



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion

Skills
VET, Apprenticeships and Adult Learning

Pilot Project on long-term mobility for apprentices

**"A European framework for mobility of apprentices:
Developing European citizenship and skills through youth
integration in the labour market"**

CALL FOR PROPOSALS

VP/2017/007

Any questions should be sent by email only to:

EMPL-VP-2017-007@ec.europa.eu

To ensure a rapid response to requests for information, applicants are invited to send their queries in English, where possible.

Applicants are invited to read the present document in conjunction with the Financial Guidelines for Applicants and the model grant agreements published with this call as well as the financial rules applicable to the general budget of the Union and their rules of application: http://ec.europa.eu/budget/biblio/documents/regulations/regulations_en.cfm.

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1. INTRODUCTION – BACKGROUND

1.1. Programme/Legal base

This action covers a Pilot Project requested by the European Parliament to the Commission for implementation within the meaning of Article 54(2)(a) of 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 (OJ L 298, 26.10.2012, p. 1).

It shall set out to test the viability of setting up "*A European framework for mobility of apprentices: Developing European citizenship and skills through youth integration in the labour market*" and builds upon a first Pilot Project of similar nature launched in 2016¹.

1.2. Context and policy background

Over recent years, considerable efforts have been made by Member States to reform their labour markets in a way that allows for easier and quicker transitions from education and training into employment. As part of this endeavour, new laws and regulations, as well as system changes in relation to initial Vocational Education and Training (VET) have been prominent and featured at the top of the policy agenda in many countries. Enhancing work-based learning and introducing or strengthening apprenticeships are at the core of these reforms. These actions have been driven largely by the need to reduce youth unemployment.

Whilst still challenging, the situation has improved markedly for young people in many respects: youth unemployment has dropped from a peak of 23,9% in 2013 to 18,5% in 2016, with a decrease of more than 10% over the last year alone. The share of early school leavers also dropped from 17% in 2002 to 11% in 2015. Paradoxically, only two-fifths of employers are confident of finding enough skilled graduates to fill entry-level positions, while a third have difficulties in recruiting staff for skilled jobs². In this context, VET plays a critical role in equipping young people with the right skills to meet labour demand needs and fuel growth and competitiveness of companies. Apprenticeships are particularly effective in providing skills that are relevant for the labour market, facilitating smooth transitions into employment.

The Copenhagen Process, fostering European enhanced cooperation in VET, has been modernised as a result of the 2015 **Riga Conclusions** of the Ministers in charge of vocational education and training of the EU Member States, the Candidate Countries, and the European Economic Area Countries, as well as the European Social Partners, and the Commission, with the support of the European VET provider associations³. These Riga Conclusions agreed five new policy priorities for the period 2015-2020, including the need to promote **work-based**

¹ Call for proposals VP/2016/010: "*A European framework for mobility of apprentices: developing European citizenship and skills through youth integration in the labour market*".

² McKinsey Centre for Government, *Education to employment: designing a system that works*; CEDEFOP, *Skill mismatch. The role of the enterprise*, 2012.

³ http://ec.europa.eu/education/policy/vocational-policy/doc/2015-riga-conclusions_en.pdf.

learning in all its forms with special attention to **apprenticeships**. The **Education and Training 2020** Working Group on VET also issued 20 guiding principles for high-performance apprenticeships and work-based learning⁴.

The **New Skills Agenda for Europe**, published on 10 June 2016, has further highlighted the VET agenda and its important contribution to employability through concrete actions. The first ever **European Vocational Skills Week** took place in 2016 and emphasised the key contribution of VET for individuals and labour markets alike and brought to the fore issues where further policy action and cooperation is still necessary.

On 2 December 2016, the tri-partite Advisory Committee on Vocational Training (ACVT) adopted unanimously an Opinion on a “**Shared Vision on Quality and Effective Apprenticeships and Work-based Learning**”. The opinion represents an important call from governments, trade unions and employer organisations from EU Member States and partner countries to further strengthen efforts to increase quality and effectiveness of apprenticeships and work-based learning.

The **European Commission's Work Programme for 2017**, reflecting the recent Commission Communication "Investing in Europe's Youth" (COM(2016)940), foresees a number of key policy initiatives in relation to apprenticeships. These include a proposal for a European Quality Framework for Apprenticeships, a demand driven apprenticeship support service for Member States and VET stakeholders and a proposal for a new dedicated long-term (6 to 12 months) apprentice mobility activity labelled "**ErasmusPro**" that will partly build on the lessons drawn from the projects to be developed under this call for proposals and its 2016 predecessor.

The importance and positive impact of learning mobility for employability, career prospects, skills and personal development has been proven by the actions funded under the Lifelong Learning Programme and Erasmus+ and has been highlighted by stakeholders taking part in the European Alliance for Apprenticeships. Evidence also demonstrates that demand for learning mobility is high: in 2016 the Erasmus+ VET Mobility Action could only fund about 40% of the applications received⁵.

