About Erasmus+

Erasmus+ is the European Union (EU) programme for education, training, youth and sport. It runs for seven years, from 2014 to 2020, with organisations invited to apply for funding each year to undertake unique and worthwhile activities.

Erasmus+ succeeds the Youth in Action programme which previously provided European funding for youth organisations. Erasmus+ in the UK is under the authority of the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS), and is managed by the UK National Agency, a partnership between the British Council and Ecorys UK.

Changing Lives, Opening Minds

Erasmus+ enables you to organise or take part in a youth exchange, volunteering placement, work shadowing or other development activity. As an individual, you can add to your understanding of other cultures, while gaining knowledge, skills and experience of value to your career. For organisations, it helps you to develop capacity, initiate international partnerships, and offer new opportunities to young people.
Key facts and figures

Over its lifetime, Erasmus+ has an overall budget of €14.7 billion for the development of knowledge and skills. A proportion of this budget is allocated to provide funding for youth projects.

With this funding, by 2020, the European Union aims to support:

- more than 500,000 young people to have the chance to volunteer abroad or take part in youth exchanges;
- 25,000 partnerships to be formed across 125,000 organisations, promoting the exchange of experience and knowledge in the world of work;
- and 800,000 youth workers, lecturers, teachers, trainers and education staff to be taught or trained abroad.
What can I do?

There are a wide range of different opportunities under Erasmus+ for youth organisations and groups working with young people. ‘Young people’ are defined as aged 13 to 30, although this varies depending on the type of funding you apply for. If you are a youth worker, there is no age limit.

It is important to note that funding applications must be made by the organisation or group, not the individuals who will be taking part. However, there are special arrangements for the youth sector which allows informal groups of young people to apply for funding.

**Youth funding is split into three areas:**

- Funding to organise exchanges or volunteering abroad for young people and training for youth workers. These types of activity are known as Mobility projects and are brought together under Key Action 1 of Erasmus+.
- Funding to link with other organisations to develop innovation and exchange good practices. This activity is known as Strategic Partnerships and falls under Key Action 2 of Erasmus+.
- Funding for conferences, debates and events for young people to meet with decision-makers and help shape youth policy. This activity is known as Structured Dialogue and forms part of Key Action 3 of Erasmus+.

Information on all youth funding opportunities can be found on our website at: [www.erasmusplus.org.uk/youth-funding](http://www.erasmusplus.org.uk/youth-funding)
Mobility for young people and youth workers (Key Action 1)

Whether you are a youth worker or a young person, Key Action 1 is the funding strand that applies to you. It is about mobility, which means spending a planned period in another country. For young people, this might mean volunteering in another country, while for youth workers, it could mean a short-term training course with counterparts from other countries. There are three different types of mobility activities: youth exchanges, volunteering, and youth worker development.

Youth exchanges
A youth exchange is designed by and for a group of young people aged 13 to 30 from different countries. You meet up and live together for up to 21 days to carry out your pre-planned work programme. This can be a mix of all sorts of activities: workshops, exercises, debates, role-play, outdoor activities and many more.

Volunteering
If you are aged between 17 and 30, you can volunteer for short term or long term placements which range from 2 weeks up to 12 months in another country, either individually or in a group (30 maximum) with the European Voluntary Service (EVS). This is a great opportunity to develop your own skills while helping others. The focus will vary depending on the placement you choose. Find out more at the European Youth Portal's Volunteering Database at: europa.eu/youth/vp/opportunity_list

Any organisation sending or hosting volunteers must first obtain EVS accreditation and sign up to the EVS Charter. More details are on our website: www.erasmusplus.org.uk/evs-accreditation

Youth worker training and networking
Erasmus+ funding also supports the professional development of youth workers. The time required varies from a week to several months, depending on your project. Examples of training activities include seminars, training courses, networking events, study visits, and job shadowing.
**Funding**

An Erasmus+ grant is intended as a contribution to your project costs and may not cover the total cost. Depending on your project, funding will come in the form of a unit cost or (a percentage of the) real cost.

**Youth exchanges:**
- Travel – including an advanced planning visit.
- Organisational support.
- Special needs support – specific additional costs for participants with a disability or specific needs.
- Exceptional costs – including the involvement of young people with fewer opportunities.

**Volunteering:**
- Travel – including advanced planning visit.
- Organisational support.
- Individual support – this is for day-to-day costs.
- Special needs support – specific additional costs for participants with a disability or specific needs.
- Exceptional costs – including mentorship or involvement of young people with fewer opportunities.
- Linguistic support.

