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ANNEX

of the Commission Decision on the Specific Action Programme for support expenditure linked to the Erasmus+ programme to be financed from the 11th European Development Fund

Action Document for Support Measure to the Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency in the implementation of the Erasmus+ activities financed under the 11th European Development Fund

1. Title/basic act/ CRIS number	Support Measure to the Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency in the implementation of the Erasmus+ activities financed under the 11 th European Development Fund (EDF). CRIS number: FED/2016/039-767 financed under the 11 th European Development Fund	
2. Zone benefiting from the action/location	African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) group of states	
3. Programming document	11 th EDF Intra-ACP Strategy document adopted on 26 November 2015 (Objective 1.4)	
4. Sector of concentration/ thematic area	Higher Education	DEV. Aid: YES
5. Amounts concerned	Total estimated cost: EUR 1 496 000 Total amount of EDF contribution: EUR 1 496 000	
6. Aid modality(ies) and implementation modality(ies)	Project Modality Direct management through EU executive agency: Education Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA) Grants (call for proposals) and procurement of services	
7 a) DAC code(s)	91010 – Administrative costs	
b) Main Delivery Channel	10000 - Public Sector Institutions	

SUMMARY

Regulation (EU) No 1288/2013 of 11 December 2013 establishing 'Erasmus+': the Union programme for education, training, youth and sport and repealing Decisions No 1719/2006/EC, No 1720/2006/EC and No 1298/EC¹ foresees in its citation (8) that, in its international dimension, "*Funds might also be made available from the European Development Fund (EDF) in accordance with the procedures governing it.*"

As from 2016, the Erasmus+ Programme benefits from additional funding from the EDF (under 11th EDF Intra-ACP Strategy) following the relevant legal and financing decisions foreseen by Council Regulation (EU) 2015/323 of 2 March 2015 on the financial regulation applicable to the 11th European Development Fund². Part of the operational credits made available from the 11th EDF will be managed by the Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA) under direct management.

As far as the EDF resources are concerned, EACEA managed so far the implementation of the Directorate General for International Cooperation and Development (DEVCO) contributions to Erasmus Mundus ACP component for a total amount of about EUR 28 000 000 and to the Intra-ACP Academic Mobility Scheme component amounting to EUR 40 000 000. In both instances, the management of the programmes was effective and efficient and fully met DEVCO/ACP expectations.

This action aims to finance the EACEA's administrative costs. The agency has its own operating budget which must be reinforced outside the Union contribution, so that it has sufficient resources to perform the newly delegated tasks related to the management of the implementation of the 11th EDF contribution to Erasmus+.

1 CONTEXT

1.1 Sector/Country/Regional context/Thematic area

The EACEA was established by Commission Decision No 2005/56/EC of 14 January 2005 to manage certain parts of the EU programmes in the field of education, culture and audiovisual. Since then, EACEA had its mandate extended and expanded several times, most recently in 2013 - Commission Decision No 2013/776/EU of 18 December 2013, as part of the preparatory process leading to the adoption of the 2014-2020 Union programmes.

The mission of EACEA is to implement certain parts of the EU programmes Erasmus+, Creative Europe, Europe for Citizens, EU Aid Volunteers, projects in the field of higher education under

¹ OJ L 347, 20.12.2013, p. 50

² OJ L 58, 3.3.2015, p. 17.

external cooperation instruments, as well as the legacy of various parts of the 2007-2013 Union programmes.

Erasmus+ is the Union programme established by Regulation (EU) No 1288/2013 to support actions in the fields of education and training, youth and sport. With an EU budget of EUR 14.7 billion for the period 2014-2020, Erasmus+ helps European countries to modernise and improve their education and training systems as well as their youth and sport policies, reinforcing their role as drivers for growth, employment, competitiveness, innovation and social cohesion.

The overall objective of the external dimension of Erasmus+ is to promote people to people contacts, intercultural awareness and understanding, develop capacity and contribute to modernising higher education in Partner Countries, with particular attention to least developed countries and disadvantaged groups, as follows:

- *Specific objective 1 (credit and degree mobility actions): Improve the skills and competences of Partner country students and staff, and the employability of graduates*
- *Specific objective 2 (capacity building action): Support the modernisation, accessibility and internationalisation of higher education in the Partner Countries*

It is estimated that approximately EUR 85 million are earmarked to Erasmus+ from the 11th EDF (Intra-ACP Strategy) until 2020, the end of the programming period.

