

European Economic Area (EEA) Financial Mechanism 2014-2021 grants in higher education

Instruction for applicants 2020

1. About the programme

The **EEA/Norway Cooperation Programme in Higher Education** is a part of the **Baltic Research Programme** managed by **Archimedes Foundation in Estonia**. It is funded from the grants of the European Economic Area (EEA) Financial Mechanism 2014-2021 also supports, in addition to scientific cooperation, **higher education cooperation** between Estonia and Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway (hereinafter: donor countries).

The following actions are supported:

- **Cooperation projects** strengthen the long-term cooperation between higher education institutions, promote the internationalisation of higher education institutions, improve the quality of studies and enable students and professors to supplement their professional knowledge and skills in an international environment.
- **Learning mobility projects** that give employees of higher education institutions and partner institutions an opportunity to acquire new knowledge and skills in an international team.

2. Cooperation projects

Cooperation projects improve the quality and internationalisation of studies by strengthening cooperation based on mutual interests between the universities and institutions in Estonia and donor countries.

Objective of the project

Supporting cooperation projects with an aim of developing learning methods, curricula or organisation of studies, support the creation of mobility windows¹ in curricula or to integrate traineeship-based methods into studies. The outcome of the cooperation projects is intellectual study outcome² to studies.

The objective of the cooperation projects is to contribute to development of curricula and teaching methods (intellectual output), also create possibilities for mobility windows or contribute to the integration of higher education and the world of work. Another objective is to exchange positive experiences with teaching methods and enable short-term study mobility for students. The projects must involve a minimum of two partners: one from Estonia and the other from a donor country.

Cooperation projects can be submitted in all fields of higher education.

Cooperation projects also support international learning mobility needed to achieve the project objectives. Study mobility is supported in relation to the following potential joint activities:

- **Short-term study mobility of students.** Support for study mobility of students, during which a person stays in a partner higher education institution for 5-30 days (travel days are not included). The aim of study mobility may be participation in a training course, study module, having a consultation, working at a library, laboratory, etc.
- **Intensive courses.** Intensive course is a short-term intensive learning period that brings together the students and professors of partner universities and the invited experts to:
 - provide a unique learning environment for professors and students that cannot be created in a single separate university;
 - address multidisciplinary topics in an international environment and to open up new perspectives for the participants;
 - exchange opinions on the contents, methods, and approaches in studies;
 - test innovative study methods that may become a part of modules or curricula being developed.

Intensive courses lasting 5-30 days are supported (travel days not included). Learning mobility of professors (including invited experts) participating in intensive courses may last 1-30 days. Students and professors of higher education institutions participating in the project and

¹ Mobility window is a period planned in curricula for participating in international mobility projects.

² Intellectual output is a new innovative product of independent value which is serving long-term goals and has a potential of use that goes beyond the limits of the project consortium. An intellectual output could be, for instance, a curriculum, teaching method, learning material, a larger analysis, a lecture material, software, etc.

academic and non-academic, project-related employees of other partner institutions are free to participate. Intensive teaching and learning must take place during the course.

- **Joint courses for employees.** Supports short-term training related to the project topic and aimed at employees at partner higher education institutions, with a duration of 3-30 days (travel time not included). Training courses may be held as seminars or workshops. For maximum impact, employees of all partner higher education institutions must participate in joint training courses.

At least one joint activity must be carried out under a cooperation project (intensive course, seminar, workshop, training course, etc.). All actions must take place in the countries of partner institutions participating in the project.

Transnational project meetings. Work-related meetings which are needed to bring the project to fruition. Meetings of up to 4 days are supported. A maximum of 4 transnational project meetings are supported within one project.

Who can submit applications and participate as partners?

At least two partner higher education institutions must participate in a cooperation project – one from Estonia and the other from a donor country. In the case that three or more countries wish to participate in the project, the main partner in each country must always be a higher education institution. Higher education institutions of each donor country may include other partners in the project, for instance, enterprises or other institutions or organisations interested in the topic. Partner institutions can only be included from countries in which the primary partner is a higher education institution.