**Youth worker training and networking:**
- Travel – including an advanced planning visit.
- Organisational support.
- Special needs support – specific additional costs for participants with a disability or specific needs.
- Exceptional costs - such as visas and vaccinations.
Strategic Partnerships (Key Action 2)

A Strategic Partnership is all about enabling organisations to work together to improve their provision for learners and share innovative practices. Informal groups of young people can also apply to undertake transnational youth initiatives. This brings together two or more groups of young people from different countries, for activities that make a difference to local communities, as well as building employability and entrepreneurship skills. This type of project can last between 6 months and 3 years, and it should involve a minimum of two youth partners from two different Programme Countries.

There is also the opportunity to work with other sectors in a cross-sector partnership through collaborative projects, which are aimed at improving provision across more than one sector. This type of project has a minimum requirement of at least three organisations from three different Programme Countries. Partner organisations from any Partner Country in the world may participate in Strategic Partnerships.

A full list of Partner and Programme Countries is available at: www.erasmusplus.org.uk/participating-countries

Types of Strategic Partnership activities include:

- new methods, tools or materials to build key competences, basic skills, language, or IT skills;
- ideas to build capacity and professionalise or modernise youth work, including the use of ICT;
- building links with other sectors to tackle social exclusion and early school leaving, combining non-formal youth work with formal education and training;
- transnational initiatives for groups of young people that encourage entrepreneurship and social commitment.
**Funding**

An Erasmus+ grant is intended as a contribution to the costs of your project so it may not cover the total cost. Funding will come in the form of a unit cost or (a percentage of the) real cost. Depending on your project, funding could cover:

- Project management and implementation.
- Transnational project meetings.
- Intellectual outputs/tangible deliverables.
- Multiplier events.
- For learning/teaching/training activities:
  - Travel.
  - Individual support – this is for day-to-day costs of attending the project including local travel, food and accommodation.
  - Linguistic support.
- Exceptional costs.
- Special needs support – specific additional costs for participants with a disability or specific needs.
Structured Dialogue - meetings between young people and decision-makers (Key Action 3)

The aim of Structured Dialogue is to put young people at the heart of policy-making. Young people get to debate the issues that matter to them with the people who make the decisions. Young people should be involved at all stages of the project from preparation to follow-up. Projects can last between 3 and 24 months, and involve a minimum of 30 participants.

Types of Structured Dialogue activities include:

• Meetings, events, seminars, debates, or discussions – linking to the Structured Dialogue process at EU level, the EU Youth Strategy or overall participation in democratic life.

• Meetings and seminars linked to official EU Presidency youth conferences.

• Events and debates linked to European Youth Week.

• Consultations including online opinions polls and surveys.

• Events simulating the functioning democratic institutions at local and national levels, and the roles of decision makers within these institutions.

A Key Action 3 project does not have to include a partner from another country.
Funding
An Erasmus+ grant is intended as a contribution to the costs of your project so it may not cover the total cost. Depending on your project, funding could cover:

- Travel.
- Organisational support.
- Special needs support – specific additional costs for participants with a disability or special needs as well as accompanying persons.
- Exceptional costs – examples are visas, or involving young people with fewer opportunities.
Online tools and resources

Before, during and after your Erasmus+ project, there is a wealth of free online information and resources to support you.

**Eurodesk** is a free information service for young people across Europe with advice and opportunities for work, study, travel and volunteering. [www.eurodesk.org.uk](http://www.eurodesk.org.uk)

**SALTO** (Support, Advanced Learning and Training Opportunities) is a network of resource centres on European priority areas for the youth sector, including youth worker training events and activities. [www.salto-youth.net](http://www.salto-youth.net)

**OTLAS** is a European-wide partner-finding tool. Your youth organisation or informal group can develop contacts, send volunteers abroad or find a partner for your project. [www.salto-youth.net/tools/otlas-partner-finding/](http://www.salto-youth.net/tools/otlas-partner-finding/)

**Youthpass** is a recognition tool for non-formal and informal learning in youth work, helping Erasmus+ participants to present what they have accomplished, the skills gained and knowledge acquired. [www.youthpass.eu](http://www.youthpass.eu)
Training opportunities for the youth sector

Every year Erasmus+ UK funds a number of training activities on the SALTO European Training Calendar.

You may find yourself in Austria, Croatia, Italy or Malta (in 2014 more than 150 participants went to 30 countries) to attend workshops, training courses, seminars and partnership building activities on topics such as citizenship, cultural diversity, inclusion and social entrepreneurship. Some activities directly support participation in the Erasmus+ programme such as ‘Appetiser: an Introduction to Erasmus+’ or ‘How to develop a quality Youth Exchange’.

