

Call for External Experts

- 2025 -

Purpose of the Call

This call is intended to increase the existing pool of External Experts within the European Union Programmes Agency.

Background

The European Union Programmes Agency (hereinafter, the Maltese National Agency) is a body corporate with distinct legal personality set up by Legal Notice 401 of 2018 (Establishment Order). It is the designated national agency in Malta to manage and promote the Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps programmes.

Within its remit, the Maltese National Agency works towards supporting Maltese entities and individuals in availing themselves of EU funding opportunities under these programmes. Thus, the Maltese National Agency is bound to provide full support to beneficiaries by following-up on project life-cycles to maximise the use of EU funds.

The Maltese National Agency also administers the National VET Teams and Eurodesk networks within the Erasmus+ programme and implements the Europass Network in Malta, thereby enabling it to further provide stakeholders and the public in general with relevant information, guidance and tools in the fields of education, training, funding, mobility and future employability.

Through its programmes and networks, the Maltese National Agency aspires to further stimulate the exchange of good practices, experiences, innovation and mobility between stakeholders working in the field of education, training and youth.

The Erasmus+ Programme

The Erasmus+ is the EU Programme for Education, Training, Youth and Sport for the programming period 2021-2027.

The Erasmus+ Programme seeks to tackle unemployment by reducing the skills gap, empower young people to actively participate in democratic life, systematic reforms leading to cooperation through various instruments, and the potential of Europe's human and social capital through lifelong learning. Moreover, the Erasmus+ Programme supports the EU and the Member States in reaching its Europe 2020 Strategy and its flagship initiatives, namely Youth on the Move and the Agenda for New Skills and Jobs, the ET2020 Strategy along with the European Youth Strategy and the EU external action. The programme supports the implementation of policies and their priorities as agreed at European level in the framework for the Open Methods of Coordination.

Erasmus+ provides an array of opportunities in the fields of education, training and youth and has the potential to reach over 4 million Europeans. These opportunities shall be provided through a number of initiatives which also include the possibility of having transnational partnerships among institutions and organisations in the three main fields of the Programme. In addition, the Erasmus+ Programme offers the possibility of allocating funding to cross-sectoral project initiatives, providing greater accessibility through simpler funding rules than the previous programmes.

The Erasmus+ Programme is intended to contribute to the achievement of:

- The European Education Area strategic framework
- The National Strategic Action Plan for Further and Higher Education 2024-2030
- National Education Strategy 2024-2030
- Lifelong Learning Strategy 2023-2030
- EU Youth strategy 2019-2027
- The National Youth strategy towards 2030

Additional details on the Erasmus+ Programme and the Key Actions can be accessed at:

<https://erasmus-plus.ec.europa.eu/erasmus-programme-guide>

The European Solidarity Corps Programme

The European Solidarity Corps is the European Union initiative which creates opportunities for young people to volunteer or work in projects that benefit communities and people around Europe. The European Solidarity Corps (ESC) is conceived to offer people under 30 in Europe the chance to support a non-governmental organisation (NGO), local authority or private company active in addressing challenging situations across the European Union – for instance: rebuilding communities following natural disasters; addressing social challenges such as social exclusion, poverty, health and demographic challenges; or working on the reception and integration of refugees.

The Corps will develop its own distinct identity, rooted in the core EU values of engagement and solidarity. By joining the Corps, participants will express their commitment and willingness to devote a period of their lives to helping others. By supporting others, including the most vulnerable in our societies and communities, young people will not only put the core EU value of solidarity into practice, but also acquire skills and experience, including language skills, that can be valuable when looking for a job or considering further education and training.

The role of External Experts

The role of the external expert is very important in providing a fair, impartial, consistent and accurate assessment of project applications according to the objectives of the action and the policy priorities for the concerned action and field of education, training or youth.

The assessment is an essential part in the selection procedure. Based on the external experts' assessment, a list of applications per action and per field ranked in quality order is established, which serves as a basis for the Maltese National Agency to take the grant award decision, following the proposal of an external Evaluation Committee. The Maltese National Agency will provide feedback to the applicants/beneficiaries based on the experts' comments when evaluating applications, final reports.

