

IV.9 – European Innovative Teaching Award and European Language Label – selection guidelines for National Agencies

1. Overview of the European Innovative Teaching Award and European Language Label

The [European Innovative Teaching Award](#) (EITA) and the European Language Label (ELL) contribute to the European Education Area strategic priority focusing on “enhancing competences and motivation in the education profession”. They also recognise the contribution of the Erasmus+ programme to the European Education Area and the importance of cooperation and networking of schools, VET and adult education providers across Europe. Further work on the European Education Area as part of the Union of Skills is envisioned. This will be reflected in the future EU Teachers Agenda which calls for improving the working conditions, training and career prospects of teachers. The EITA and the ELL are relevant tools for supporting these policy objectives while contributing to the broadest possible visibility and showcasing of teachers’ achievements.

The EITA and ELL share a common target group and common broad objectives focusing on teachers and trainers’ involvement in the European cooperation with Erasmus+ projects. They are non-monetary awards, aiming at valuing and raising the attractiveness of the teaching profession, more specifically, recognising the involvement of teachers in successful Erasmus+ projects and their outcomes. Having the European Language Label as one of the categories within the European Innovative Teaching Award, enhances coherence and creates more visibility for the awards.

The specific objectives of the European Innovative Teaching Award and European Language Label are to:

- celebrate the achievements of teachers, trainers and their schools and organisations, and give more visibility to their work
- identify and promote outstanding teaching and learning practices
- foster mutual learning
- highlight the value of the Erasmus+ programme for the collaboration of teachers, trainers and learners across Europe.

2. Implementation of the European Innovative Teaching Award

The awards are given on an annual basis to Erasmus+ projects selected by the National Agencies. The awarded projects are promoted at the European and national level as good practice examples of innovation in education and training. They are also flagged in the Erasmus+ Project Results Platform.

The National Agencies should fund the activities related to the implementation of the European Innovative Teaching Award (such as organising the selection process and the communication activities) as part of their operating budget supported by the EU contribution to management

costs. Additionally, the National Agencies can use the Erasmus+ Training and Cooperation Activities budget to organise national EITA events provided that they offer clear European added value and are instrumental to improving the quality of the Programme and/or reaching its objectives.

Where possible, synergies with complementary European or national initiatives should be sought, for example through organising joint national award ceremonies (in particular eTwinning), Training and Cooperation Activities (TCAs) and publishing compendia on good practice examples.

To ensure transparency, high quality and consistent implementation of the EITA, the National Agencies involved must follow the guidelines set out hereafter.

Up to five awards per Erasmus+ Programme Country¹ will be given, one for each of the following categories:

- early childhood education and care
- school education (primary education and general secondary education)
- vocational education and training²
- adult education
- European language label

In cases where different Erasmus+ National Agencies manage projects in the fields of school education, vocational education and training and adult education, cooperation between the agencies must be established.

In case there are no suitable projects in a given category, the National Agency may decide not to award any project in that category.

Notwithstanding the above, the National Agencies are encouraged to select one project for each category from their pool of finalised projects.

3. Selection process and transparency

The National Agencies should organise the EITA selection in a transparent way, according to their internal procedures set up in advance and in line with these guidelines. The National Agencies should choose one of the following options for organising the selection process:

- **Direct selection of laureates.** Under this option, the National Agency draws the list of projects to be given the European Innovative Teaching Award in the respective categories through one round: the selection is done on the basis of the eligibility and award criteria mentioned below, taking solely into account previously existing information – compatibility with the annual theme, the final project report and its evaluation, available outputs, etc. Once the selection process is completed, the National Agency should contact the coordinators of the selected projects to ask for their

¹ In Belgium, the EITA selection process is organised separately for the Flemish, French and German-speaking communities.

² In the context of the EITA, vocational education and training schools are secondary schools delivering initial vocational education and training curricula.

agreement on receiving the award.