All activities on the calendar are transnational, not-for-profit and directed at youth organisations and youth workers who wish to further develop their competences in working with young people and, on occasion, make contacts for future Erasmus+ projects.

Selected participants receive 70% reimbursement of travel costs (up to a maximum of €600) with food and accommodation provided free by the activity organisers.

Visit [www.erasmusplus.org.uk/transnational-cooperation-activities](http://www.erasmusplus.org.uk/transnational-cooperation-activities) for more information.
Why take part?

Gain life experience
When you take part in a youth exchange or volunteering projects through Erasmus+, you get to experience life in another country and culture, meet new people and try out a new language. All this while you make a real difference in the community of your host country.

Make your CV shine!
Volunteering and work experience can be the best source of personal development and will look great on your CV, giving you some fantastic talking points in an interview.

Boost your skills
If you are looking to stand out from the crowd in the job market, taking part in a Structured Dialogue project boosts all your skills – social skills, learning skills, planning and project management skills, debating skills – for both personal and career development.

Get inspired
Erasmus+ enables youth workers and other staff in youth organisations to learn new skills and experience best practice in another country. Not only does this help to improve the quality of your organisation’s work, it also helps staff feel valued and motivated – contributing to creativity in the workplace and improving employee retention.

Enrich youth provision
Working with European and international partners widens the horizons of your organisation, giving opportunities to really improve the quality of provision for young people.
Case studies

UNA Exchange (Key Action 1)
Giving young people a ‘step up’ through volunteering

Cardiff-based UNA Exchange’s ‘Step by Step’ project supports young people with fewer opportunities to join volunteering activities in other countries – this is mainly short-term volunteering through the European Voluntary Service (EVS), but also youth exchanges. One such volunteer was Clarice Barber, a 19 year-old from Prestatyn, Denbighshire, who took part in a two-week volunteering project in Belgium. Clarice is diagnosed with Asperger syndrome and has speech and communication difficulties and she also suffers from anxiety. Although an active young person, Clarice had never participated in any kind of international or residential activity for more than one or two nights.

For two weeks Clarice lived and worked near Marche-en-Famenne in Belgium with a group of 11 other young people from Belgium, Japan, Spain, Turkey, France, Afghanistan, the Czech Republic and Italy. They were working for a community organisation called “Grimm” building dry-rock walls, repairing a fountain, constructing a disabled toilet and removing Japanese knotweed.

“Clarice gained a great deal from this experience, most particularly in terms of self-confidence and independence. She proved that she can travel distances alone, negotiate large travel terminals and get on with people from different backgrounds and cultures.”

Sheila Smith, Step by Step Manager, UNA Exchange
Lancaster and Morecambe College (Key Action 2)

Using entrepreneurial skills to energise local economies

Across Europe young people with entrepreneurial skills should be empowered to help strengthen their local economies. ‘Ideas into Action’ is a two year partnership project led by Lancaster and Morecambe College working alongside European partners to help guide and prepare young people to think and act entrepreneurially within their community. Partner countries include the UK, Italy, Slovakia, Romania, Lithuania and the Netherlands.

The project’s aims and objectives are to combine the expertise of all partners to create, pilot and refine training materials and share these with associate and social partners dealing with young people. Social partners include; youth clubs and community groups, the voluntary sector, informal youth groups and career guidance professionals.

Resources produced will be used across the partnership to deliver entrepreneurial guidance. The project will serve as a model for youth workers and trainers to embed themes essential to a changing labour landscape. Locally, the project will help to increase youth motivation and innovation in the local economy. By delivering a fresh approach to entrepreneurship young people can be less reliant on social benefits and take responsibility for their own future. The project outcomes will support young people to expand their horizons and employment outlook.

“Hopefully this project can make a small step towards encouraging more young people to actively participate in entrepreneurship and to consider alternative career opportunities.” Mathew Hayes, European Project Coordinator, Lancaster & Morecambe College.
Peabody (Key Action 3)
Westminster via Tower Hamlets

Six out of ten young people voted in the last general election. This is despite a generation of young people being keen to express their views and connect with others online using social media.

‘Relationship Status: It’s Complicated,’ (RSIC), is a 12 month programme of political engagement, dialogue and influencing, run for and by young people. Over 90 young people, aged 14-24, will discuss key issues in education, safety, active citizenship and personal development with decision makers at national level. The project engages young people from disadvantaged backgrounds, enabling them to feel that they have a voice and their views count.