Respecting deadlines is mandatory and of paramount importance. There shall be no exception for extending the set deadlines. External Experts are required to perform the assessment to the highest professional standards and within the deadline agreed with the Maltese National Agency. Evaluations submitted shall be scrutinised for quality and the Maltese National Agency reserves the right to request reassessment and may decide not to assign additional assessments in subsequent deadlines. The Maltese National Agency retains the right to withhold payment in cases where the assessment carried out does not meet the required level of quality. Quality benchmarks are communicated by the Maltese National Agency to all external experts. The External Experts must take into account all feedback provided by the Maltese National Agency to ensure a more streamlined and equitable approach in the assessment of project application. This may also apply in the case of project final reports.

External experts are bound by a code of conduct as set out in the contract of engagement. All information related to the assessment process is to be treated as strictly confidential. Therefore, external experts are not allowed to disclose any information about the applications submitted and results of the assessment to any third parties or the general public.

Depending on the action and the level of grant requested, the assessment of applications will be undertaken by two external experts. The Maltese National Agency can decide to appoint external experts from another Erasmus+ and/or European Solidarity Corps Programme country/ies.

Technical Characteristics of External Experts

Suitable candidates must have expertise in one or more areas of education and training, youth and sport, pertaining particularly to any of the following six sectors as part of the Erasmus+ Programme:

- School Education;
- Adult Education;
- Vocational Education and Training (VET);
- Higher Education;
- Youth; and
- Sport.

The External Experts must:

- i. have the necessary capabilities to judge the applications in terms of the Erasmus+ Programme objectives and policy priorities to provide good quality assessments;
- ii. be open and receptive to innovative ideas while actively applying their knowledge and experience in the selection process;
- iii. possess strong analytical skills;
- iv. be proficient in report writing;
- v. be able to collaborate effectively with other peer experts and the Maltese National Agency;
- vi. be able to reach a mutually agreed consolidated statement with peer expert/s;
- vii. respect deadlines for evaluating and scoring the applications.

Key Duties of External Experts

The key duties are as follows:

- Be familiar with all the Programme reference documents, particularly the Programme Guide, the application forms, the Guide for Experts, the Model for Erasmus+ KA2 final report training for experts, the assessment forms and the Assessment Module;
- Be fully knowledgeable about the assessment guidelines and award criteria established by the European Commission;
- Participate in compulsory training provided by the Maltese National Agency;
- Provide clear, consistent and balanced comments on each award criterion of the applications in a polite, grammatically well-structured, objective and constructive manner;
- Score all criteria accurately and avoid giving average scores;
- Analyse the grant requested and suggest any reduction if necessary;
- Consider carefully the cost-benefit and feasibility implication of project outcomes between reduction in grant and allocating a lower score;
- Provide explanation on, substantiate and quantify any proposed grant reduction;

- Look into other elements of assessment, in particular to content elements that are included in the Assessment Module and which are to be marked by the external experts;
- Provide feedback on the Assessment Module in addition to comments and scores;
- Provide feedback to the Maltese National Agency, in a clearly distinct manner from that provided to applicants;
- Cooperate with other experts and reach mutual agreement on instances of consolidated assessments;
- Conduct the assessment exercise to high quality standards and to redo/review their assessment exercise should the Maltese National Agency deem fit to request it;
- Maintain impartiality at all times and to report immediately to the Maltese National Agency at any stage of the assessment where impartiality and non-conflict may be compromised;
- Respect time-frames/ deadlines as indicated by the Maltese National Agency.

Non-Conflict of Interest and Impartiality Requirements

External Experts must not have a conflict of interest in relation to the proposals on which they are requested to give their opinion. To this end, every external expert is to sign a declaration provided by the Maltese National Agency that no such conflict of interest exists at the time of their appointment and that they undertake to inform the Maltese National Agency of both the existence and its nature should such conflict arise. The same declaration binds external experts to confidentiality.

Persons involved in a project application in the selection round for the action under assessment are considered as having a conflict of interest for that selection round and will not be appointed as external experts.

When a potential conflict of interest is reported by the external experts or brought to the attention of the Maltese National Agency by any means, the Maltese National Agency will consider the circumstances and decide either to exclude the external experts from the assessment of the given application or the whole selection round or allow the expert to take part in the assessment, depending on the objective elements of information at its disposal.

Experts who are directly involved in any of the applications submitted for a given selection round will be excluded from all assessment for that selection round.

