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Guidance

# Overview of the Erasmus+ programme

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## About Erasmus+

The United Kingdom (UK) and the European Union (EU) have agreed for the UK to associate to the [Erasmus+ programme](#) from 2027.

Erasmus+ is an EU programme that provides grant funding for international placements and partnership projects for organisations working in:

- education
- training
- youth
- sport

The programme aims to help individuals develop their knowledge, gain work experience and build personal and professional skills through opportunities to study, learn and work in [eligible countries](#).

For organisations, Erasmus+ provides opportunities to build international partnerships that encourage innovation and strengthen practice, creating lasting benefits for:

- staff
- learners
- young people
- communities

These partnerships help strengthen the UK's global reputation in education and training.

As well as the information in this guidance the Erasmus+ [National Agency](#) website has details of the Erasmus+ programme, including eligibility and how to apply for funding.

## Who it is for

Erasmus+ is open to learners including trainees and staff in:

- higher education (HE)
- further education (FE)
- vocational education and training (VET)
- schools and adult education

It is also open to:

- young people and youth workers in the youth sector
- staff (including volunteers) in sports organisations

It supports the government's commitment to growing physical activity participation and increasing access to grassroots sport opportunities.

## What you can do

- school pupils can spend time studying abroad, either as part of a class or group, or individually
- students and apprentices in HE, FE and VET can study, train, volunteer or do a work placement abroad
- adult learners can spend time at an adult learning organisation abroad or study abroad as part of a group
- young people who work or volunteer for youth organisations can travel for training or a youth exchange and take part in workshops, debates and outdoor activities
- youth workers and staff working in schools, FE, HE or adult education can train or teach abroad and take part in professional development activities
- grassroots sports staff can spend time abroad job-shadowing or on a coaching assignment

## Organisations

Organisations can also take part in Erasmus+ by forming collaborative projects with partners abroad. These projects aim to develop and share innovative practices and improve the education, training, youth or sport activities organisations offer.

For more information on opportunities for each sector and how to apply see Erasmus+ programme guidance for:

- schools
- vocational education and training

- for adult education
- higher education
- youth
- sports

## **Erasmus+ definition of a project**

When an organisation applies for Erasmus+ funding, it applies for a 'project'.

A project sets out:

- the work the organisation intends to deliver with the funding
- whether this involves international placements or a partnership with other organisations abroad

It outlines the planned activities and the goals they are designed to achieve.

Examples of goals and activities include:

- developing staff skills
- supporting students to strengthen their language abilities and cultural understanding

## **Where you can go**

As part of Erasmus+, participants in all sectors can travel to any European Union member state, plus:

- Iceland
- Liechtenstein
- Norway
- North Macedonia
- Serbia
- Türkiye

Grant holders in the higher education and youth sectors can also allocate up to 20% of a project's funding to support international mobilities to countries that are not associated with the programme.

## Who can apply for funding

Learners or staff cannot apply directly for Erasmus+ funding. You must apply through a participating organisation such as your school, university, FE college or place of work.

Organisations that can apply for funding include:

- schools
- HE providers
- FE providers
- VET providers
- adult education providers
- youth and sport organisations
- non-profit organisations

The [Erasmus+ Programme Guide](#) contains more information about which organisations can apply for funding. It is a technical document, designed primarily for organisations preparing funding applications.

## Erasmus+ Key Actions

Funding for Erasmus+ projects is split across 4 Key Actions and organisations will need to state which Key Action their project relates to.

### Key Action 1: mobility projects

Supports students, young people and staff working in education, youth and

grassroots sports to travel abroad to study, train, teach or volunteer. This is known as a 'mobility'.

Example: A group of secondary school pupils travel to a partner school in another country for a short study visit to experience learning in a different education system and culture.

## **Key Action 2: partnerships**

Supports partnerships and capacity building for schools, FE providers, higher education providers, and other groups to work together on joint priorities and share ideas.

Example: An FE college works with partners abroad to develop and trial new digital training materials.

## **Key Action 3: policy development and cooperation**

Supports countries to work together to improve education, youth work and sport across Europe through policy development projects.

Example: Organisations from several countries work together to research how inclusion and diversity are promoted in education systems. They use the findings to produce recommendations for improving policy and practice.

## **Jean Monnet actions**

Supports people to learn more about the EU and its policies, especially in schools and universities.

Example: A university develops a short course explaining how key EU policies work and how they influence international cooperation with countries outside the EU.

# Erasmus+ priorities

Erasmus+ is guided by 4 horizontal priorities that apply across the different Key Actions.

Applications for projects should demonstrate how they respond to at least one of these priorities.

## Priority 1: inclusion and diversity

This priority aims to ensure equal access to Erasmus+ by promoting inclusive and accessible project activities and by supporting people who face barriers, including:

- social
- economic
- cultural
- geographical
- educational

This supports the government's [Opportunity Mission](#) by prioritising participation from disadvantaged groups and continues the ambition set by the [Turing Scheme](#) to widen access to international opportunities.

## Priority 2: environment and fight against climate change

This priority supports the green transition by encouraging environmental awareness, sustainable behaviours and the development of skills linked to climate action across education, training and youth activities.

## Priority 3: digital transformation

This priority focuses on improving digital skills and supporting the use of digital tools and methods in education, training and youth activities, including blended and online approaches.