Out of this amount, EUR 55 million concern actions within the mandate of EACEA:

- Approximately EUR 25 million under *Specific Objective 1*, for the degree mobility/joint degrees actions that will allow an additional **550** two-year scholarships for ACP nationals to be financed.
Erasmus+ includes an excellence action that funds Joint Master Degrees offered by consortia of Programme Country and Partner Country universities when relevant. They provide high-level scholarships to excellent students and staff worldwide funded from heading 1 and supplemented by funding windows under the Intra-ACP funds.
The Intra-ACP funding window aims at increasing further the participation of highly qualified student candidates from ACP Partner Countries to pursue joint Master degree studies in the different programmes offered in at least two EU Member State institutions.
- Approximately EUR 30 million under *Specific Objective 2*, for capacity building projects. These projects promote the exchange of knowledge and fund curriculum development and modernisation, joint or double degrees, modern teaching and learning practices, upgrading of facilities and equipment, improving university governance and creating better links between higher education and the world of work (Joint Projects). This action also finances projects that seek to have an impact on national systems, by involving national authorities, alongside universities (Structural Projects). Institutions from ACP Partner Countries can act as lead applicants and there will always be an equal or higher number of institutions from the ACP Partner countries than the number of institutions from EU Member States involved in the partnerships. The EDF contribution, with an

average project size of EUR 800 000, will allow the funding of approximately **38 projects**.

The contribution from the 11th EDF to the EACEA's administrative expenses linked to the management of the above-mentioned activities (the present Action) is in addition to the operational budget of EUR 85 000 000 earmarked to Erasmus+ during the period 2015-2020.

2 RISKS AND ASSUMPTIONS

Risks	Risk level (H/M/L)	Mitigating measures
The proposed amounts represent the indicative contribution during the year; the actual contribution will be calculated taking into account the real needs of the agency (may be lower but not higher than the amount authorised for the year).	M	The amounts not used can be decommitted once the FDC expires (= after N+1).
Assumptions		
The calculation of the yearly budget takes into account the agency's needs in terms of human resources (+ 2 contract agents), the costs related to the use of the infrastructure, the costs related to management of the programme (missions, translations and audits) and an yearly indexation of the price by 2%.		

3 LESSONS LEARNT, COMPLEMENTARITY AND CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES

3.1 Lessons learnt

EACEA managed in the past the EDF resources linked to the implementation of the Erasmus Mundus ACP component (EUR 28 million) and of the Intra-ACP Academic Mobility Scheme (EUR 40 million). In both instances, the management of the programmes was effective and efficient and fully met DEVCO/ACP expectations.

The EDF contribution to Erasmus+, which has been envisaged for delegation to EACEA, is in line with the agency's current mandate and mission and represents a continuation of its existing activities. The agency has built up competence, skills and capacity in the management of the programmes delegated to it over several years. The additional funding from the 11th EDF would therefore benefit from EACEA's accumulated experience and expertise in programme management both within the EU and with Partner countries across the world (such as for instance the Intra-ACP Academic Mobility Programme), and result in productivity gains. The programme beneficiaries would also benefit from a high quality of programme management and service delivery.

3.2 Complementarity, synergy and donor coordination

The EACEA benefits from its status as a public body specifically created to manage programmes in the area of education, audiovisual and culture and this focus enhances the visibility of the EU programmes among stakeholders and general public. Existence of a single entity managing a number of complementary programmes generates synergy effects in terms of visibility to the mutual benefit of all programmes, thereby enhancing the visibility of the Union action in the area.

3.3 Cross-cutting issues

N/A

4 DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTION

4.1 Objectives/results

The action will finance the administrative costs for the management of the Erasmus+ activities funded from the 11th EDF, which will be entrusted to EACEA.

4.2 Main activities

On the basis of the powers delegated by the Commission and within the framework of the Erasmus+ annual work programme adopted by the Commission, the Agency shall manage some or all stages in the lifetime of the projects and operating grants

In this connection, it shall be responsible for monitoring the projects and operating grants, making the necessary checks and recovery procedures, and for performing budget implementation tasks covering revenue and expenditure within the meaning of the Financial Regulation, in particular:

- (1) Award grants and manage the ensuing agreement or decision, including the operations required to launch and conclude grant award procedures;
- (2) Conclude public procurement procedures and manage the ensuing contracts, including the operations required to launch and conclude public procurement procedures.

EACEA has received a delegation from the European Commission to implement the relevant Erasmus+ projects financed under the 11th EDF through *Commission Decision C(2016)401 of 01.02.2016 amending Commission Decision C(2013)9189 delegating powers to the EACEA with a view to the performance of tasks linked to the implementation of the Union programmes in the field of education, audiovisual and culture, comprising, in particular, implementation of appropriations entered in the general budget of the Union and of the EDF allocations.*

4.3 Intervention logic

N/A

5 IMPLEMENTATION

5.1 Financing agreement

In order to implement this action, it is not foreseen to conclude a financing agreement.