Only Estonian higher education institutions may submit applications as coordinators. Project coordinator manages the project budget, is responsible for the correct use of the support, and pays partners in donor countries their share of the support.

Duration of the project

The cooperation project lasts for 12-24 months.

Financing conditions

The contribution awarded for a single cooperation project is 10,000 to 150,000 euros.

The travel and living costs of participants living in the country of location of the joint activity will only be reimbursed if there are participants from at least two countries and the distance between the origin and destination of the participant from the same country is at least 10 kilometres. E.g., participants who have travelled from northern Norway to southern Norway will have their travel and living costs reimbursed.

Every activity corresponds to only one budget category with the exception of learning, teaching, training activities which enable the request for living, as well as travel costs. For example, if you plan to include a transnational project meeting in your project, you can only request funding for it under the transnational project meeting sheet in the budget application. Adding the same activity under multiple budget categories will not result in additional funding for the same event.

The following costs are eligible under the project:

Eligible support	Support description	Financing mechanism	Amount	Basis for allocation
Project management and implementation	Project management (e.g., planning, finance management, communication between partners); local project activities carried out under a project, e.g., classroom project work with students, organisation of implementation of integrated learning methods, etc.); informing, promoting, and distributing (e.g., leaflets, information sheets, web based information)	Unit cost	For actions of a coordinating organisation: 500 euros per month	Number of participating institutions and the duration of the project, up to 2750 euros per month.
		Unit cost	For actions of partner organisations: 250 euros per participating organisation in per month	

<p>Staff support related to the development of intellectual outputs</p>	<p>Developing intellectual outputs/specific outcomes of the project Staff support related to project management and administration are covered from the support item “project management and implementation”. To prevent potential overlap with such item, applicants will have to justify the type and volume of staff support applied for in relation to each output proposed. Intellectual output must be necessary, it can be disseminated, and has a wider use.</p>	<p>Unit cost</p>	<p>B1.1 Manager/day working on project B1.2 researcher/teacher/trainer /youth worker/day working on project B1.3 technician/day working on project B1.4 administrative staff/day working on project</p>	<p>Role of the participating people in the project and the number of days contributed. Staff costs related to project management and implementation are covered through the budget line “project management and implementation”. To avoid overlapping units applying, the coordinator needs to give a detailed explanation about the amount and type of staff costs for each intellectual output mentioned in the application,</p>
<p>Transnational project meetings</p>	<p>Participation in meetings between partners and organised by one of the partners for the purpose of implementing the project. Contribution to the travel and living support of participants. Applicants must justify the necessity and number of meetings and participants. The basis is travel distance per participant.</p>	<p>Unit cost</p>	<p>When the distance of the travel is 100–1999 km: 575 euros per participant per meeting. When the distance of the travel is 2000 km or more: 760 euros per participant per meeting. Max 4 per project.</p>	<p>Number or participants and travel distance. Travel distances must be calculated using the distance calculator supported by the European Commission.</p>
<p>Multiplier events</p>	<p>Local and international conferences, seminars, events to promote wider introduction and dissemination of intellectual outputs of the project. This item does not include travel and subsistence expenses for representatives of organisations participating in the project. Support for multiplier events will only be granted if they are directly related to the dissemination of the intellectual output of the project.</p>	<p>Unit cost</p>	<p>100 euros per local participant (i.e., for participants living in the country in which the event takes place). 200 euros per international participant (i.e., participants from other countries). Cannot be more than 7% of the overall budget of the project.</p>	<p>Number and origin of participants. Unit cost is only calculated per participants outside the consortium. In case your project has not been granted support to develop an intellectual output, no support will be provided for organising a multiplier event.</p>

