

ERASMUS FOR YOUNG

ENTREPRENEURS PROGRAMME

**BECOMING AN
INTERMEDIARY
ORGANISATION**

2010-2011



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1. ABOUT THE PROGRAMME.

Erasmus for Young Entrepreneurs is a pilot project initiated by the European Union (EU). It aims at helping new entrepreneurs to acquire relevant skills for managing a small or medium-sized enterprise (SMEs) by spending time (1 to 6 months) in an enterprise managed by an experienced entrepreneur in another European country. It contributes to improving their know-how and fosters cross-border transfers of knowledge and experience between entrepreneurs. It also helps the development of more internationalized SMEs and the creation of more new businesses in Europe. It comes under the Small Business Act for Europe which considers this initiative a key contribution “to create an environment within which entrepreneurs and family businesses can thrive and entrepreneurship is rewarded”.

This pilot project represents an innovative response to the dual challenge of stimulating entrepreneurship and encouraging cross-border business co-operation in Europe. By way of staying with and learning from an experienced entrepreneur in another EU country, new entrepreneurs will gain competences and perspectives that will prove invaluable during the business start-up phase, while also enhancing potential cross-border activity and thus the probability of success.

The specific objectives of the programme are:

- On-the-job-training for new entrepreneurs in SMEs elsewhere in the EU in order to facilitate a successful start and development of their business ideas;
- Exchanges of experience and information between entrepreneurs on obstacles and challenges to starting up and developing their businesses;
- To enhance market access and identification of potential partners for new and established businesses in other EU countries;
- Networking by building on knowledge and experience from other European countries between entrepreneurs.

Erasmus for Young Entrepreneurs is financed by the European Commission and operated across 21 EU countries by the help of more than 100 local, regional or national intermediary organisations competent in business support (e.g. Chambers of Commerce, start-up centres, incubators etc.). Their activities are coordinated at European level by EUROCHAMBRES, the Association of European Chambers of Commerce and Industry, which acts as Support Office.

1.1. CONCEPT.

Erasmus for Young Entrepreneurs provides practical and financial assistance for new entrepreneurs (NE) spending time in the business of experienced host entrepreneurs (HE) in other EU countries. New entrepreneurs travel to an experienced entrepreneur in another EU country and work with him/her for 1 to 6 months. The matching of the new entrepreneurs with the host entrepreneurs is carried out with the help of the intermediary organisations.

1.3.1 Who can participate?

1.1.1.1. New entrepreneur profile.

NEs are defined as entrepreneurs in the early stages. This includes both nascent (i.e. "would-be") entrepreneurs, who are firmly planning to start their own business based on a viable business plan, and entrepreneurs who have recently started their own business (i.e. been in operation for not more than three years). The 3-year limit on the existence of an enterprise does not apply to a new entrepreneur who has taken over a family business. However, in this case, the transfer of the family business to the new entrepreneur must have taken place no more than three years ago.

1.1.1.2. Experienced host entrepreneur.

Host entrepreneurs (HEs) are experienced entrepreneurs (ideally owners of a micro or small enterprise) or persons directly involved in entrepreneurship at SME board level.

1.3.2 How does it work?

The process to identify, validate, implement and evaluate stays abroad comprises of the four following phases:

- 1. Application phase:** interested NEs and HEs apply via an on-line registration tool and establish contact with the IO that they have chosen. The IOs responsible screen the entries and, once completed, accept them.
- 2. Matching phase:** the IOs facilitate contacts between accepted NEs and HEs and seek to make matches. Interested NEs and HEs can also search the Erasmus for Young Entrepreneurs database for appropriate partners and make suggestions to their chosen IO.
- 3. Contracting and preparation phase :** the parties involved (NE, HE, IOs responsible) reach agreement on the commitment to quality, business/work/learning plan, tasks, responsibilities, deliverables, financial conditions, legal implications, etc. and sign the necessary agreements. The Commission gives the final approval of the match. NEs and HEs participate in preparatory activities organised by the IOs responsible.
- 4. Implementation phase:** NEs and HEs complete the stay abroad – in accordance with their needs – in one or more phases and report on them. The IOs responsible monitor the quality of the activity and evaluate the results.

1.3.3 Duration.

The stay abroad needs to be completed within an overall time span of twelve months and should total **between one month and six months**. Within this time span the stay may be divided into a number of shorter time slots (minimum one week per slot), which the NE actually spends at the HEs business.

1.3.4 Content of the stay abroad.

Activities of the NE during the stay abroad may include:

- Shadowing a senior host entrepreneur;
- Market research and developing new business opportunities;
- Project development, innovation and R & D;
- Taking a fresh look at existing business operations;

- Understanding SME finance;
- Branding, sales and marketing of the HEs company;
- Work on concrete projects from one or more of the above mentioned areas.

