

Opportunities for
Schools with

ERASMUS+



The important bits...

The European Union's new funding programme creates some wonderful opportunities for teachers, schools and pupils in the North East of England.

Colleagues in schools may have been familiar with Comenius. However, it would be wrong to think of ERASMUS+ as a rebranded form of Comenius. The new programme's emphasis lies in supporting much wider EU ambitions of:

- boosting skills and employability,
- modernising education through the sharing of best practice,
- promoting the learning of languages.

In the school sector, priority will be given to projects which:

- boost attainment and basic skills,
- tackle early school drop out,
- promote high quality early years education and care,
- support the professional development of teaching staff.

Application for funding is to facilitate teacher observation, sharing of best practice and work on development of materials which will address the programme's priorities. Applicants to the programme must show how their planned project contributes to the objectives and priorities above.



etwinning

eTwinning offers a secure platform for staff working in schools to communicate, collaborate, develop and share projects.

Basically, the etwinning portal (www.etwinning.net) is a meeting point and workspace for schools. Available in twenty five languages, the site now has the involvement of nearly 260000 members and over 34000 projects between 124000 schools across Europe. The portal provides online tools for teachers to find partners, set up projects, share ideas, exchange best practice and start working together.

School projects which primarily involve pupils exchanging work about customs, traditional tales, healthy lifestyles etc. should use the etwinning portal to communicate with partners.



Key Action 1

Schools can apply for funding from two strands of the programme (called Key Actions).

Under Key Action 1, a school can apply for funding to support the professional development of the whole school staff. The school's headteacher or governing body should outline a wider European development plan for the school; this will recognise professional development needs and how these can be matched by;



Applications should be presented as a funding proposal in response to whole school need rather than to meet the particular professional development requirements of a single member of staff. The European development plan can propose activity over a twelve or twenty four month period.

At the time of application, the school may not yet have identified a course provider. It is perfectly acceptable to make an application without giving precise details about the course, if it is not known. If you choose to undertake some job shadowing, you must give details about your partner school and quote a special registration number; known as a PIC, which is described later in this booklet.

A daily rate is paid to cover course fees as well as a daily subsistence rate to cover the cost of accommodation and meals. Travel costs are reimbursed using a flat rate based on distance to be travelled.

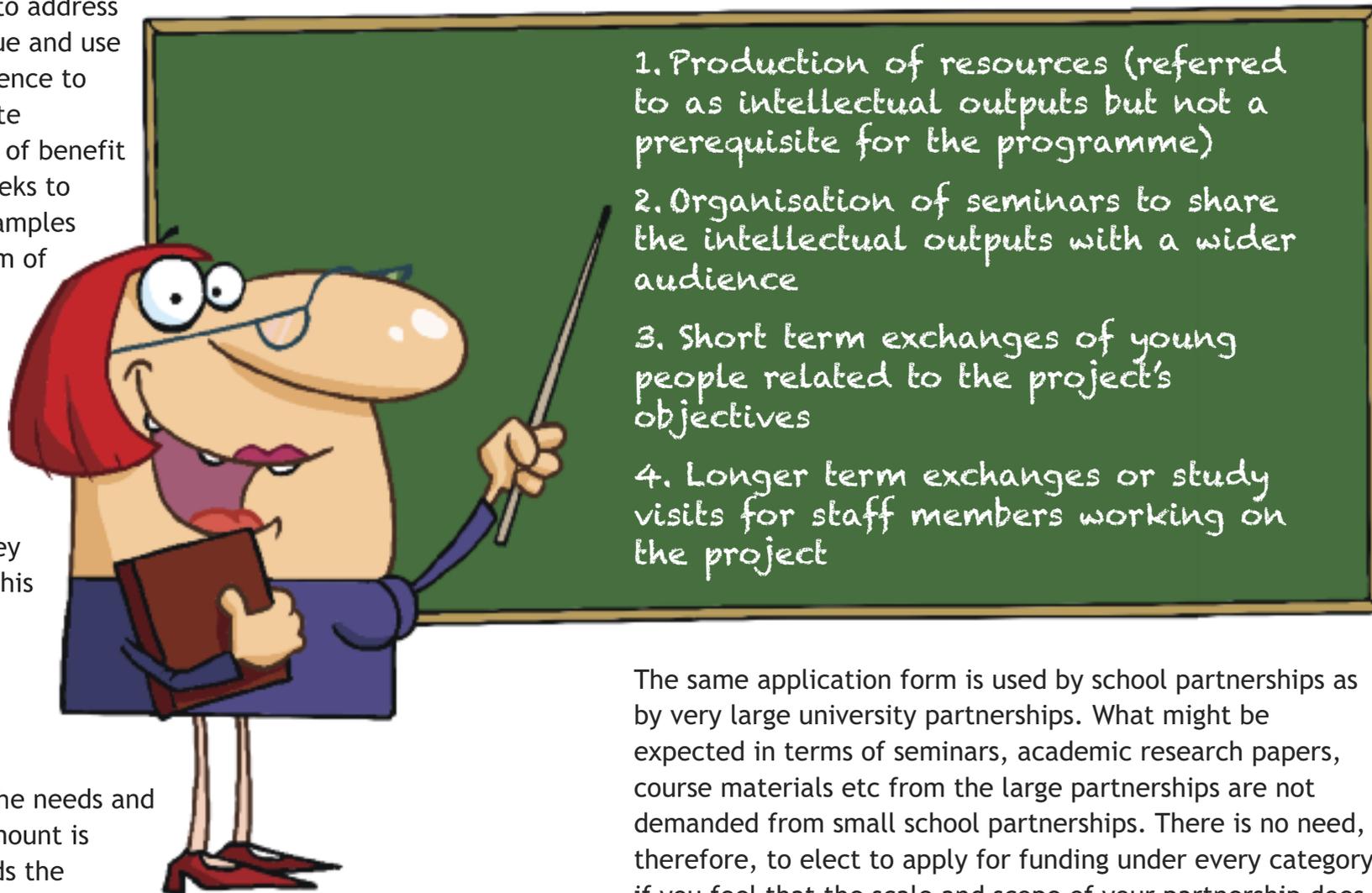
It may be that the total of the grant does not cover all of the costs incurred as it is expected that schools will make some form of contribution; whether this is in-kind staff time or a direct financial contribution towards costs.