Studies⁶ show that the overall benefit of mobility for VET learners tends to increase with the length of the experience. Stays of more than 6 months provide the highest added value in terms of improvement of professional, personal and social skills. Mobility brings gains for the company as well as for the apprentice him/herself. While short-term placements (less than 6 months) help to improve personal and social skills, longer placements considerably improve professional skills and employability as well as the benefit to the employer.

In spite of the positive effects from long-term VET apprentice mobility, most of the mobility experiences financed by Erasmus+ cover very short stays abroad (average of 34 days in the

⁴ <http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/events-and-projects/projects/apprenticeships-work-based-learning>.

⁵ In 2016 6.971 proposals for Erasmus+ VET learner mobility were received but only 2.779 projects could be selected for funding.

⁶ http://www.pedz.uni-mannheim.de/daten/edz-b/gdbk/07/analysis_leonardo_study_en.pdf.

period 2014-2016)⁷. Among the main reasons cited for this are the difficulty of fitting longer placements in upper secondary programmes and, in the case of apprentices, the different legal statutes of trainees and apprentices in different countries, particularly when it comes to apprenticeship contracts. Companies also hesitate to send their apprentices abroad for too long because in most cases they are employees of the company and are expected to learn and work in the company with which they are under contract. This is a particular challenge for SMEs that sometimes invest heavily in their apprentices and would have difficulties in sending them abroad for long periods. The different education and training systems and annual academic schedules also constitute a significant barrier, making it hard to find the right "window" for a long-term mobility experience. The typical age of vocational learners, 15 to 19 year olds (minors in some cases), can pose liability problems in terms of insurance and health and safety rights and coverage. Language barriers, socio-cultural factors, family ties and attachments often also act as a break on long-term apprentice mobility.

In view of the potential benefits of longer-term mobility for apprentices, this pilot project intends to identify ways to address the above obstacles and draw policy lessons that would help the development of more permanent actions to support long-term VET apprentice mobility.

2. OBJECTIVES – TYPES OF ACTIVITIES – EXPECTED RESULTS

2.1. Objectives

In line with the 2016 Pilot Project on long-term mobility of apprentices⁸, the ultimate goal of this call for proposals is to enable young apprentices to develop their skills and enhance their employability prospects, whilst also strengthening their sense of European citizenship.

This will be done by testing different approaches for putting in place the necessary support infrastructure as well as the relevant institutional and contractual frameworks to assist with the placement of apprentices from the moment of departure abroad through to the return date.

In particular, actions should:

1. assess to what extent demand exists among relevant stakeholders for developing **long-term** (minimum 6 to maximum 12 months) **transnational** apprentice mobility schemes, and the uptake of such schemes;
2. identify obstacles (legal, practical, institutional, academic, etc.) that prevent apprentices from carrying out longer-term stays abroad;
3. identify and disseminate good practices and success factors for long-term work placements for apprentices.

⁷ Through these Erasmus+ VET mobility projects 2015, 73,5% of VET learners undertook or will undertake a work placement abroad for less than a month, 26,1% for between 1 and 6 months, and 0,4% for more than 6 months.

⁸ Call for Proposals VP/2016/010: "A European framework for mobility of apprentices: developing European citizenship and skills through youth integration in the labour market".

2.2. Types of activities to be funded

Grants awarded under this call for proposals will serve to finance activities designed to meet the above mentioned objectives and the specific activities set out in this section. This shall include the infrastructure and network development costs incurred by project beneficiaries, as well as the actual costs associated with the mobility experience of the apprentices (i.e. travel, accommodation, local transport and subsistence of the students abroad).

Projects should implement the following activities.

1. Identify the candidates for placements and ensure appropriate matching of their profiles to the labour demand needs of the host companies. This includes ensuring that the candidates possess a suitable knowledge of the host country language or receive adequate linguistic support prior to and during the mobility experience.
2. Organise induction/welcome sessions, pre-mobility training and (as necessary, see point 1) language courses.
3. Design and develop detailed learning agreements for the work placements of the apprentices, including relevant curricular content with clear learning outcomes, specifying the formal recognition provisions and listing clearly the rights and obligations of each party.
4. Organise the travel and accommodation of the selected apprentices, and bear the associated costs, i.e. outward and return travel from/to their place of origin, suitable accommodation and living costs during the mobility experience.
5. Put in place specific activities to facilitate youth integration in the host location thus fostering a sense of European citizenship among the apprentices.
6. Ensure that enterprises are ready to host and train the apprentices for the entire duration of their stay, ideally appointing a mentor for each apprentice.
7. Carry out a thorough assessment and evaluation at different stages of the placement experience, allowing for the identification of success and enabling factors to:
 - ensure the participation of companies, in particular SMEs, and apprentices in long-term mobility placements;
 - integrate long-term mobility experiences in another EU Member State into national apprenticeship curricula;
 - ensure validation and recognition of the learning outcomes acquired through the mobility experience;
 - overcome obstacles to long-term mobility of apprentices across EU borders.
8. Develop and test models for long-term exchanges of apprentices in enterprises.
9. Carry out a regular evaluation of all aspects of the apprentices' stay abroad (including: preparation, integration, relevance of the training and skills acquired, sense of European citizenship, foreign language development, quality of the teaching and learning environment including testimonies by the apprentices themselves) and foresee feedback

mechanisms to the Commission.

