



Support for European University Capacity Building

Call for submissions October 2019

Context

At the 2017 Gothenburg Summit, EU leaders outlined a vision for education and culture. In its [December 2017 Conclusions](#), the European Council called on Member States, the Council and the Commission to take forward a number of initiatives, including:

'...strengthening strategic partnerships across the EU between higher education institutions and encouraging the emergence by 2024 of some twenty 'European Universities', consisting in bottom-up networks of universities across the EU which will enable students to obtain a degree by combining studies in several EU countries and contribute to the international competitiveness of European universities'.

The European Commission's European Universities Initiative responds to this appeal. Today, it is one of the flagship initiatives of the EU's ambitions to build a [European Education Area](#).

HEA Call 2019/20

The HEA, with the support of the Department of Education and Skills, seeks to support Irish HEIs applications to, and participation in, this European Universities Initiative.

This call for applications will therefore offer support to eligible Irish higher education institutions (i.e. those that hold the Erasmus Charter) to facilitate preparation and submission of a competitive proposal to the European Commission's second European Universities Initiative call expected to launch in October 2019. The funding will also be available to those HEIs who are engaged as part of a successful first call consortium.

What is the European Universities Initiative?

The aim of the European Universities Initiative (co-developed by higher education institutions, student organisations, Member States and the Commission), is to bring together a new generation of creative Europeans able to cooperate across languages, borders and disciplines to address societal challenges and to ensure the continued competitiveness of Europe.

The initiative aims to encourage the emergence by 2024 of 'European Universities', consisting of alliances of bottom-up networks of universities across the EU which will enable students to obtain a degree by combining studies in several EU countries and contribute to the international competitiveness of European universities.

In order to achieve this major step forward, the Commission is testing different cooperation models for European Universities with two calls for proposals under the [Erasmus+ programme](#).

The alliances will:

- be open to partners from all types of higher education institution and cover a broad geographic scope across Europe
- be based upon a co-envisioned long-term strategy focussed on sustainability, excellence and European values
- offer student-centred curricula jointly delivered across inter-university campuses, where a diverse student bodies can build their own programmes and experience mobility at all levels of study
- adopt a challenge-based approach according to which students, academics and external partners can cooperate in inter-disciplinary teams to tackle the biggest issues facing Europe today

The successful alliances must be composed of a minimum of three higher education institutions from at least three EU Member States or other Programme countries. In addition, any public/private organisation active in the field of education and training, research and innovation or in the world of work can be part of the alliance as an associated partner.

First call

The results of the 2019 call have been published. This first call, together with a second to be launched this autumn, will test different models for the concept of European Universities and examine its potential to transform higher education. It is expected that the European Universities Initiative will be fully rolled out and scaled up under the next Erasmus programme 2021—2027. For more information, see the [factsheet](#) and [press release](#).

Second call, Autumn 2019

The second European Universities call for proposals will be published by the European Commission in autumn 2019 along with a range of other calls available on the [Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency \(EACEA\) funding opportunities page](#). A webcast update (22/10/19) is available [here](#).

HEA Call 2019/20

Aim

This call for applications will offer support to eligible Irish higher education institutions to facilitate preparation and submission of a competitive proposal to the second European Universities Initiative, call expected to launch in October 2019,¹ and to HEIs who are engaged in successful projects under the first pilot call.

Eligibility

Applications will be accepted from publicly funded Irish higher education institutions which hold the Erasmus Charter for Higher Education (ECHE).

Eligible costs relate solely to the costs incurred in the preparation of the application to the European Universities Initiative or to the costs incurred in the ongoing engagement in successful projects under the first call to a maximum of €15,000.²

Application procedure

Proposals must be emailed in electronic format to policy@hea.ie using the application form issued by the HEA and available [here](#).

Queries to Niall Kelly, Policy and Planning, Higher Education Authority
nkelly@hea.ie / 01 231 7100

Closing date

Submissions should be received by the HEA in electronic format before **5pm, Friday 22nd November 2019**. Late applications will not be accepted. A signed / hard copy is not required.