Key Action 2

Under Key Action 2, funding is available for strategic partnerships between schools and also between schools and other education providers. The fundamental aim is to create a group which can begin to address a common concern or issue and use joint energies and experience to develop, trial and evaluate approaches which will be of benefit to all. The programme seeks to develop best practice examples which will support the aim of creating competitive people who are well skilled and able to contribute to the economy. It is still possible to include pupils on short term visits/exchanges under Key Action 2 but only where this element significantly impacts on the project's outcomes.

The available funding is calculated according to the needs and size of the project. An amount is paid to contribute towards the project management costs (staff time, communication costs, postage, printing



etc.), and a second amount is paid to cover project meetings when all partners come together to work on the project. An additional sum can be claimed if there are to be joint staff training or professional development sessions which last more than five days. Other elements of the grant calculation pertain to:

1. Production of resources (referred to as intellectual outputs but not a prerequisite for the programme)
2. Organisation of seminars to share the intellectual outputs with a wider audience
3. Short term exchanges of young people related to the project's objectives
4. Longer term exchanges or study visits for staff members working on the project

The same application form is used by school partnerships as by very large university partnerships. What might be expected in terms of seminars, academic research papers, course materials etc from the large partnerships are not demanded from small school partnerships. There is no need, therefore, to elect to apply for funding under every category if you feel that the scale and scope of your partnership does not warrant it.

Getting started

There is a very strict application protocol which must be adhered to in order for your electronic application to be successful. Full guidance is available on the national agency website www.erasmusplus.org.uk and from Europe Direct North East England.

If your school has not previously applied for a PIC (Participant Identification Code) then you must begin by applying for one. Once you have it, it is yours forever!

This is a security step which verifies whether the applicant is eligible to apply by comparing your details against a list supplied by the DfE.

You will need to sign up on the European Commission's Authentication Service (ECAS)
<https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/cas/eim/external/register.cgi>
and follow its guidance.

You will also have to upload legal entity and financial declaration forms. See the national agency website for further guidance.

It takes time to comply with the registration process and this can be frustrating, but it is a necessary step which you have to go through if you are to benefit from the generous grants which are available.

A European development plan

Schools are used to explaining their priorities and ambitions as part of their own development planning. Erasmus+ asks schools to consider what their overarching European plans might be, before making application to Key Action 1. It is also a good idea to use this as a framework for Key Action 2 applications.

The development plan asks schools to show how attendance at courses, job shadowing or partnership activity can help deliver wider internationalisation ambitions. You need to show that your school has a vision to make pupils and staff more aware of European connections and how these can support teaching and learning. It is worth

suggesting that a policy will be developed to extend professional and intercultural competencies and that this, in turn, will lead to the delivery of an international or European dimension to the curriculum. You could infer that this can be achieved through international school partnership working and by attendance on multinational courses in other countries.



Through collaboration with colleagues in other parts of Europe, your school is seeking to both improve the professional abilities of its own staff and share best practice for the benefit of all. Particular emphasis should be given to the areas which reflect the main priorities of the programme which are outlined on the first page of this booklet.

As with all plans and policies, it is good to refer not just to what you are going to do, but also to the evaluation and dissemination tools which will monitor the progress of the school towards its vision. The use of Europass (a European wide certificate which records the skills and knowledge acquired in another European country) and other tools to track staff development would be recommended.