5.2 Indicative implementation period

The indicative operational implementation period of this action, during which the activities described in section 4.1 will be carried out, is 96 months from the date of adoption by the Commission of this Action Document.

Extensions of the implementation period may be agreed by the Commission's authorising officer responsible by amending this decision; such amendments to this decision constitute non-substantial amendment in the sense of Article 9(4) of Regulation (EU) 2015/322.

5.3 Implementation modalities

Direct management, implemented by executive agency EACEA. The implementation of this action concerns administrative expenditure (for the management of the Erasmus+ Call for Proposals, the assessment and management of grant awards, contracting and monitoring the awarded projects, etc.).

5.4 Scope of geographical eligibility for procurement and grants

The geographical eligibility in terms of place of establishment for participating in procurement and grant award procedures and in terms of origin of supplies purchased as established in the basic act and set out in the relevant contractual documents shall apply subject to the following provisions.

The Commission's authorising officer responsible may extend the geographical eligibility in accordance with Article 22(1)(b) of Annex IV to the ACP-EU Partnership Agreement on the basis of urgency or of unavailability of products and services in the markets of the countries concerned, or in other duly substantiated cases where the eligibility rules would make the realization of this action impossible or exceedingly difficult.

5.5 Indicative budget

	Indicative Annual Instalments
2016	EUR 211 000
2017	EUR 215 000
2018	EUR 219 000
2019	EUR 223 000

2020	EUR 241 000
2021	EUR 159 000
2022	EUR 113 000
2023	EUR 115 000
Total	EUR 1 496 000

5.6 Organisational set-up and responsibilities

The operating budget of the agency is governed by the standard financial regulation³, which is the same for all the executive agencies and is obligatory for them.

The administrative costs at the level of the agency correspond to the sum of:

- staff related costs (Title I in the agency's administrative budget),
- costs related to infrastructure and operating expenditure i.e. overheads (Title II),
- other costs linked to programme support (Title III).

The director of the agency is authorising officer for the operating budget (Article 14(1) of Regulation (EC) No 58/2003) and for this purpose applies the standard financial regulation.

For the payment of expenditure charged to its administrative appropriations, the agency appoints an accounting officer, whose accounting duties are limited to the agency's administrative expenditure. The accounting officer cannot intervene in the authorisation process for administrative appropriations, as the duties of authorising officer and accounting officer are segregated and mutually incompatible (Article 28 of the standard financial regulation). To prevent any confusion of roles, he/she is not entrusted with the tasks of initiating agent or *ex ante* verifying agent for operational appropriations. However, the accounting officer may be entrusted with the *ex post* verification of operational appropriations.

5.7 Performance monitoring and reporting

The agency produces an annual activity report (AAR – Article 9(7) of Regulation (EC) No 58/2003), which gives an account of the implementation of both operational appropriations and operating budget. It is drawn up by the director, contains a declaration of assurance accompanied, if necessary, by reservations and is finally adopted by the Steering Committee of the Agency.

The agency also produces annual accounts, drawn up in accordance with the rules and principles laid down by the Commission's accounting officer (Article 14(2) of Regulation (EC) No

³ Commission Regulation (EC) 1653/2004 of 21 September 2004 on a standard financial regulation for the executive agencies pursuant to Council Regulation (EC) No 58/2003 laying down the statute for executive agencies to be entrusted with certain tasks in the management of Community programmes.

58/2003). At the end of the financial year, the agency not only reports on the overall amount left unused, but also provides all the information needed to establish a link between operating expenditure and each of the programmes managed by the agency (grouped by fund source). This information will enable the Commission to reply to the budgetary authority's questions about implementation of the programmes managed by the agency. Once the final accounts have been established for the agency, if the budget result is positive, each delegating Directorate General (DG) (or the DG which has received a co-delegation from the delegating DGs) draws up a recovery order corresponding to the amount of appropriations which the agency has not used.

5.8 Evaluation

N/A

5.9 Audit

The agency and its operations are audited by the Internal Auditor of the Commission (IAS) and the European Court of Auditors.

In connection with the agency's tasks under the delegated parts of the Erasmus+ programme, it is responsible for making the necessary checks and recovery procedures, including carrying out ex-post audits. Expenses pertaining to control and audit activities which are required for the management of the Programme and the achievement of its objectives have to be covered by the agency's operating budget – by the 11th EDF for the part of the Erasmus+ programme financed by it.

5.10 Communication and visibility

N/A