10. Identify the various types of public support for apprentice mobility in Europe and suggest possible avenues for optimising such support.
11. Develop and implement a communication and awareness raising plan focusing on the benefits of long-term apprentice mobility. The plan should be tailored to the interests and needs of the relevant labour market and VET stakeholders.

2.3. Target group of the mobility experiences, status during mobility and recognition of outcomes

a) Target group of the mobility experiences

The organisations forming the consortium will ensure the identification of the individual learners for participating in the actions of this call. The VET learners should follow or have followed schooling of EQF level below 6. The selected candidates should be one of the following:

- VET learners who have the status of apprentice⁹ and are at least 17 years old at the time of departure abroad;
- VET learners whose graduation from an apprenticeship has taken place within the last 12 months prior to the signature of the grant agreement.

b) Status of apprentices during the mobility

Participants will be subject to an apprenticeship agreement of the host country giving the participant employee or employed apprentice status (ideally remunerated). In the absence of this type of contract, the participants will be covered by the rules governing the relevant apprenticeship programme of the host country.

c) Recognition of the learning outcomes of the mobility experience

Organisations in the consortia should determine, through appropriate assessment, documentation and validation, to what extent the agreed learning outcomes have been achieved by participants and ensure that these are appropriately recognised.

Organisations may decide to apply the European Credit system for Vocational Education and Training (ECVET) in the framework of their mobility activities. In these cases, a precondition for using ECVET is the setting up of an ECVET partnership. This partnership needs to bring together the competent organisations involved in: (1) identifying the suitable learning outcomes during mobility activities; (2) delivering VET programmes that are apt to satisfying

⁹ Apprenticeships are a particularly successful form of work-based learning, which is based on the following principles: apprenticeships are part of formal education and training programmes and lead to a nationally recognised qualification; apprenticeships combine company-based training (periods of practical work experience at a workplace) with school-based education (periods of theoretical/ practical education in a school or training centre); most often there is a contractual relationship between the employer and the apprentice, with the apprentice being paid for his/her work. Apprenticeships differ from other types of in-company learning, such as internships/traineeships, which are often outside formal education and training programmes, and not linked to recognised qualifications.

these needs; (3) assessing the extent to which learning outcomes have been achieved by learners; and (4) validating and recognising learners' credits on their return to the home institution.

The partnership for ECVET mobility activities can be formalised through a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU). A MoU is an agreement between competent organisations which sets the framework for credit transfer. It formalises the ECVET partnership by stating the mutual acceptance of the status and procedures of competent organisations and institutions involved. It also establishes partnerships' procedures for cooperation.

MoUs can be developed by networks of competent organisation/institutions from several countries/systems, but they can also be bilateral, depending on the partnership needs and ambitions. For more information and guidance on the establishment of a MoU, please refer to the following links:

http://ec.europa.eu/education/policy/vocational-policy/ecvet_en.htm and
<http://www.ecvet-secretariat.eu>

2.4. Principles and criteria in compliance with the European Quality Charter for Mobility

Organisations that plan to organise mobility activities for VET learners (including apprentices) must organise their activities in line with the principles and criteria set out in the European Quality Charter for Mobility¹⁰.

The European Quality Charter for Mobility constitutes the quality reference document for education and training stays abroad. The Charter provides guidance on mobility arrangements for learning or other purposes, such as professional betterment, to both young learners and staff. The respect of the principles set out in the Charter should help to ensure that mobility participants always have a positive experience both in the host country and in their country of origin on their return, and that the number and depth of education and training exchanges are stepped up. The Charter is available at:

http://europa.eu/legislation_summaries/education_training_youth/lifelong_learning/c11085_en.htm.

2.5. Expected outputs/results

Projects financed under this call for proposals should set out to achieve the following results.

- Sustainable cooperation structures should be established between consortium members, as well as with relevant external organisations to ensure quality transnational placements of apprentices.
- Methodologies and instruments should be developed for receiving and integrating the apprentices in the host company/organisation and broader host environment.

¹⁰ Recommendation (EC) No 2006/961 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 December 2006 on transnational mobility within the Community for education and training purposes: European Quality Charter for Mobility (Official Journal L 394 of 30.12.2006).

- The mobility experiences carried out should result in the acquisition of a minimum set of agreed learning outcomes by the apprentices and these should be appropriately documented and recognised in the country of origin.
- The final report should identify and assess the obstacles encountered before, during and after periods of mobility, as well as the benefits of long-term mobility for the different stakeholder groups.