Here's one we made earlier

Key Action 1

Crook Primary School is a large primary school in County Durham. The school has recently been awarded a grant of 14000€ to help deliver European leaders in the school and to support modern foreign language teaching. The international dimension of the school and the wider learning community was referenced and evidenced throughout the application.

The school submitted a well presented application which identified the professional development needs of some newly qualified teachers in KS1 and also those of staff who will be delivering MFL across the school as part of the new curriculum entitlement.

A strong case was made for staff to attend language immersion courses in France and in Spain and to observe the teaching of English in Italy and Spain. Through these activities, the school will develop staff who are better acquainted with the pedagogy of teaching modern foreign languages to young learners and will also upskill their own language abilities.

The Headteacher presented a rigorous monitoring and quality evaluation system to ensure that the objectives are met by those attending the courses. On their return to school, staff will both disseminate their experiences and act as leaders for the promotion of a European dimension within their year groups.

The school referenced partnership working, use of etwinning and the Europass framework to acknowledge staff achievement in its application.

Key Action 2

A local special school is waiting to hear the outcome of its funding application under KA2.

Together with partners in four other countries, the school plans to share approaches and trial solutions towards integrating school leavers into the world of work. Very often, young people with learning disabilities or physical challenges, leave school and encounter obstacles to employment or in engaging in life in the community. The special educators from the UK, together with partners in Estonia, Latvia, Portugal and Romania, will jointly develop a work related curriculum which benefits from the collective experience of helping pupils in their schools make the transition from school to life in the community.

The funding will be used to visit each other's schools to observe practice, organise thematic workshops and develop curriculum resources. Pupils and staff will trial different approaches and define which employability skills are most relevant for their pupils. A robust monitoring and evaluation system will track school leavers and indicate whether their exposure to the new work related curriculum helps them in pathways to employment or volunteering.

Things to consider

- 1** Is your application focussed on developing the skills and outlooks of your staff members in order to meet your school's European development plan ?
You should consider applying under Key Action 1
- 2** Is your project a partnership of educators who wish to work together to develop an approach which will impact on employability by developing basic skills and foreign language competence, tackle early school drop out or improve child care and early years education?
You should consider applying under Key Action 2
- 3** Is your project an exchange of pupils' work and research which can be exchanged electronically?
You should consider developing an etwinning partnership

Tips

There is a presumption that teachers and pupils only need to travel to partner schools when the visit is an integral part of the project development, or to attend staff training.

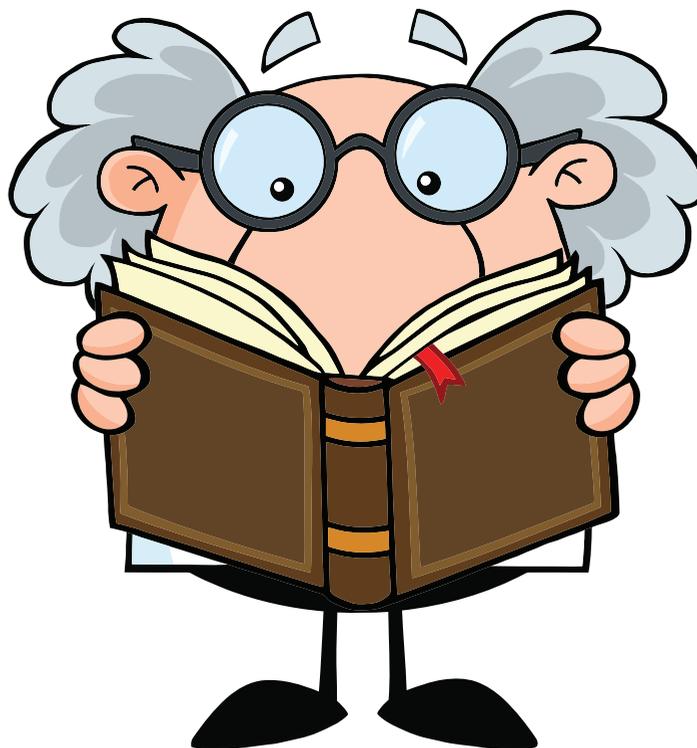
It is not a requirement for schools to have partner schools in other European countries to apply for funding under Key Action 1.

Partnerships under Key Action 2 can be made up of just two schools (from two different programme countries) or as many as ten.

Applicants are strongly advised to reference use of etwinning and Europass as this will support their application.

KA1 projects last 1 or 2 years, KA2 projects last for 2 or 3 years

80% of the funding will be paid at the start of the project. The balance will be paid once a satisfactory final report has been submitted.



The application timeline

The deadline for applications will be posted on the national agency website:

<https://www.erasmusplus.org.uk>

It is expected that the next deadlines will be in February. Schools should allow a good deal of time to both prepare and submit their application.

The outcome of applications will be made known to schools in time to start KA2 projects in September. KA1 activities should normally not be planned before the school Summer holidays.

Schools will have to report to their national agency on the progress and outcome of their projects.



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