Exceptional costs	Actual costs pertaining to subcontracting or purchase of goods or services necessary for the implementation of the project, and which cannot be covered by unit costs. Conclusion of subcontracting agreements must be related to the services which the partners are unable to provide on their own in accordance with the requirements, and which are unavoidably necessary for the implementation of the project ³ . Cannot include items usually found in an office setting or regularly used by members of the consortium.	According to the actual costs	75% of eligible costs Maximum of 15,000 euros per project.	Supporting documents on expenditure
Special needs support	Additional support directly related to participants with disabilities; including support related to travel and subsistence of the persons accompanying the participants with special needs, if justified and as long as a grant for these participants is not requested through the budget categories "travel" and "living support". The request for financial support to cover such costs must be motivated in the application form.	According to the actual costs	100% of eligible costs	Supporting documents on expenditure

Table A: Support for short-term learning mobility related to project activities

Travel support	Participants' costs for travel from and to the place of origin. The application must justify the necessity of the mobility to achieve the project objectives and outcomes. The application must indicate the distance travelled in one direction in order to be able to	Unit cost	Distance from destination 10–99 km: 20 euros per participant	Distance from destination
			Distance from destination 100–499 km: 180 euros per participant	
			Distance from destination 500–1999 km: 275 euros per participant	

³ Due to the nature of the project, the unavoidably necessary costs could include, for example, printing and translation costs, costs of IT services or equipment rental, study materials, etc. Gifts and keepsakes are not unavoidably necessary.

	calculate the unit cost.		Distance from destination 2000–2999 km: 360 euros per participant	
Travel distances must be calculated using the distance calculator supported by the European Commission: http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/resources/distance-calculator_en by entering the location of the sending and receiving institutions. The unit cost is intended to cover the cost of return trips.				
Living support based on unit cost:				
Living support for students (short-term learning mobility and intensive courses)	Living support of participants during the study period/day	Unit cost	Up to day 14: 58 euros per day per participant + on days 15–30: 42 euros per day per participant	Number of days
Living support of employees (joint short term staff courses, teaching or expert guidance for intensive study programmes)	Living support of participants during the study period/day	Unit cost	Up to day 14 of the action: 106 euros per day per participant + on days 15–30 of the action: 74 euros per day per participant	Number of days
Special needs support	Additional support directly related to participants with special needs, including, in justified cases, the travel and living support of the accompanying persons, except when the costs of the latter are covered based on unit costs. The need for such costs must be justified in the application.	According to the actual costs	100% of eligible costs	Supporting documents on expenditure

Table B: Unit costs for staff developing intellectual outputs

These funds can only be used to cover the salaries of employees involved in the creation of intellectual outputs. Unit cost includes all taxes. The amount of remuneration depends on the role of the involved employees in the project and the country where the organisation whose employee is involved is located. An employee can be involved under a contract of employment, contract for services, or an authorisation agreement.

Manager	Professor, researcher	Technician	Administrative staff
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	B1.1	B1.2	B1.3	B1.4
Liechtenstein, Norway	294	241	190	157
Iceland	280	214	162	131
Estonia	88	74	55	39

Payments

The contribution is paid out in parts:

- First payment – 40% of the total amount of the support is paid within 30 days from the conclusion of a financing agreement.
- Interim payment – 40% of the total contribution will be paid within 90 days of the submission of the interim report, provided that the report is approved and 70% of the first payment is used.
- Balance payment – up to 20% of the total contribution after approval of the final report.