- **Short-listing of potential laureates.** Under this option, the National Agency screens projects that meet the eligibility criteria and that are compatible with the annual theme. Subsequently, the National Agency takes into account the award criteria and asks short-listed projects for further additional information (provision of targeted information, particular outputs and promotional materials, etc.). It also collects from them an expression of interest to take part in the EITA selection. The list of projects to be awarded with the EITA in the respective categories is drawn by the National Agency based on both the preliminary and additional information received.
- **Publishing an open call.** Under this option, the National Agency publishes a targeted open national EITA call limited to Erasmus+ completed projects. To ensure that enough applications are submitted, the National Agency should pay particular attention to promoting the open call. Interested beneficiaries should apply by a set deadline, expressing their interest to take part in the EITA selection based on their achievements. The applications should meet the eligibility and award criteria and be compatible with the annual EITA theme. Based on the applications received, the National Agency draws the list of projects to be awarded.

To ensure the transparency of the process, the National Agency must publish the information on the selection process and the eligibility and award criteria on its website before the start of the selection process.

For the selection of the ELL project, the National Agency can select from the projects that have expressed interest in the label when submitting their final report regardless of the theme³, under calls when this feature was implemented. For projects for which the ELL flag was not implemented, the National Agency should use the procedure described above. In case there are too few projects, the National Agency can also use the short-listing of potential laureates or direct selection as described above.

The project description template is available as an Appendix to these guidelines. This template should be used to collect information from the project beneficiaries in each category, but also to assess the project merits in comparison to other projects, on the basis of the award criteria specified below. In all cases, once the selection process is finalised, the duly filled-in project templates must be sent to the European Commission, accompanied by 3 high quality photographs of the selected projects, as per the agreed timeline. The text will be processed by the Commission for publication purposes, thus it should be provided in English using jargon-free language. The photographs will be used for promotional purposes.

The European Commission will provide the National Agencies with updated GDPR forms and EITA privacy statement. Once the EITA selection is done, each National Agency will send these documents to their EITA winning projects to be signed.

By the 15 July, the National Agencies will send the filled in, dated and signed forms from the project representatives to allow the European Commission and its external contractor to get in contact with the laureates. National Agencies should also make sure they collect all the consent

³ In the transition period in 2026 all previous ELL European Themes will be eligible to receive the ELL under EITA.

forms from the people who appear in photographs and videos, in case the National Agency decides to produce videos, and send to the European Commission.

The European Commission will officially disclose the EITA laureates, followed by promotional activities. Once the laureates are disclosed, the National Agencies must publish the information on their national laureates on their respective websites.

In case of any complaint, the National Agencies should provide the Commission with the background on this specific case in order to justify the selection as it was carried out.

4. Eligibility, selection and award criteria

The awarded projects must comply with the following criteria:

4.1. Eligibility criteria

Erasmus+ projects under Key Action 1 Learning mobility of individuals and Key Action 2 Partnerships for cooperation that started from 2021 to 2025 and which are finalised should be considered for the EITA. A project that has received the EITA in previous years cannot be considered again.

In exceptional cases, where the respective National Agency does not have at its disposal a large enough pool of finalised projects from the aforementioned period, it may look into projects that were funded in or before 2020. NB: In case of KA219/KA229 projects, only parent projects can be taken into consideration.

A project whose final report has been duly submitted, evaluated and closed in administrative terms is to be considered as a finalised one.

The National Agencies have the flexibility to narrow down the pool of projects to be taken into consideration for selection through defining a stricter or laxer threshold of points received at the final report stage. This could happen due to the overall large number of granted projects to be evaluated, a need to balance underrepresented sectors, a lack of specific information in project descriptions, etc.