Training

The Maltese National Agency provides training to all external experts throughout the year. Attendance to these training sessions is compulsory. External experts who do not participate in the training session/s shall not be assigned project proposals or final reports for assessment. Training is intended to provide an opportunity for the external experts to familiarise themselves

with the selection criteria, interpretation and the objectives of the Erasmus+ and/or European Solidarity Corps Programmes as applicable, and their respective priorities, the relevance and impact criteria, target audiences and their relevance to the different actions as well as the expected outcomes of project proposals, and the financial mechanisms adopted in the Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps Programmes under the different actions.

The training for the external experts engaged shall provide a clear explanation about the respective tasks to be undertaken and relevant background documentation. The Maltese National Agency shall provide each external expert with a Guide for Experts as well as an IT User Guide. The training shall include detailed technical training on the IT system to be used by every expert engaged. The use of the IT tool provided by the European Commission in relation to assessment is mandatory.

The training sessions are envisaged to be an opportunity for the external experts to familiarise themselves with project applications forms as well as provide guidelines to reach comparable quality levels of assessments.

Feedback provided by the external experts is envisaged to be communicated to the applicants and beneficiaries, as applicable. Hence, training will be directed at coherent and comprehensive feedback as well as report writing skills. External experts are expected to provide sufficiently constructive and detailed feedback so as to ensure that applicants/beneficiaries are able to capitalise on such comments and improve prospective applications submitted under future calls.

Ownership of the Assessments

The assessments carried out by the External Experts on behalf of the Maltese National Agency shall remain the property of the Maltese National Agency.

All data gathered and administered such as databases, software and supporting records or materials acquired, compiled or prepared during assessment procedures shall be the property of the Maltese National Agency.

Remuneration

Key Action 1		
Sectors	Projects Budget ≤€60,000	Projects Budget > €60,00
School Education Adult Education Vocational Education & Training, Higher Education – Programme Countries Youth	€80	€150
Sport	€80	
Higher Education – Partner Countries	€30 per participating organisation, per application	

Key Action 2 – Small Scale Partnerships		
Sectors	Projects Budget €30,000	Projects Budget €60,000
School Education Adult Education Vocational Education & Training, Youth	€80	€150

Key Action 2 – Cooperation Partnerships			
Sectors	Projects Budget	Projects Budget	Projects Budget
	€120,000	€250,000	€400,000
School Education Adult Education Vocational Education & Training, Higher Education – Programme Countries Youth	€150	€200	€250

European Solidarity Corps	
Solidarity Projects	€80

Accreditations (E+) & Quality Label (ESC)	
Accreditations – All Sectors	€200
Quality Label	€200
Quality Label - additional monitoring Remuneration for additional monitoring/on-site visits, approved a priori by the Programme Manager or by the National Coordinator, are paid on a per hour basis and once a Report is received and accepted by the MT NA.	€20

This remuneration is also applicable for assessment of KA2 final reports.

Remuneration indicated in the table is inclusive of VAT and/or income-related taxes. Payment will only be processed against a VAT/Tax invoice / fiscal receipt.

Payment shall only be made after the Maltese National Agency approves and accepts the assessment. Experts may be required to provide further feedback and clarifications on their assessment, or redo, or improve the assessment to a level of sufficient quality before the payment is authorised.

The Agency reserves the right to withhold payment for work of insufficient quality.

Selection Process

Applicants will be assessed and selected on their practical ability to carry out the specific assessment tasks as well as on the knowledge of the relative sectors of expertise.

In the first stage of the selection process, the applicants will be provided with a sample application and they will be required to evaluate and assess the application according to the key duties, demonstrating analytical and technical competence as well as report writing skills.

Applicants who pass the first stage will be called for an interview, where they are expected to demonstrate sufficient expertise and knowledge in their respective area of competence.

Additionally, applicants must specifically have:

- High proficiency in the English language, both in written and spoken form;
- Proficiency in office automation software (word processing, spreadsheets, email, online tools).

The detailed *curriculum vitae* in Europass format should highlight the academic qualification and experience related to the key area/s of competence.

Applicants shall be informed of the selection results on completion of the evaluation process.

Petitions objecting to the result are to be submitted by email at hr.eupa@gov.mt. Petitions are to reach the European Union Programmes Agency within ten (10) working days from the date of publication of the results of selection.

External Experts whose contract is still in force are not required to re-apply.

Submission requisites

The closing date for the submission of applications is **23rd February 2025**.

Interested applicants are to fill in the e-form application by clicking here: [External Expert Call](#)