Selection criteria

A good application must comply with the following criteria:

Objectives and relevance (up to 30 points)	<p>The needs, objectives and outcomes of the cooperation project are clear, realistic and address a relevant topic. The objectives of the project correspond to the objectives of the programme and are in line with the strategic goals of the higher education institutions. Expected outcomes provide innovative solutions to clearly defined needs and target groups.</p>
Quality of project design and work plan (up to 20 points)	<p>The project is focused on clearly defined topics, tasks and activities. The plan is relevant as to achieving the objectives. The tasks have been determined and divided between the partners so that all of the partners are actively involved and it is possible to achieve the objectives.</p> <p>The timeframe of the project is realistic and appropriate. If a project provides for learning or training activities, the following will be assessed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the extent to which they correspond to the project objectives; - whether the number of participants justified; - the level of organisation of the activities; - the organisation of acknowledging the study outcomes.
Cooperation quality of project team (up to 20 points)	<p>Partners have the professional competence and experience necessary to carry out the project and achieve the objectives. The application clearly states the roles of the partners and how they contribute to the activities and outcomes. Appropriate activities are planned to ensure effective communication and cooperation.</p>
Impact and dissemination of results (up to 30 points)	<p>The expected impact on target groups and institutions is clearly described. Project evaluation measures are understandable. It is clear how the objectives of the project were assessed and the impact achieved. A dissemination plan is appropriate. Activities will continue to have an impact after the end of funding.</p>

In case of two applications having the same evaluation score, preference will be shown to newcomer institutions previously not funded through the current programme.

3. Learning mobility projects

Mobility projects support the bilateral mobility of higher education (both for academic and none academic, project related) staff of Estonia and donor countries and the mobility of employees from other partner institutions to Estonia.

Objective of the project

Support is granted for learning mobility projects that support the professional development of employees at partner higher education institutions in line with the strategic goals of internationalisation of higher education institutions, increase professional and teaching competence of employees, their innovation and ability to improve the quality of teaching and promote cooperation between Estonian and donor country higher education institutions. Mobility projects also increase participants' awareness of other cultures and support the emergence of international networks.

Supported actions

The programme enables two types of study mobility:

- Mobility of academics (in both directions) and staff of other partner institutions (to Estonia) to **teach in higher education institutions**,
- mobility of higher education institutions' staff to **training taking place in a donor country** (outside Estonia).

Employees participating in mobility must have a contractual employment relationship with the institution involved in the project (including a contract of employment, contract for services, or an authorisation agreement).

The following tables provide an overview of the conditions for mobility.

Mobility of academics and staff of partner institutions to teach

Who can participate?	<p>Teaching in partner higher education institutions is open for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - professors at higher education institutions - staff at institutions in donor countries. <p>Inbound mobility of academics and other partner institutions in donor countries and the outgoing mobility of teachers from Estonian higher education institutions can be funded.</p>
Description	<p>Mobility allows teaching by an academician from a higher education institution or from other institution in another participating country as a guest lecturer. Teaching can take different forms (seminars, lectures, tutoring, etc.) and is aimed at students at the host university.</p> <p>Study mobility of professors and employees:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - promotes exchange of experience and knowledge and the implementation of innovative methods in studies; - enables the institution to expand and enrich the selection and content of the

	<p>courses offered;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - offers students a new understanding of how to work in the field; - significantly improves the foreign language skills of participants. <p>Teaching at a higher education institution must be integrated into the curriculum of the host institution.</p> <p>The guest lecturers' subject plan (curriculum) must be agreed between the partners before the mobility starts. After a mobility visit, a report and a letter of confirmation from the partner institution regarding the period of participation and the work load must be submitted.</p> <p>Travel and subsistence expenses related to teaching abroad shall be reimbursed to the participant. Travel costs are reimbursed according to the distance between the place of departure and the place of destination, the cost of living being dependent on the duration of the mobility and the cost of living in the country of destination. It is not a salary for a professor or employee.</p>
<p>Duration of learning mobility</p>	<p>The period of teaching at a foreign higher education institution may last from 1 day to 4 weeks (plus travel days). The minimum teaching load is 5 academic teaching hours per week.</p> <p>In order to maximise the impact of study mobility on the host university's learning and cooperation between partners, mobility should generally last at least 5 working days.</p>
<p>Conditions</p>	<p>Partners have the right to set their own selection criteria for their teaching staff and non-academic staff.</p>