Project activities to date include the ‘Unharnessed Political Power of Young People’ event which brought together young people, decision makers and key people of influence such as Members of Parliament and Lewisham and Tower Hamlets Councils, to engage with young people. Recently elected Youth MP for Westminster, Aby Murray, gave a passionate speech about young people engaging in politics, as well as the young Mayors from Lewisham and Tower Hamlets.

Samid Ahmed from the core group in Tower Hill spoke about his involvement in the project and why the issues that young people care about such as education, safety, crime and genuine access to sustainable careers are political issues that need to be addressed; so young people should be included in important conversations.

“The event at Westminster Council brought together motivated young people and hopefully we influenced some of them to vote in the election. If we don’t vote, our opinions won’t be listened to.”

Samid Ahmed, participant
How to apply
A step by step guide to applying

1 Check the eligibility of your organisation
An eligible UK organisation is any public, private or non-profit organisation active in the field of youth, or an informal group of young people.

2 Find a partner
To find a partner or get inspired with project ideas, try www.salto-youth.net

3 Get EVS-accredited
If are applying for Key Action 1 funding and you want to host or send volunteers, you will need to be European Voluntary Service accredited: www.erasmusplus.org.uk/evs-accreditation

4 Review your capacity
It is important to consider whether your organisation has financial and organisational capacity to run the project (especially if you want to apply for more than €60,000 of funding), as well as having enough staff and resources available.
5 Decide on your project
Decide on and prepare a project proposal for your organisation based on the funded activity allowed under a Key Action. Double check the duration allowed for your project as well as start and end dates.

6 Register on ECAS and obtain your PIC
Create an ECAS account and register in the Portal to obtain a nine digit PIC (Participant Identification Code) which you and your partners will need in order to complete the eForm.

7 Fill out the eForm
Choose the correct eForm for your sector, Key Action and funding round. Ensure you have enough time to do this, check that all fields are correctly filled out and validate the form. Only then will you be able to submit.

8 Check the deadline and dates
Check and double-check the deadline and the time for submitting your online application form.

Also check the project start and end dates. Applications submitted after the deadline will not be accepted.

Visit [www.erasmusplus.org.uk/youth-funding](http://www.erasmusplus.org.uk/youth-funding) for more information.
How to apply

Top tips

For Erasmus+ youth funding there are three application deadlines in a calendar year. You will need to apply online using the electronic application form (or ‘eForm’) for the relevant Key Action for your project, so it is vital that you download the correct form.

There is no limit to the number of separate applications your organisation can submit. However, if the value of your application is €60,000 or above, European Commission requirements mean that we need to assess the capacity of your organisation to deliver the project.

Five top tips:

1. Whether you have been successful or unsuccessful in applying for funding for a project previously, you can still apply for another project in the next funding Round.
2. Start your application well before the due date, in case there are any issues with IT on deadline day.
3. When your PIC is entered into an application form, your organisation’s details will be entered automatically. If these appear to be incorrect you should update the data in the Participant Portal.
4. Read the application guidance carefully as this will help you to create a clear thread by linking your objectives to your planned activities, with relevant methods and learning outcomes.
5. Feeling confused by the jargon?
   Visit www.erasmusplus.org.uk/glossary for a glossary of terms

Read more top tips at www.erasmusplus.org.uk/toptips

A reminder that youth organisations, but not young people or youth workers as individuals, can apply for Erasmus+ funding. Informal groups of young people can also apply.
Support from the UK National Agency

Whether you are new to the programme, or have applied before, at the UK National Agency we are here to support you all the way, from application guidance, through to managing your project.

- **Erasmus+ briefing sessions** – these are aimed at newcomers, and take place each autumn in locations across the UK.
- **Guides for applicants** – for each Key Action and sector, the UK NA provides application guidance documents, available for download from our website.
- **Application support webinars** – sign up to these online events, including a Q&A session, for more detail on the application process in the run up to the funding deadline(s).
- **Advice sessions** – you can call or email us for specific advice about completing your application and we may also occasionally run extra advice webinars or events.

Visit [www.erasmusplus.org.uk/events](http://www.erasmusplus.org.uk/events) for upcoming events.

**Funding deadlines**

Deadlines are announced by the European Commission during each annual Call to Apply but can change, so please visit [www.erasmusplus.org.uk/deadlines](http://www.erasmusplus.org.uk/deadlines)
Contact us

The UK National Agency is a partnership between the British Council and Ecorys UK. This page sets out how you can contact us for advice and guidance on Erasmus+.

Enquiries on youth funding

Key Action 1 youth enquiries
T: 0161 957 7755 erasmusplus.enquiries@britishcouncil.org

Key Action 2 and Key Action 3 youth enquiries
T: 0121 212 8947 erasmusplus@ecorys.com

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