4.2. Annual theme

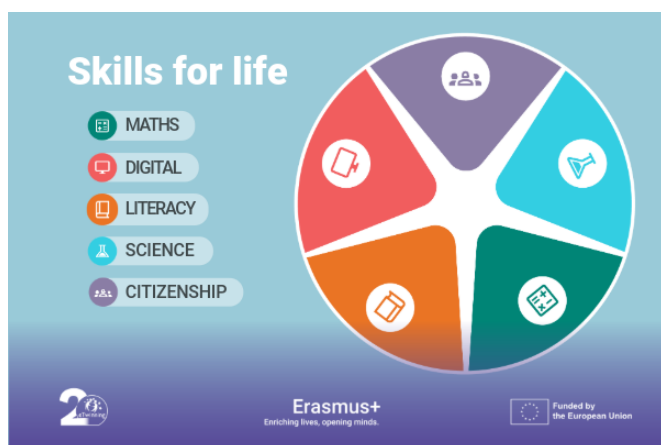
In 2026 the annual theme is “Skills for life”, supporting the EU in its work to improve basic skills across Europe. The annual theme supports the ‘Basic Skills Action Plan’, adopted in March 2025 as part of the European Commission’s Union of Skills strategy.

The EITA award for 2026 will go to Erasmus+ projects aiming to raise achievement in one or more of these 5 essential skills: literacy, mathematics, science, digital and citizenship.

- Literacy: understanding, using, evaluating and reflecting, orally and in writing, using visual, audio and digital materials across disciplines and contexts
- Mathematics: reasoning mathematically; formulating, using and interpreting mathematics to solve real-world problems and make well-founded, data-based judgements/decisions
- Science: engaging with science-related issues and ideas as a reflective individual (explaining phenomena scientifically, evaluating and designing scientific enquiries, interpreting data and evidence)

- Digital: confidently, critically and responsibly engaging with digital technologies for learning, working and participating in society (information literacy, communication, media literacy, digital content creation, online safety, digital wellbeing)
- Citizenship: behaving responsibly and participating fully in civic life, grounded in an understanding of social, economic, legal and political structures (civic and democratic concepts, institutions and processes: e.g. democracy, media literacy, crisis preparedness, respect for others, freedom of speech)

These 5 basic skills support individuals in thinking critically, engaging with their communities, staying healthy, adapting to a rapidly changing job market and navigating today's complexities, including digital tools and artificial intelligence (AI). In a time of growing disinformation and polarisation, these skills are becoming more important than ever. They support informed, active citizenship and are key to building resilient, inclusive societies.



When organising the selection process, relevant projects dealing with the annual theme could be identified based on key words or priorities/topics, available in the Erasmus+ dashboards and the Erasmus+ project results platform: Digital competence, Literacy, Science, Chemistry, Informatics / ICT, Language & Literature, Mathematics / Geometry, Natural Sciences, Physics, Citizenship

4.3. Award criteria: the innovation characteristics

The EITA will be awarded based on the following criteria. Each criterion should be assessed on a scale from 1 (poor) to 10 (excellent).

Methodologies used	<p>In what ways are the teaching and learning approaches elaborated and implemented in the project innovative?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multidisciplinary approaches • Key competence development (knowledge, skills and attitudes) and assessment (formative assessment) • Linking formal, non-formal and informal learning • Inclusion, participation, cooperation • Learners' active role in the learning process • Cooperation with external stakeholders
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Innovation environments	<p>In what ways do learning environments support innovative teaching and learning approaches?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organisation as an enabler of innovation • Building a positive organisational climate • Sustainable use of available resources • A whole organisation approach • Cross-sectoral cooperation
Teachers'/Trainers' role	<p>In what ways do teachers/trainers involved in the project influence the innovative teaching and learning processes?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teachers'/Trainers' agency as innovators • Teachers'/Trainers fostering wellbeing • Teachers'/Trainers' skills and competences • Teachers'/Trainers' cooperation and peer learning
Impact and outputs	<p>What is the impact of the innovative teaching and learning processes elaborated and implemented in the project?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct impact on the project target groups • Inclusion of participants with fewer opportunities • Spill-over effect (to other students, teachers, trainers, organisations, local communities and parents)

The timeline for the implementation of the 2026 European Innovative Teaching Award will be shared with National Agencies via email.