ERASMUS+

CREATING OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE UK ACROSS EUROPE

Invitation to Tender (ITT)

Vocational Education & Training Tracer Study UK Research 2019

Introduction

Erasmus+ is the EU programme for education, training, youth and sport. The Erasmus+ programme will run from 2014-2020 and supports activities in education, training, youth and sport across all sectors of lifelong learning including higher education, further education, adult education, schools and youth activities.

Erasmus+ is managed in the UK by the UK National Agency (NA) The UK NA is a partnership between the British Council and Ecorys UK.

Part of the role of NAs is to investigate and evidence the impact of the programme on the organisations and individuals that participate.

The UK NA is participating in a transnational research project to track individuals who have participated in a vocational education and training (VET) mobility placement abroad through Erasmus+. The transnational project is led by the Polish NA and includes eight other NAs.

Each participating NA is conducting an online survey of participants using a standardised questionnaire based on an original design previously piloted by the Polish NA. Each national survey will be supplemented by qualitative interviews and group interviews with individual participants. These will also use standardised topic guides. Copies of the topic guides and survey questionnaire have been provided as part of this ITT package.

Focus of the research

The main focus of the research is to understand how the mobility placement has helped participants. The UK research should identify where mobility placements are contributing to UK policy priorities in the VET field, especially in terms of improving the employability of VET learners.

Scope

The successful research team will be required to undertake the following tasks:

- **Analyse survey responses**. This should include weighting and significance testing. The UK online survey was launched in October 2018 and is expected to close in early December 2018. We anticipate 400-500 responses from a population of ~9,200.
- Arrange and conduct **qualitative interviews** with VET learners. We anticipate a minimum of 20 interviews but would welcome more subject to budget and if the value added. The interviews should be conducted with VET learners who have completed their programme of study and have progressed elsewhere (e.g., into employment, further education and training, self-employment, or unemployment). The online survey includes a question agreeing to participate in a follow-up interview and non-respondents to the survey can also be contacted as they have explicitly agreed to be contacted for further research.
- Arrange and conduct **group interviews** with current VET learners who have completed their Erasmus+ mobility placement. There should be at least two group interview sessions. We expect that current Erasmus+ VET mobility projects can be contacted to help arrange group interviews with their learners. There are currently 98 projects from 2017 and 112 from 2018 who could be contacted.

Report template

Each country research report will follow a standard template which will be provided by March 2019.

Communication and dissemination

The contractor will be asked to contribute to communication and dissemination of the research findings. Activities could include writing articles or blogs for the UK Erasmus+ NA website, other relevant websites or print publications, submitting academic journal articles or presenting findings at conferences or seminars.

All activities would need to be discussed with and approved by the UK Erasmus+ NA in advance and copy approval would be required.

VET Sector Consultative Group

The UK Erasmus+ NA organises a VET Sector Consultative Group (SCG) of key sector stakeholders and policymakers. Member are drawn from education providers, employers, UK government and devolved administration departments and agencies. The SCG meets twice a year in spring and autumn with regular exchanges of information in-between. We encourage bidders to involve the VET SCG by factoring in a face-to-face session to present and discuss findings. The spring 2019 SCG meeting will most likely take place in May or June.

Transnational study

The transnational analysis will be conducted by researchers at the Polish NA - Foundation for the Development of the Education System (www.frse.org.pl). There is a possibility that country researchers will be invited to contribute to the transnational analysis and reporting. This would most likely involve an overseas trip and additional analysis between July and October 2019. Cost for this activity will be agreed separately to this contract but bidders should indicate whether they are willing to participate.

A transnational research partnership meeting of NAs and some researchers will take place on 14-15 March 2019 in Belgium. The researchers should plan to attend this meeting and include a budget for time, travel and subsistence.

Outputs required

- A polished draft report for comments.

- A final report of around 30-30 pages for publication on the Erasmus+ website, including
  - Summary (1-2 pages)
  - Overview of the research questions, design, methods used & analysis approach

- Separate annexes to the report, including
  - Research tools (e.g., topic guides, questionnaires)
  - Detailed overview of the research design and analysis approach

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Timescale and key dates

12 November 2018	Invitation to Tender issued
07 January 2019	Deadline for tenders
By 11 January 2019	Decision communicated to bidders
w/c 14 January 2019	Start-up meeting with successful bidder, Birmingham, UK
31 January 2019	Online survey data cleaned and sent to Polish NA
28 February 2019	Common report / analysis structure finalised
15 March 2019	Transnational meeting of NAs and researchers, Belgium
May / June 2019	UK Erasmus+ VET Sector Consultative Group stakeholder meeting, TBC
31 May 2019	Draft report deadline
w/c 3 June 2019	Presentation of research, Birmingham, UK (if required)
30 June 2019	Delivery of final report

Contract value

A maximum of £25,000 including all fees and expenses but net of VAT.

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Tender Requirements

Tenders should be submitted for the attention of Steven Murray by email to eplusimpact@ecorys.com. The deadline is **Monday 07 January 2019 at 10am**.

Questions may be submitted in writing to the eplusimpact@ecorys.com before 17:00 on Wednesday 19 December 2018. Questions received and the answers given will be posted on the Erasmus+ website alongside the ITT notice.

Tenders should be a maximum of 16 pages of A4, excluding the title and contents pages. If a tender exceeds 16 pages, only the first 16 pages will be considered. Proposals should include the following information:

- An outline of the proposed research design, research techniques, analysis approach.
- Communication and dissemination activity.
- Pen portraits of the project team.
- Examples of at up to three similar or otherwise relevant projects conducted by the team.
- An outline timescale, including key points / dates.
- Project risks and proposed actions to minimise them.
- Project and quality management in delivery and analysis.
- An outline budget showing no. of days per team member, day rates, expenses, other costs.
- Contact details of two references who can be contacted if required.
- Detailed CVs of team members can be included as an annex outside of the 16 page limit.

Tender Assessment

Tenders will be assessed against the following criteria. Each criterion will be ranked 0-5 and weighted. Verbal feedback will be offered to all tenderers.

Criteria	Relevant proposal sections	Weighting
Understanding of the project requirements	Research design, communication & dissemination, risks, timescale	35%
Project team and experience	Pen portraits, CVs, previous projects	20%
Project management	Risk management, quality management	10%
Value for money	Budget, research design	35%