Mobility of higher education staff to participate in training

<p>Who can participate?</p>	<p>Employees of participating Estonian higher education institutions may be sent to a study trip to participate in training.</p>
<p>Description</p>	<p>Mobility allows academic and support staff in higher education institutions to participate in training at a partner institution or partner institution in a donor country (such as an enterprise).</p> <p>Study mobility to participate in a training course:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - enables one to acquire new knowledge or practical skills important for professional development; - helps to create and strengthen cooperation between higher education institutions, enterprises and other partner institutions. <p>The training may take various forms, including job shadowing, teaching, participation in a workshop, participation in a conference, etc.</p> <p>A training programme approved by the host institution must be submitted to the sending institution prior to the mobility. After a mobility visit, a report and a</p>

	<p>letter of confirmation from the host institution regarding the period of participation and the work load must be submitted.</p> <p>Travel and living support related to training abroad are reimbursed to the partners when participating in mobility. Travel costs are reimbursed according to the distance between the place of departure and the destination. The amount depends on the duration of the mobility and the cost of living in the destination country. It is not a salary for a professor or employee.</p>
Duration of learning mobility	<p>Mobility to participate in training abroad can generally take from 3 days to 4 weeks (plus travel days).</p> <p>Mobility of less than 3 working days is only allowed in cases where it is not possible to arrange a longer absence for the employee or to participate in conferences, seminars and workshops with a defined programme.</p>
Conditions	<p>Partners have the right to set their own selection criteria for their teaching staff and non-academic staff. Higher education institutions may link their participation in mobility with an obligation to introduce their experiences/lessons to those interested in the home university later.</p>

Duration of the project

The duration of learning mobility projects is up to 12 months.

Financing conditions

The support for one mobility project is up to 150,000 euros. The grant consists of participants' travel and living allowances and mobility organisation grants.

Support is administered by the Estonian higher education institution that filed the application. Information on programme opportunities and selection criteria must be public and accessible to all staff in the institution.

The following costs are reimbursed in learning mobility projects:

Eligible support	Support description	Financing mechanism	Amount	Basis for allocation
Travel support	Travel expenses for travel to and from the place of origin of mobility.	Unit cost	Distance from destination 10–99 km: 20 euros per participant	Number of days
			Distance from destination 100–499 km: 180 euros per participant	
			Distance from destination 500–1999 km: 275 euros per participant	
			Distance from destination 2000–2999 km: 360 euros per participant	

<p>Travel distances must be calculated using the distance calculator supported by the European Commission: http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/resources/distance-calculator_en by entering the location of the sending and receiving institutions. The unit cost is intended to cover the cost of return trips.</p>				
Living support based on unit price:				
Cost of living in a donor country	Cost of living of Estonian professors/employees in donor countries	Unit cost	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 250 €/day - 1250 €/week - 2200 €/2 weeks - 3000 €/3 weeks - 4000 €/4 weeks 	Number of days
Cost of living in Estonia	Cost of living of donor country professors/employees in Estonia:	Unit cost	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 150 €/day - 750 €/week - 1250 €/2 weeks - 2000 €/3 weeks - 3000 €/4 weeks 	Number of days
<p>If the mobility period does not coincide exactly with the week, the unit cost will be calculated proportionally taking into account the unit cost of that particular week and the amount of days, adding these to the unit cost of the full week. The result is rounded to the nearest euro. For a 10-day study trip to Norway, the cost of living is calculated as follows: 1,250 euros (7 days) + 2,200 (unit cost for 2 weeks)/14*3 (3 extra days) = 1,721.43 or 1,721 euros. Support is awarded to a higher education institution according to a one-day rate (150 €/250 €), but in the case of mobility, institutions will be guided by the above rates and calculation.</p>				
Other expenses:				
Special needs support	Support directly related to mobility of participants with special needs. The request for financial support must be well justified in a specific application form once participants have been selected.	According to the actual costs	100% of eligible costs	Supporting documents on expenditure
Mobility organisation support	Support directly linked to the organisation of mobility (excluding travel and living support of participants)	Unit cost	Up to 100th participant: 350 euros per participant + starting from 101st participant: 200 euros per additional participant	Number of participants in study mobility

Mobility organisation support helps to cover the costs of organising bilateral mobility for staff. Organising a mobility may include the following activities, but not only:

- preparation, monitoring and evaluation of staff involved in mobility,
- improving the foreign language skills of participants,
- academic and organisational matters with partner institutions,
- selection of employees, notifying and assisting them,
- gathering feedback from employees returning from a mobility activity.

