative cares.  
Website: <http://www.medlang.eu/>
- **EET – Economic e-Translations**  
The EE-T, Economic e-Translations project is funded by the European Commission in the framework of the Lifelong Learning Programme - Erasmus Multilateral projects in the field of Higher Education. The project, assessed the impact of translations of economic texts on the European history of economic thought. Website: <http://eet.pixel-online.org/index.php>
- **History On Line**  
The History On Line project is funded by the European Commission in the framework of the Lifelong Learning programme – Erasmus Multilateral Projects in the field of Higher Education. The project developed an Internet Portal for history teaching based on the effective use of ICT potential.  
Website: <http://www.historyonline.eu/>
- **NELLIP Network of European Language Learning Providers**  
The NELLIP project is funded by the European Commission in the framework of the Lifelong Learning Programme - KA2 Languages. The NELLIP project promoted quality in language learning through the application of the quality criteria used to award the European Language Label.  
Website: <http://nellip.pixel-online.org/>