

International cooperation, innovation and excellence projects funding opportunities for UK HEIs

Funding for cooperation, innovation & the exchange of good practice

Strategic Partnerships¹

Strategic Partnerships are transnational projects, designed to help UK HEIs develop and share innovative practice and cooperate with international HEIs. They promote cooperation, peer learning, and exchanges of experiences in the field of higher education. They may address an issue in one specific field, but are expected to result in the development, transfer and implementation of innovative practices at organisational, local, regional, national or international level. Projects last two to three years, and each project can be funded for up to €450,000 in funding.

The 2019 priorities for Strategic Partnerships to address will be:

- tackling skills gaps and mismatches
- promoting and rewarding excellence in teaching and skills development
- promoting more flexible and innovative learning.

Between 2014 and 2017, 222 Strategic Partnerships including UK organisations were awarded, worth over €65 million. 74 of these were coordinated by UK HEIs, such as the University of Northumbria's *Sharing Learning from Practice to Improve Patient Safety* project, which seeks to build an evidence based approach to patient safety education, and the University of South Wales' *Developing Entrepreneurial Women - Changing Horizons* project, which seeks to address the teaching methods and content of entrepreneurship education, and specifically the under-representation and under-utilisation of women in entrepreneurship.

Capacity Building in the Field of Higher Education (CBHE)²

CBHE projects, which last from two to three years, are aimed at modernising and reforming HEIs, through activities such as developing new curricula, improving governance, and building relationships between HEIs and enterprises. They can also tackle policy topics and issues, preparing the ground for higher education reform, in cooperation with national authorities. The projects are primarily for the benefit of the non-EU countries involved and are run by a consortium of institutions and with a grant of between €500,000 and €1 million per project, which can be used to cover staff costs, travel costs, costs of stay, equipment and sub-contracting activities.

Between 2015 and 2017 UK organisations have been involved in 121 of the CBHE projects awarded, worth over €108 million, of which UK HEIs coordinated 17 projects. In 2018 the UK was awarded 5 UK coordinated CBHE projects, at a value of over €4 million, with 26 individual UK organisations involved in a total of 28 CBHE projects. Glasgow Caledonian University currently coordinates 4 CBHE projects, and was awarded a 5th in 2018, 3 of which focus on social innovation working with organisations in Latin America, Southeast Asia and South Africa.

Knowledge Alliances³

Knowledge Alliances are transnational projects which bring HEIs and business together to work on common issues, in order to build innovation within Higher Education Institutions in Europe and support the

¹ Strategic Partnerships: <https://www.erasmusplus.org.uk/apply-for-higher-education-partnership-funding>

² CBHE: https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/erasmus-plus/actions/key-action-2-cooperation-for-innovation-and-exchange-good-practices/capacity-0_en

³ Knowledge Alliances: https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/erasmus-plus/actions/key-action-2-cooperation-for-innovation-and-exchange-good-practices/knowledge_en.

modernisation of Europe's HE systems. Projects run for two to three years, must involve at least two HEIs and two enterprises or business, and can secure a maximum of €1 million per project.

Projects are open to any discipline or sector and focus on developing new, innovative, and multidisciplinary approaches to teaching and learning, stimulating entrepreneurship and the entrepreneurial skills of higher education and company staff, and/or exchanging knowledge and working together on new solutions.

Between 2014 and 2017, the UK has been involved in 32 Knowledge Alliances, worth over €28 million. The UK is the third most successful coordinating country, securing almost €5 million in UK coordinated Knowledge Alliance projects, including Cranfield University's *Knowledge Alliance for aDditive Manufacturing between Industry and univeRsitiEs (ADMIRE)* which addresses the gap between the industrial and academic worlds, whilst responding to an urgent market need in the qualification of the additive manufacturing workforce.