3. TIMETABLE

Stages		Date or period
a.	Publication of the call	January 2017
b.	Information day, Brussels	February 2017
c.	Deadline for submitting applications	29 March 2017
d.	Evaluation period (indicative)	April-May 2017
e.	Information to applicants (indicative)	June 2017 ¹¹
f.	Signature of grant agreement (indicative)	June 2017 ¹²
g.	Starting date of the action (indicative)	July 2017

3.1. Starting date and duration of the projects

The actual starting date of the action will either be the first day following the date when the last of the two parties signs the grant agreement, the first day of the month following the date when the last of the two parties signs or a date agreed upon between the parties.

Applicants should note that if their project is selected, they may receive the grant agreement after the start date of the action that they have set. It is therefore advisable to number the months in the work plan instead of indicating the name of the months.

Any expenditure incurred before the signature of the grant agreement will be at the applicant's risk. No expenditure can be incurred before the deadline for submission.

The indicative duration of the project is **18 months**.

4. BUDGET AVAILABLE

The total budget earmarked for the EU co-financing of actions under this call is estimated at **EUR 2.841.856**.

¹¹ And in any case no later than 6 months after the submission deadline.

¹² And in any case no later than 3 months after the date of information to applicants.

As an **indication**, the requested EU grants are expected to be between EUR 300.000 and EUR 500.000.

The Commission reserves the right not to distribute all the funds available.

4.1. Co-financing rate

Under this call for proposals, the EU grant may not exceed 85% of the total eligible costs of the action.

The applicants must guarantee their co-financing of the remaining 15% covered by the lead and co-applicants' own resources or from other sources other than the European Union budget.

5. ADMISSIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

- Applications must be sent no later than the deadline for submission referred to in section 3.
- Applications must be submitted by using the electronic submission system available at <https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/swim> and by sending a signed, printed version of the application form and its annexes by post or courier service (one original dossier and one copy; see also section 12).
- The annexes must include the **description of the action** and the **work plan** (see section 14).

Failure to comply with the above requirements will lead to the rejection of the application.

Applicants are encouraged to submit their project proposal in English, French or German in order to facilitate the treatment of the proposals and speed up the evaluation process. It should be noted, however, that proposals in all official languages of the EU will be accepted. In this case, applications should be accompanied by an executive summary in English (see section 14, checklist point 3).

6. ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

6.1. Eligibility of the applicants (lead and co-applicants) and affiliated entities¹³

a) Place of establishment

Legal entities¹⁴ properly established and registered in EU Member States are eligible as

¹³ See section 2 of the Financial Guidelines for Applicants for definitions.

¹⁴ Entities without legal personality are also eligible provided that their representatives have the capacity to undertake legal obligations on behalf of the entity and offer guarantees for the protection of the Union's financial interests equivalent to those offered by legal persons. To this end, such entities must provide a

applicants (lead and co-applicants) or affiliated entities.

b) Type of entities

To be eligible, the lead applicant, co-applicant(s) and affiliated entities must be public or private organisations active in the field of VET.

c) Consortia¹⁵

To be eligible, actions must have the involvement of at least two applicants (lead and co-applicants) established in at least two different EU Member States.

At least one of these organisations is a sending organisation and at least one is a receiving organisation that will provide the work experience. The sending and the receiving organisations must be in different Member States to ensure the transnational nature of the action.

The proposal may also involve so-called “**associate organisations**” from the public or private sector that contribute to the implementation of specific project activities or support the dissemination and sustainability of the project¹⁶. Associate organisations are not considered as members of the consortium and they do not receive funding. However, their involvement and role in the project and different activities have to be clearly described, as well as how they bring added value to the planned activities by investing resources and know-how.

If the lead applicant is not considered to be eligible, the application will be rejected.

If a co-applicant or affiliated entity is considered not to be eligible, this organisation will be removed from the consortium and the eligibility of the modified consortium will be re-evaluated. In addition, the costs that are allocated to a non-eligible co-applicant or affiliated entity will be removed from the budget. If the modified consortium is still eligible, the application will be evaluated on that basis. If the application is accepted for funding, the work plan will have to be adapted as appropriate.

d) Natural persons

Natural persons are not eligible to submit an application under this call for proposals.

6.2. Eligible activities

a) Geographical Location

To be eligible, actions must be fully carried out in EU Member States.

signed letter of the legal representative certifying his/her capacity to undertake legal obligations on behalf of the organisation (see section 14, checklist point 8).

¹⁵ Letters of mandate, authorising the lead applicant to submit the proposal and to sign any grant agreement on their behalf must be submitted from each co-applicant.