Evaluation

A review board comprising of, typically, HEA personnel, with or without external assistance, will evaluate the proposals for support. The proposals recommended for support will be presented to the Board of the HEA for approval.

This is intended as a non-competitive form of support. However, the HEA may need to prioritise funding in accordance with the number of applications received. Proposals will be evaluated under the following criteria:

¹ https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/erasmus-plus/actions/key-action-2-european-universities_en

² These include coordinator (or internal approved staff) least-cost travel expenses and institutional subsistence rates, costs of hosting meetings, employment of a researcher for short-term analysis and professional services in the preparation of an application. Further eligible cost guidance is available in the appendix below.

- Conformity of the proposed project to requirements of the European Universities Initiative, as described in the application;
- Management capability and track record of the proposer(s), as outlined in the application;
- Justification for the costs deemed necessary to prepare and submit a European Universities Initiative proposal;
- Benefit of the proposed project to Irish higher education and research.

NOTE: Not all applications are guaranteed funding by the HEA/DES.

Appendix I - Eligible cost guidance

This is a non-competitive form of support. Proposals will be evaluated under the following criteria:

- Conformity of the proposed project to requirements of the European Universities Initiative, as described in the application;
- Management capability and track record of the proposer(s), as outlined in the application;
- Justification for the costs deemed necessary to prepare and submit a European Universities Initiative proposal, or for the costs incurred in engagement in a successful project under the first call;
- Benefit of the proposed project to Irish higher education and research.

Eligible costs will include actual costs that are necessary to prepare and submit a proposal under the second EU Pilot Call or actual costs incurred in engagement in a successful project from the first call, which may include:

Networking/Travel

- **Travel to visit future team members or collaborators** – European University proposals may include team members (i.e., collaborators) located anywhere in the world where clear justification is provided. Costs should be based on standard travel and subsistence guidelines.
- **Incoming travel to avail of key expertise** – European University applications may benefit from bringing in expertise from outside of Ireland. Costs should be based on standard travel and subsistence guidelines, with the duration of the visit(s) detailed; the person(s) visiting the applicant should be named, and the reasons for bringing them to Ireland should be outlined.
- **Travel to visit current European University award holders or subject experts** – applicants may benefit from spending time within an active European University funded group. Costs should be based on standard travel and subsistence guidelines; the lead researcher being visited should be named, and the duration of the visit must be stated.

Staff time (either teaching buy-out or research assistant)

- **Buying out teaching time** – funds may be sought to provide for cover for lecturing or similar activities, in order to free up time for proposal preparation.
- **Assistance in proposal preparation** – short-term assistance with data management, proposal preparation or other administrative tasks may be sought. Applicants must describe the type of assistance that will be required.

Consultancy and external services:

- **Consultants in Ireland and around Europe** offer tailored workshops and/or provide one-to-one support for EU programme applicants. Applicants must describe the type(s) of support being sought, the vendor(s) that will be used, and a breakdown of the costs (including VAT) for each type of support being sought (e.g., number of hours/days, costs per hour/day, etc.).
- **Communication skills / Graphical design** which is of high quality may benefit European University proposals and, where relevant, support for development communications skills, application material or slides for presentations may be sought. Applicants must describe the type(s) of support being sought, the vendor(s) that will be used, and a breakdown of the costs.

N.B.:

Applications to this fund must include clear justification for any use of consultant proposal developers outside of services provided by institutional offices, and a clear delineation of the costs requested (i.e., number of hours required, hourly rates, etc.)

In the case of a resubmission under the European University Initiative, details of the previously submitted proposal (including name, acronym, proposal number, Call ID, whether or not it received EU support funding for the first submission, and the score that was awarded to the proposal in the previous evaluation) should be accompanied by a list of the major weaknesses identified in the evaluation, where they exist, and a statement of how the Coordinator plans to overcome these weaknesses in the resubmission.

Applications will only be **accepted before the stated closing date of 5pm, Friday 22nd November 2019**. Applications may look to obtain a **maximum of €15,000 and all limits are inclusive of VAT. All money figures below are inclusive of VAT.**