Sport⁴

The Sport Chapter in Erasmus+ aims to tackle cross-border threats to the integrity of sport, such as doping, intolerance and discrimination; promote and support good governance in sport and dual careers of athletes; promote voluntary activities in sport, together with social inclusion, equal opportunities and awareness of the importance of health-enhancing physical activity, through increased participation in, and equal access to sport for all. Up to €400,000 is available per project, with projects lasting between one and three years.

Between 2014 and 2017, 120 Sport Collaborative Partnerships with UK partners have been awarded. 39 of these partnerships have involved UK HEIs with the total grant value for these 39 projects worth over €13 million. Leeds Beckett University, for example, coordinates the *Research-Embedded Strategic Plan for Anti-Doping Education: Clean Sport Alliance Initiative for Tackling Doping* project, a project which also involves the University of Birmingham and Kingston University, as well as partners in the Netherlands, Germany, Ireland and Slovenia.

Funding for Joint Master Degrees

Erasmus Mundus Joint Master Degrees (EMJMDs)⁵ are international study programmes delivered by a consortium of HEIs from at least 3 different countries and, where relevant, other partners with specific expertise and interest in the study programme.

Between 2014 and 2020, the European Commission aims to fund around 350 such courses, with funding of up to €5 million available per project. Projects are 4-6 years in duration, and provide funding for three annual intakes of students, including a certain number of scholarships to students worldwide, and an annual flat-rate fee for management and guest academic costs.

Approximately 1 in 3 projects are awarded funding. In 2018, Glasgow University was successful in securing funding to coordinate 4 EMJMD projects, worth over €15 million.

Funding to promote excellence in teaching & research of EU studies

Jean Monnet⁶ Activities are designed to promote excellence in teaching and research in the field of European Union studies worldwide. The activities also foster the dialogue between the academic world and policy-makers, in particular with the aim of enhancing governance of EU policies. The objectives of Jean Monnet are to: equip students and young professionals with knowledge of EU subjects; stimulate teaching and research on the EU; foster dialogue between the EU and the world in higher education.

Several types of funding model are available, with funding of up to €300,000 per project, depending on the type of project applied for:

⁴ Sport: <https://www.erasmusplus.org.uk/sport-funding>

⁵ EMJMD: https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/erasmus-plus/actions/key-action-1-learning-mobility-individuals/erasmus-mundus-joint-master-degrees_en

⁶ Jean Monnet: https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/erasmus-plus/actions/jean-monnet_en

- **Jean Monnet Modules** - a short teaching programme in the field of EU studies. The Jean Monnet Module anchors and mainstreams teaching on EU matters in curricula which so far have included EU related content only to a limited extent.
- **Jean Monnet Chairs** - a teaching post with a specialisation in EU studies for university professors for a duration of three years. A Jean Monnet Chair must be held by only one professor, who must provide the minimum of 90 teaching hours per academic year.
- **Jean Monnet Centres of Excellence** - gathers the expertise and competences of high-level experts and aims at developing synergies between the various disciplines and resources in EU studies, as well as at creating joint transnational activities and structural links with academic institutions in other countries.
- **Jean Monnet Support to Associations** - Jean Monnet supports associations that have as their explicit purpose to contribute to the study of the European integration process.
- **Jean Monnet Networks** - foster the creation and development of consortia of international players (HEIs, Centres of Excellence, departments, teams, individual experts, etc.) in the area of EU studies.
- **Jean Monnet Projects** - Jean Monnet Projects support innovation, cross-fertilisation and the spread of EU content.

In 2018, approximately 20% of applications were successful. Five projects were awarded to UK HEIs with a total grant value of over €570,000, including funding secured by Queen's University of Belfast for a Jean Monnet module on *Comparative Competition Law: the Case of the EU as the Leading Model*.

European Universities initiative

This initiative will provide funding to UK HEIs to support the development of bottom-up alliances of higher education institutions in order to increase collaboration, quality, performance and international competitiveness of European higher education institutions. Driven by high quality, these European Universities would attract the best students, teachers and researchers, making use of the most innovative pedagogies and digital technologies. They would act as role models for other higher education institutions, progressively increasing the international competitiveness of European higher education. Please see https://ec.europa.eu/education/european-universities-initiative_en and www.ukro.ac.uk/aboutukro/Documents/180622_ukro_conference_maltauro.pdf for more details.