¹⁶ Letters of commitment must be submitted from each associate organisation confirming that they are willing to participate in the project with a brief description of their role (see section 14, checklist point 6).

b) Types of activities

The grant will finance the activities indicated in section 2.2 and other additional activities related to the setting up of the mobility action.

c) Core activities

The activities 1, 3, 4, and 6 under section 2.2 are considered to be core activities and may not be subcontracted.

d) Financial Support to third parties for mobility costs

Financial support to third parties for mobility costs – *in this context, **the apprentices*** – is eligible under this call (see also point 3 of the Financial Guidelines for Applicants).

Annex II lays down the rules governing such financial support. See also section 14.1.

7. EXCLUSION CRITERIA

Applicants (lead and co-applicants) and affiliated entities must sign a declaration on their honour certifying that they are not in one of the situations referred to in article 106(1) and 107.1(b) and (c) of the Financial Regulation concerning exclusion and rejection from the procedure respectively, using the relevant form attached to the application form available at <https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/swim/external/displayWelcome.do>.

8. SELECTION CRITERIA

Applicants (lead and co-applicants) must have the financial and operational capacity to complete the activity for which funding is requested. Only organisations with the necessary financial and operational capacity may be considered for a grant.

If the lead applicant is considered not to have the required financial or operational capacity, the application as a whole will be rejected. If a co-applicant is considered not to have the required financial or operational capacity, this co-applicant will be removed from the consortium and the application will be evaluated on that basis¹⁷. In addition, the costs that are allocated to the non-eligible co-applicant will be removed from the budget. If the application is accepted, the work plan will have to be adapted as appropriate.

8.1. Financial capacity

Applicants (lead and co-applicant) must have access to solid and adequate funding to maintain their activities for the period of the action and to help finance it as necessary.

The financial capacity of the applicant (lead and co-applicants) to carry out the action must be confirmed by the submission in the proposal of the following items:

¹⁷ This includes a re-evaluation of the eligibility of the modified consortium.

- Annual balance sheets and profit and loss accounts for the last financial year available (see section 14, checklist point 10);
- For grants of EUR 750.000 or more¹⁸, an audit report produced by an approved external auditor certifying the accounts for the last financial year.

The ratio between the total assets in the applicant's balance sheet and the total budget of the project or the part of the project budget for which that organisation is responsible according to the budget in the application form should be greater than 0,70. In addition, the Commission will take into account any other relevant information on financial capacity provided by the applicant. In this context, the Commission will in particular take account of the information provided in section F.2 of the SWIM application form.

The verification of financial capacity will not apply to public bodies.

8.2. Operational capacity

Applicants (lead and co-applicants) must have the operational resources (technical, management) and the professional skills and qualifications needed to successfully complete the proposed action.

Applicants **which hold the Erasmus+ VET Mobility Charter**¹⁹ will be considered as having the operational capacity required for the proposed action. A copy of the Charter must be included in the application file (see section 14, checklist point 11).

Applicants **that are not holders of the Erasmus+ VET Mobility Charter** must prove their operational capacity required for the proposed action by demonstrating a strong track record of competence and experience in the field of mobility of VET learners. These organisations must submit a list of the main projects relating to the subject of the call carried out in the last three years (see section F.3 of the SWIM application form and, where applicable, section 14 of this call, checklist point 13).

9. AWARD CRITERIA

(1) Relevance of the proposal to the objectives and expected results of the call for proposals (maximum 25 points)

- The capacity of the consortium to organise sustainable long-term learning agreements, with such capacity ideally going beyond the duration of the project life (10 points).
- The capacity to identify companies/SMEs for, and to actively involve them in, the hosting of apprentices during their mobility (10 points).

¹⁸ The threshold of EUR 750.000 applies to each applicant's (lead or co-applicant) share of the overall grant.

¹⁹ Erasmus+ VET Mobility Charter holders are organisations that have been selected under an Erasmus+ call for proposals due to their proven track record in organising Erasmus+ VET mobility projects for learners and staff. Erasmus+ VET Mobility Charter holders benefit from streamlined Erasmus+ application procedures, including the application process, the organisation of mobility projects, and reporting activities.

- iii. The capacity of the consortium to enhance European citizenship through dedicated youth integration activities for apprentices (5 points).

(2) Quality of the project design and implementation (maximum 35 points)

- i. The overall methodology for implementing the project, including a detailed work plan defining the roles and responsibilities of the main applicant and the other participating organisations, the distribution of tasks, staff allocation, etc. (10 points).
- ii. The description of the criteria and procedure to be used for selecting the participants for the mobility experience, quantifying the planned number of participants per vocational field (5 points).
- iii. The content of the learning agreements, defining inter alia the learning outcomes, the number of hours and content of the work placement abroad and the coaching arrangements of the apprentice by the sending organisation and by the receiving company (5 points).
- iv. The specification of the legal and administrative details concerning the training contract to be established with the apprentice in relation to social protection provisions, legal and medical cover during the stay abroad, accommodation, allowances, tutoring, etc. (5 points).
- v. The adequacy of the induction/welcome sessions and language courses that will prepare for, and form part of, the apprenticeship experience in the host country (5 points).
- vi. The explanation of how the learning outcomes from the mobility experience will be recognised in the country of origin (5 points).