Payments

- First payment – 70% of the total amount of the support is paid within 30 days from the conclusion of a project agreement.
- Interim payment – 20% of the total contribution will be paid within 90 days of the submission of the interim report, provided that the report is approved and 70% of the first payment is used.
- Balance payment – 10% of the total contribution after approval of the final report.

Selection criteria

Relevance and objective (up to 30 points)	The needs, goals and outcomes of the mobility project are clear, realistic and relevant to the topic. The objectives of the project correspond to the objectives of the programme and are in line with the strategic goals of the higher education institutions.
Project quality (up to 40 points)	The plan is relevant as to achieving the objectives. The arrangements for co-operation between partners and the responsibilities, roles and tasks are clearly described. The principles for selection of employee mobility are described. Dissemination of information on programme opportunities and selection criteria is indicated.
Impact and dissemination of results (up to 30 points)	The expected impact at the individual, institutional and national level is clearly described. Dissemination of the results of the mobility project is ensured at the level of the institution of higher education and its subdivisions and, if necessary, in the donor countries.

In case of two applications having the same evaluation score, preference will be shown to newcomer institutions previously not funded through the current programme.

4. Application

Application deadline

- The deadline for submitting applications is **13 April 2020 at 16.00** (Estonian time).

Submission of applications

Applications are submitted by Estonian higher education institutions (project coordinators). The application must be digitally signed and all the documents required in the application form must be attached. The application form and budget form are available on the programme website: <http://haridus.archimedes.ee/en/eeanorway-cooperation-programme-higher-education> .

More detailed instructions on how to apply can be found in the call for proposals.

Assessing and selecting the applications

Applications that meet the requirements of each technical inspection are evaluated by two independent and impartial experts. The selection panel receives a ranking of projects and, after review, decides which projects to support under the programme. The process ensures that all applications are evaluated according to the same criteria.

5. Project implementation

Reports

In the middle of the project contract period, the project coordinator will submit an interim report containing information on the progress of the project and the financial statement. Provided that the report is approved and 70% of the first payment is used, it is followed by a second payment.

The final project report must be submitted within 60 days after the end of the project. A balance payment will be made after the final report has been approved.

A list of mandatory documents certifying project costs is provided in the project agreement.

Monitoring

Institutions could be visited during the project period to assess the implementation of the project.

6. Programme coordination

Programme coordination

The programme is coordinated by the Ministry of Education and Research.

In Estonia, the programme is implemented by Archimedes Foundation which deals with informing, advising, carrying out evaluations and concluding contracts and monitoring the implementation of approved projects.

In Norway, the project is coordinated by the Norwegian Agency for International Cooperation and Quality Enhancement in Higher Education (DIKU), in Liechtenstein, the National Agency for International Educational Affairs (AIBA), and in Iceland, there is no coordinating body.

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Legislation regulating the EEA grants:

- [Regulation on the implementation of the European Economic Area \(EEA\) Financial Mechanism 2014–2021](#)
- [Memorandum of understanding on the implementation of the EEA financial mechanism 2014–2021 between the Republic of Estonia, Iceland, the Principality of Liechtenstein, the Kingdom of Norway](#)
- [Guideline for Educational Programmes – Rules for the establishment and implementation of programmes falling under programme Area 3 “Education, Scholarships, Apprenticeships and Youth Entrepreneurship”](#)