## Priority 4: participation in democratic life, common values and civic engagement

This priority promotes participation in democratic life and supports meaningful opportunities for people to share their views and take part in decision making.

The Erasmus+ programme guide provides further information about the Erasmus+ priorities.

## What the National Agency does

The Department for Education (DfE) is the UK's National Authority for Erasmus+.

As the National Authority, DfE oversees the programme in the UK and is responsible for monitoring and supervising its management.

To take part in Erasmus+, the UK must also appoint a [National Agency](#) that is not a government department.

This National Agency is responsible for delivering Erasmus+ in the UK and managing the programme's indirect management activities, which account for around 80% of funding for:

- Key Action 1 (learning mobility)
- Key Action 2 (cooperation projects)

Their responsibilities include:

- providing information on the programme

- reviewing applications submitted in their country
- monitoring and evaluating the implementation of the programme in their country
- supporting people and organisations taking part in Erasmus+
- promoting the programme and its activities at a local and national level
- managing the allocation of funds and ensuring they are spent properly

DfE has commenced discussions with British Council with a view to them being appointed as the National Agency.

## How funding works

Erasmus+ funding is managed in 2 ways:

- directly by the EU's [Education and Culture Executive Agency \(EACEA\)](#)
- indirectly through the UK's National Agency

Your project's Key Action will determine if you apply for directly or indirectly managed funds.

Funding is applied for by organisations, such as universities or colleges. Individuals, such as students and staff, do not apply directly and instead receive funding through their institution.

## Indirect management through the National Agency

Most Erasmus+ activities are managed indirectly through the UK's National Agency, this includes:

- Key Action 1: funding for people to study, train or work abroad
- Key Action 2: most of the funding for organisations to work together on joint projects

If your project falls under these Key Actions, you must apply to the [National Agency](#).

The National Agency will be responsible for assessing your application and, if

successful, awarding funding and overseeing your project.

For Key Action 1 mobility projects, funding can cover:

- travel
- living costs
- course fees
- visa and entry costs
- language learning
- organisational support
- preparatory visits

There is additional funding for people with disabilities, additional learning needs and those from disadvantaged backgrounds. The [Erasmus+ Programme Guide](#) provides more information about the funding rules and amounts.

Key Action 2 partnership project funding can cover any activity that is relevant to delivering the project, such as:

- project management (planning, finances, coordination and communication between partners, monitoring and supervision)
- learning activities
- teaching and training activities
- meetings and events
- project deliverables (publications, materials, documents, tools and products)
- activities aimed at maximising the impact of project results
- activities aimed at sharing project's results

## **Direct management**

Other Erasmus+ activities are managed directly by the EU through the EACEA. This includes:

- Key Action 2: some of the funding for organisations to work together on joint larger scale projects

- Key Action 3: funding for policy development and cooperation projects
- Jean Monnet Actions: funding for teaching and research on EU topics

If your project falls under any of these actions, you must apply directly to EACEA, not the UK's National Agency. The EACEA will be responsible for assessing your application and, if successful, awarding funding and overseeing your project.

The Erasmus+ Programme Guide explains in more detail:

- which activities fall under each Key Action
- any eligibility requirements
- how to apply

## Timescales and preparation

The next funding round is expected to open in November 2026 and close in February 2027.

Exact dates will be confirmed in the 2027 Erasmus+ Programme Guide, which is likely to be published in autumn 2026.

Application deadlines will depend on the type of Erasmus+ project you apply for.

[The National Agency website](#) provides more information about how to apply for Erasmus+.

To prepare for the Erasmus+ funding round, interested organisations are encouraged to start:

- thinking about which types of projects they would like to get involved in
- building or expanding partnerships with EU partners in the relevant sector

The steps below outline the typical steps involved in developing and submitting an Erasmus+ project application, to help you start thinking about what you'll need to prepare.

## **Step 1: Decide on your project idea**

Decide the type of project you want to run, for example it could be a mobility project or a partnership project

There is an [online database of previous Erasmus+ projects](#) which could be useful for exploring previous project and gathering ideas.

## **Step 2: Check it aligns with the Erasmus+ priorities**

Make sure your idea supports at least one of the programme priorities

## **Step 3: Register your organisation**

Register your organisation so you can apply for funding:

- For directly managed projects (managed by the European Education and Culture Executive Agency, EACEA): register in the [EU Funding & Tenders Portal](#) to obtain a PIC (Participant Identification Code).
- For indirectly managed projects (managed by the National Agency): register through the [Organisation Registration System](#) to receive an OID (Organisation Identification Number)

If your organisation has taken part in another EU programme, you can reuse its existing PIC or OID.

## **Step 4: Find a partner(s) in an eligible participating country**

Identify an organisation in a participating country that shares your goals and is interested in developing the project with you.

To browse partner requests and post your own project ideas see:

- For Schools: [European School Education Platform](#)
- For Adult Education: [EPALE Partner Search](#)
- For Youth: [SALTO-YOUTH](#)

## Step 5: Develop the project proposal in more detail

Work with your partners to agree the project's timeline, activities, intended outcomes and how the project will achieve these.

## Step 6: Complete and submit the application

Complete your application in line with the published guidance and submit it by the deadline in the Erasmus+ Programme Guide.

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