(3) Dissemination and potential impact (maximum 30 points)

- i. The quality of the methodology to assess the impact of the mobility experience on participants and participating organisations during and after the project lifetime, to evaluate the other relevant elements of the mobility experience as described in section 2.2, and to identify the obstacles and success factors regarding long-term mobility experiences (20 points).
- ii. The appropriateness and quality of the arrangements to disseminate the outcomes of the project within and outside the participating organisations, targeting in particular transnational networks of regions, sector-based transnational networks of enterprises or networks along supply chains (10 points).

(4) The financial quality of the proposal (maximum 10 points)

- i. The clarity and completeness of the proposed budget (5 points).
- ii. The degree to which the level of output and impact of the project is proportional to the amount of the requested grant (5 points).

With consideration to the budget available for this call for proposals, only the proposals with the highest evaluation scores will be considered for award, **on condition that they reach at least 70% of the maximum possible total mark and at least 50% of the maximum possible mark for criteria (1) to (4).**

10. LEGAL COMMITMENTS

In the event of a grant being awarded by the Commission, a grant agreement, drawn up in euro and detailing the conditions and level of funding, will be sent to the coordinator (lead applicant) of the consortium.

The 2 copies of the original agreement must be signed by the coordinator and returned to the Commission immediately. The Commission will sign it last.

The grant agreement may include corrections and deletion of ineligible costs or activities made by the Commission. Therefore the applicant should carefully read the whole agreement and the budget and work plan sections in particular, before signing and returning the copies to the Commission.

A model grant agreement is published on the Europa website under the relevant call: <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=629&callId=504>.

Please note that the award of a grant does not establish an entitlement for subsequent years.

11. FINANCIAL PROVISIONS

Details on financial provisions are laid out in the Financial Guidelines for Applicants and the model grant agreement, both published on the Europa website under the relevant call: <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=629&callId=504>.

The above mentioned documents, together with Annex II (Guidelines regarding the costs of the apprentices' mobility experiences) to the present call for proposals, provide more details for the applicant organisations, especially guidelines for presenting the proposals' provisional budget along with the rules governing which categories of expenditure are eligible and which are not.

12. PROCEDURE FOR THE SUBMISSION OF PROPOSALS

The procedure to submit proposals electronically is explained in point 14 of the "Financial Guidelines for Applicants". Before starting, please read carefully the SWIM user manual: http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/calls/pdf/swim_manual_en.pdf.

Once the application form is filled in, applicants must submit it **both electronically and in hard copy**, before the deadline set in section 3 above.

The SWIM electronic application form is available until midnight on the day of the submission deadline. Since the applicants must first submit the form electronically, and then print, sign and send it by post service or hand delivery by the submission deadline, it is the **applicant's responsibility to ensure that the appropriate postal or courier services are locally available on the day of the deadline.**

The hard copy of the proposal must be duly signed and sent in **duplicate** (one marked "original" and one marked "copy"), including all documents listed in the checklist in section 14,

by the deadline (the postmark or the express courier receipt date serving as proof) to the following address:

**European Commission
Call for proposals VP/2017/007
DG EMPL/E.3, PLB3 – 06/49A
B-1049 Brussels
Belgium**

Please send your proposal by **registered post, express courier service or by hand delivery only**. Proof of posting or express courier receipt should be kept as it could be requested by the European Commission in cases of doubt regarding the date of submission.

Hand-delivered proposals must be received by the European Commission **before 4 p.m.** on the date of the deadline for submission as indicated in section 3 at the following address:

**European Commission
Central Mail Service
Call for proposals VP/2017/007 – DG EMPL/E.3
Avenue du Bourget 1
B-1140 Evere
Belgium**

At that time the Mail Service will provide a signed receipt which should be conserved as proof of delivery.

If an applicant submits more than one proposal, each proposal must be submitted separately.

Additional documents sent by post, by fax or by electronic mail after the deadlines mentioned above will not be considered for evaluation unless requested by the European Commission.

The applicant's attention is also drawn to the fact that incomplete or unsigned forms, handwritten forms and those sent by fax or e-mail will not be taken into consideration.

13. COMMUNICATION

13.1. Information day

An **information day** for potential interested applicants will be held in February in the premises of the European Commission in Brussels, Belgium. More information will be posted on the call website in due course.

The Commission cannot reimburse any costs related to participation in the aforementioned information session.

13.2. Communication during the application period

The information contained in the present call document together with the Financial Guidelines for Applicants provides all the information you require to submit an application. Please read it carefully before doing so, paying particular attention to the objectives and priorities of the present call.

