Erasmus
Networks

[ERA 13]

Objectives and description of the action

Erasmus networks are designed to promote European co-operation and innovation in specific thematic areas of particular importance to higher education in a European context. In this way, they contribute to enhancing quality, defining and developing a European dimension within a given academic discipline, study area, or furthering innovation and good practice on other aspects of higher education development. This is achieved by means of co-operation within the network between higher education institutions, university faculties and departments. Such co-operation should also involve academic and other associations, learned societies, enterprises, professional bodies, other partners of socio-economic importance in the public or private sector and, where appropriate, student organisations. All networks should bring together an appropriate range of relevant stakeholders concerned by the theme addressed. Co-operation within networks is expected to lead to outcomes which will have a lasting and widespread impact on higher education institutions across Europe in the field concerned.

Erasmus Thematic Networks may be of two types:

- ***Academic Networks*** designed to promote innovation in a specific discipline, set of disciplines or multidisciplinary area

- ***Structural Networks*** designed to help improve and modernise a specific aspect of higher education organisation, management, governance or funding (such as broadening access to higher education, promoting the "knowledge triangle" of education, research and innovation, improving university management, enhancing quality assurance and so on).

Priority themes for both Academic and Structural Networks, are contained in the appropriate call for proposals. Each year, network proposals focusing on subject areas and themes not sufficiently covered by networks already being funded under this action, are particularly encouraged, in order to arrive an optimal coverage of academic disciplines and key aspects of higher education development and management. However, continuing support for networks which have come to the end of their funding cycle is also awarded, provided that they can demonstrate a strong track record of achievements and impact and that extending their funding period will give rise to significant further developments (e.g. in terms of the scope of activities, methodological approach or geographical coverage)

The following is an indicative list of the kind of issues on which Academic projects will tend to focus while respecting the priorities set in the call for proposals:

- *Mapping the field*. This might typically involve describing, analysing, and comparing existing teaching methods, and defining and experimenting with new ones, identifying existing high quality teaching material and placing it at the disposal of the members of the network with the aid of databases.
- *Activities in the Field of Quality Assurance*, whether related to an academic field or an

aspect of university management and administration

- *Facilitating European Co-Operation*. Assessing the state of the art in European co-operation, identifying needs and obstacles and ways to overcome them. Setting up tools (the use of ECTS, new models of co-ordination, European strategies). Promoting the production of European modules
- *Defining and Updating Generic and Sectoral Competences* using the method of the Pilot Project "Tuning Educational Structures in Europe". Now it is up to network projects to take the Tuning results further. Networks are now expected to implement the methodology and outcomes of the Tuning project in their discipline
- *Promoting Synergies between Teaching and Research* by encouraging higher education institutions to integrate research results in their teaching and link Erasmus networks with the Thematic Networks funded by the Research DG
- *Reinforcing the Link between Education and Society*, bringing together public and private sector, scientific and professional players, thereby contributing to Europe's innovation capacity.

Similarly, Structural Networks will normally base their further work on a state-of-the-art mapping of existing practice and emergent trends in different parts of Europe, and are expected to become a sustainable European forum for the development of innovation good practice in the organisational field concerned.

As a minimum, each network is expected to carry out the following operational activities:

- Establish a website and other appropriate tools to support information exchange and dissemination
- Produce an annual report on the state of innovation in its area of activity
- Provide the 'players' in Erasmus with full information about the network's events and activities
- Organise an annual meeting in the thematic area of the Network. The meeting will also bring together representatives of other Erasmus-supported activities in the field concerned, including notably Multilateral Projects and Intensive Programmes. It can take the form of an open seminar or conference, thereby encouraging collaboration between Erasmus-supported projects and other relevant initiatives
- Take appropriate measures regarding the evaluation of the network's performance.

One of the organisations participating in the network project must act as the co-ordinator. However, other network partners may take the lead on different phases of the work programme. It is vital that the whole of the Network be actively associated with its activities.

Full details of the conditions for participation are contained in the general call for proposals relating to the academic year concerned.

Who can benefit
• Higher Education Institutions • Public Bodies • Enterprises • Associations

Who can apply	The coordinating organisation of the network, on behalf of the network consortium; coordinating

	organisations which are higher education institutions must hold an Erasmus University Charter

Selection Procedure	COM	**Management of selected projects**	Executive Agency

Minimal size of the consortium	Please refer to EAC Executive Agency website
Participating countries	Please refer to Part II – section 3.1 of the Lifelong Learning Programme 2008-2010 General Call for Proposals
Duration , methods of funding, level of funding	Please refer to EAC Executive Agency website
Funded activities	Please refer to Part II – section 7 of the Lifelong Learning Programme 2008-2010 General Call for Proposals
Political priorities for this action	Please refer to Part I of the Lifelong Learning Programme 2008-2010 General Call for Proposals

Application Form