This new initiative is due to launch in pilot in autumn 2018 with application deadlines in spring 2019. Please note, the action is still in development, so details are subject to change. The final details will be published in the 2019 Programme Guide, which will be added to this page in Autumn 2018:

https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/resources/programme-guide_en

Outward mobility funding

Some HEIs have used mobility funding to support specific projects. For example, Cardiff University's School of Medicine used funding with Georgia to develop competencies in *Trauma-Focused Cognitive Behavioural Therapy for Post Traumatic Stress Disorder Treatment*, developing and delivering training to post-graduate students and HEI employees on a train-the-trainer basis.

Others have used funding to build and strengthen existing links with international partners. For example, the University of Northampton used funding to build on the business school's existing links with Kazakhstan, exploring the entrepreneurship teaching practice and strategies in both universities. From this they planned to develop both a future bid for CBHE funding (see above) and also a Joint Master's Degree in International Entrepreneurship.

There are two types of funding, one for **intra-European mobilities**⁷ and one for international mobilities (aka **International Credit Mobility**⁸). The former is non-competitive, meaning if you apply for funding you will get it

⁷ Intra-Europe mobility: www.erasmusplus.org.uk/apply-for-higher-education-student-and-staff-mobility-funding

⁸ International Credit mobility: www.erasmusplus.org.uk/apply-for-international-credit-mobility

(although maybe not everything you apply for), and funding covers all the EU countries as well as Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway, FYR Macedonia, Turkey, and, from 2019, Serbia. The latter covers the rest of the world, but you must apply for each individual country, and the funding is competitive. How competitive depends on the region: In 2018 we were able to fund all applications in some regions, with the most competitive region resulting in a funding ratio of 1 in 6. However, you can apply for funding with as many countries as you need to. For example, Middlesex University has received International Credit Mobility funding for Albania, Azerbaijan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Canada, Chile, China, Egypt, Israel, Kazakhstan, Malaysia, Montenegro, Palestine, Russia, Serbia, and the USA.

Mobility funding is available for **both staff and students**. Students at all levels, including PhD, can be funded to study or undertake a traineeship overseas, for between 2 and 12 months, depending on the activity. Staff funding is open to both administrative and teaching staff, and can be used for training or teaching, for a few days up to two months. As well as the grant for participants, the HEI also gets organisational support funding to contribute to the management costs. Furthermore, there is additional funding available for those with disabilities or from disadvantaged backgrounds.

How to apply

Calls for applications come out on an annual basis. The next call is due to open in Autumn 2018 and close in Spring 2019. Application deadlines vary, depending on the specific opportunity you are applying for. Please sign up to the Erasmus+ UK newsletter to be alerted when the calls are launched: www.erasmusplus.org.uk/subscribe-to-our-newsletter.

You can see past calls and application forms by following the links to the National Agency website (for mobility and Strategic Partnership funding) and the Erasmus+ European Commission website (for all other project funding).

Additionally, you can find the quality guides given to application assessors online:

- For mobility and Strategic Partnership funding
 - www.erasmusplus.org.uk/news/2018-guide-for-experts-is-now-available
- For all other project funding
 - https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/erasmus-plus/library/2015-guide-for-experts-quality-assessment-for-erasmus-plus-actions_en

Find out more

- Erasmus+ UK National Agency website: www.erasmusplus.org.uk
- Previously funded projects: <http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/projects/eplu-projects-compendium/> and <http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/projects/>
- Erasmus+ European Commission website: https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/erasmus-plus_en
- Erasmus+ factsheets by country and region: https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/about/factsheets_en#worldwide
- Erasmus+ Programme Guide: https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/resources/programme-guide_en