All enquiries must be made by e-mail only to:

EMPL-VP-2017-007@ec.europa.eu

For technical problems please contact: empl-swim-support@ec.europa.eu

Questions may be sent by to the above address no later than 10 days before the deadline for the submission of proposals. The Commission has no obligation to provide clarifications to questions received after this date.

Replies will be given no later than 5 days before the deadline for submission of proposals. To ensure equal treatment of applicants, the Commission will not give a prior opinion on the eligibility of applicants or affiliated entities, an action or specific activities.

As a rule, no individual replies to questions will be sent but all questions together with the answers and other important notices will be published (FAQ in EN) at regular intervals on the Europa website: <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=629&callId=504>.

The Commission may also, on its own initiative, inform interested parties of any error, inaccuracy, omission or clerical error in the text of the call for proposals on the mentioned Europa website.

It is therefore advisable to consult the above mentioned website regularly in order to be informed of the questions and answers published.

No modification to the proposal is allowed once the deadline for submission has elapsed. If there is a need to clarify certain aspects or to correct clerical mistakes, the Commission may contact the applicant for this purpose during the evaluation process.

All communication regarding an application will be done with the **lead applicant only**, unless there are specific reasons to do otherwise.

13.3. Information on the outcome of the procedure

Applicants will be informed in writing about the results of the selection process.

Unsuccessful applicants will be informed of the reasons for rejection.

No information regarding the award procedure will be disclosed until the notification letters have been sent to the beneficiaries.

14. INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE PRESENTATION OF THE APPLICATION AND REQUIRED DOCUMENTS

14.1. Instructions for the presentation of the application

The **description of the action** must be written using the template available in SWIM.

The **work plan** should provide a detailed, chronological overview of all project activities. As mentioned in section 3.1. of the call, it is advisable to number the months in the work plan instead of indicating the name of the months.

Where certain elements of the description of the action and the work plan overlap with the SWIM application form, applicants can in the latter limit themselves to a reference to the separate documents. The detailed description of the action and the work plan will be attached to the grant agreement and will form an integral part thereof.

Proposals should include inter alia the activities indicated in section 2.2 above in the description of the action and the work plan and foresee the corresponding expenditure in the budget estimate.

The proposal should clearly explain the role in the action of all applicants and any affiliated entities or associate organisations.

With regard to any **financial support to target groups for mobility costs**, applicant organisations must earmark credits and specify the requested amount for direct support to apprentices for mobility costs under the heading "Costs of services", item "Other services" of the estimated budget in SWIM (see section 1.3 of the SWIM application form). The application must include, in the description of the action, a **detailed breakdown of these costs**, in line with the guidelines set out in Annex II.

In case of subcontracting any tasks comprising part of the action (see the Financial Guidelines for Applicants), the description of the action must provide details on the tasks to be subcontracted and the reasons for doing so and these tasks must be clearly identified in the budget. Core tasks as defined in section 6.2 of the call cannot be subcontracted.

14.2. Required documents

The checklist below indicates the documents that must be provided and at which stage of the procedure:

Checklist Part 1 – List of documents to be provided **BY ALL APPLICANTS** on submission of the proposal.

Checklist Part 2 – List of documents to be provided **ONLY FOR ACCEPTED APPLICATIONS.**

The checklist also indicates where originals are required. We recommend that applicants use the **checklist** in order to verify compliance with all requirements.

While some information must be supplied using the templates available in the SWIM application form, other documents may need to be completed and/or attached electronically, usually either administrative documents or free format text descriptions. The SWIM application form indicates in each section where SWIM templates should be used as

well as which and where free format documents can be uploaded electronically.

At the submission of the application, **copies of the signed originals** will be accepted for most of the documents to be submitted by the co-applicants. However, the lead applicant shall keep the original signed versions for its records, because **originals** may have to be submitted for certain documents at a later stage. **If the lead applicant fails to submit these original documents within the deadline given by the Commission, the proposal will be rejected for lack of administrative compliance.**

Regarding the compilation of the application file, it is recommended that the applicant:

- 1) follows the order of documents as listed in the checklist (and attach a ticked checklist as below to the proposal);
- 2) prints the documents double-sided;
- 3) uses 2-hole folders (do not bind or glue).

CHECKLIST-PART 1 – Documents to be submitted by the submission deadline

This table indicates the documents that must be provided by the submission deadline and where originals are required. We strongly recommend using the table as a checklist in order to verify compliance with all requirements.

Notes: Documents marked with * are obligatorily to be attached online in SWIM as well being sent in paper version. **Highlighted documents** do not need to be provided by public entities.

No.	Document	Specification and content	The document must be provided by each				Originally signed?	Checkbox
			Lead applicant	Co-applicant	Affiliated entity	Associate organisation / third party		
1	Declaration on honour*	The template is available in SWIM and must be written on the official letterhead of the organisation, bearing the original signature of the authorised legal representative and include the application's reference number generated by SWIM (VP/2017/OXX/XXXX). <i>Copies of the original signed declaration of co-applicants are accepted at the submission of the application; originals to be submitted upon request.</i>	✓	✓	--	--	✓	<input type="checkbox"/>
2	Signed SWIM application form submitted online	The SWIM application form submitted online must be printed and dated and signed by the authorised legal representative and send by hard copies as foreseen in Section 12. <i>Note: the online form must be electronically submitted before printing. After electronic submission, no further changes to the proposal are permitted.</i>	✓	--	--	--	✓	<input type="checkbox"/>
3	Executive summary in EN	Free format executive summary in EN (maximum 2 pages), if required (see section 5 of the call).	✓	--	--	--	--	<input type="checkbox"/>
4	Description of the action and work plan*	Description of the action: the template available in SWIM must be duly completed and submitted electronically together with the online submission form, as well as on paper. The paper version must be identical to the electronic version. Work plan: this free format document should give a detailed, chronological overview of all project activities.	✓	--	--	--	--	<input type="checkbox"/>

No.	Document	Specification and content	The document must be provided by each				Originally signed?	Checkbox
			Lead applicant	Co-applicant	Affiliated entity	Associate organisation / third party		
5	Letter of mandate*	The template is available in SWIM and must be written on the official letterhead of the organisation, dated and signed by the authorised legal representative. <i>Copies of the original signed letters of mandate are accepted at the submission of the application; originals to be submitted upon request.</i>	--	✓	--	--	--	<input type="checkbox"/>
6	Letter of commitment*	The template is available in SWIM and must explain the nature of the organisation's involvement (associate organisations) or the amount of any funding provided (third parties). The letter must be written on the official letterhead of the organisation and bear the original signature of the legal representative. <i>Copies of the original signed letters of commitment are accepted at the submission of the application; originals to be submitted upon request.</i>	--	--	--	✓	--	<input type="checkbox"/>
7	Legal/capital link with lead or co-applicant	Affiliated entities are required to provide proof of the legal and/or capital link with the lead or co-applicant.	--	--	✓	--	--	<input type="checkbox"/>
8	Proof of registration	A certificate of official registration or other official document attesting the establishment of the entity (for public bodies: the law, decree, decision, etc., establishing the entity). Exclusively in the case of entities without legal personality , a signed letter of the legal representative certifying his/her capacity to undertake legal obligations on behalf of the organisation.	✓	✓	✓	--	--	<input type="checkbox"/>
9	Balance sheet and profit & loss accounts	The most recent balance sheet and profit & loss accounts, including assets and liabilities, specifying the currency used.	✓	✓	--	--	--	<input type="checkbox"/>

No.	Document	Specification and content	The document must be provided by each				Originally signed?	Checkbox
			Lead applicant	Co-applicant	Affiliated entity	Associate organisation / third party		
10	Erasmus + VET Mobility Charter	Copy of the Charter, if available.	✓	✓	--	--	--	<input type="checkbox"/>
Only for organisations not holding the Erasmus+ VET Mobility Charter								
11	Statutes	The articles of association/statutes or equivalent proving the eligibility of the organisation. It is recommended not to include a paper copy of statutes in the application file, but to attach only an electronic copy in the SWIM application form.	✓	✓	--	--	--	<input type="checkbox"/>
12	Curriculum vitae of the project manager	Detailed CV of the person responsible for managing the action (named in section A.3 of the online application form). The CV should indicate clearly the current employer.	✓	--	--	--	--	<input type="checkbox"/>
13	List of main projects	A list of the main projects carried out, if any, in the last three years relating to the subject of the call other than those already indicated in the SWIM online application form (section D.3) – free format .	✓	✓	--	--	--	<input type="checkbox"/>

CHECKLIST-PART 2 – Documents to be submitted only for accepted applications, upon request by the European Commission

Note: highlighted documents do not need to be provided by public entities.

No.	Document	Specification and content	The document must be provided by each				Originally signed?	Checkbox
			Lead applicant	Co-applicant	Affiliated entity	Associate organisation / third party		
14	Legal entity form*	The template is available in SWIM and online (http://ec.europa.eu/budget/contracts_grants/info_contracts/legal_entities/legal_entities_en.cfm) and must be duly signed and dated by the legal representative.	✓	✓	--	--	✓	<input type="checkbox"/>
15	VAT certificate	A document showing the identification number for tax purposes or the VAT number, if applicable.	✓	✓	--	--	--	<input type="checkbox"/>
16	Financial identification form*	The template is available in SWIM and online (http://ec.europa.eu/budget/contracts_grants/info_contracts/financial_id/financial_id_en.cfm) and must be duly signed and dated by the account holder and bearing the bank stamp and signature of the bank representative (or a copy of recent bank statement attached).	✓	--	--	--	✓	<input type="checkbox"/>

ANNEX I – Financial Guidelines for Applicants

ANNEX II – Guidelines regarding the costs of the apprentices' mobility experiences

Both annexes are available on the call webpage:

<http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=629&callId=504>