1.2. LEGAL ASPECTS.

The contractual relationship between the new entrepreneur (NE), the host entrepreneur (HE) and the intermediary organisations (IOs) involved consists of two main elements:

- A “**Commitment to Quality**” signed by the four parties (the NE, the HE and the two IOs involved) setting out the conditions for the stay abroad (i.e. work plan, tasks, responsibilities, deliverables, financial conditions, legal implications, etc.);
- An **agreement between the NE and the IO** to which the NE applied (normally in the country of origin of the NE), under which funding can be disbursed to the NE. This agreement specifies the tasks, responsibilities, financial conditions and legal implications of the project within the agreed timetable; annexed to this agreement are the detailed business plan, the work/learning project for the NEs stay abroad, the aims and objectives, activities, outputs, and time-schedules.

The IO to which the NE has applied is responsible for disbursing financial support to the NE according to the terms set out in the agreement. The IO to which the HE submitted his or her offer to host an NE is responsible for facilitating the relationship at the location of the stay abroad.

1.3. SUPPORT.

1.3.1 Intermediary Organisations.

For the pilot project, 102 intermediary organisations (IOs) have been officially appointed to establish contacts between new entrepreneurs (NEs) and host entrepreneur (HEs). These organisations are already involved in promoting entrepreneurship at European, national or sub-national level. **Their main task is to facilitate successful relationships between NEs and HEs and to offer match-making services** (such as promotion, information, induction, validation of applications, arranging contacts, issuing contracts, logistical support, etc.). Every relationship between an NE and an HE needs two IOs (one as the contact IO for the NE and the other as the contact IO for the HE), as the NE and HE must be from different countries. So, it is a good idea for **InnovaWood** members to become an Intermediary Organisation. As InnovaWood is a private

organisation, it is defined by the European commission as an “Action with multiple beneficiaries LOT 1: European partnerships”.

1.3.2 Support Office.

A Support Office established at European level and cooperating closely with the Commission and the IOs ensures consistency in the work done by the IOs and enhances the pan-European dimension of the mobility scheme. This role is performed by EUROCHAMBRES, the European association of Chambers of Commerce and Industry. It is responsible for coordinating all the Intermediary Organisations. For further questions, please contact any of the following:

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2. FURTHER INFORMATION.

For further information, it is necessary to read the call for proposals (programme for being an intermediary organisation), the frequently asked questions and the grant agreement:

- **Call for proposals:**
http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/newsroom/cf/document.cfm?action=display&doc_id=2580&userservice_id=1&request.id=0
- **FAQ's:**
http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/newsroom/cf/document.cfm?action=display&doc_id=2780&userservice_id=1&request.id=0
- **Documents to be downloaded in order to complete your proposal:**
http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/newsroom/cf/itemlongdetail.cfm?item_id=2941&tpa_id=174&lang=en
- **Grant agreement for an action with multiple beneficiaries (Lot 1: European partnerships):**
http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/newsroom/cf/document.cfm?action=display&doc_id=2511&userservice_id=1

3. IS IT STILL POSSIBLE TO BECOME AN INTERMEDIARY ORGANISATION?

The Intermediary Organisations that are currently implementing the Erasmus for Young Entrepreneurs programme have been selected further to a call for proposals launched by the European Commission in June 2008. They have been officially appointed for the duration of the pilot project phase (i.e. 2009 and 2010). **So, the next call will be from 2010.**

It is also possible to watch via streaming a networking meeting organized in the previous call for further information: <http://scic.ec.europa.eu/streaming/ccab2d/>

4. OVERVIEW OF EXCHANGES

Since the launch of the Erasmus for Young Entrepreneurs programme in February 2009 some 100 exchanges between new entrepreneurs and host entrepreneurs have been prepared. The business relationships cover a wide variety of sectors and take place across different EU countries.

Some of the relationships will start in summer 2009. The objectives of those relationships are mainly to learn from each other, explore a promising business idea and start-up a new enterprise.

1) Alvaro O. from Spain goes to Elisiario C. in Portugal

Sector of activity: Leisure, tourism, Duration: 1 month (August 2009)

Alvaro would like to open a windsurfing school in Spain. In order to get to the core of running such a business, he plans to travel to Portugal to a fellow businessman. There, he will learn about the special requirements of running such a business, dealing with clients, managing dangerous situations at sea, etc. In turn, Elisiario would like to create a business relationship that may allow him in the future to expand in Portugal.

More information:

BIC Euronova SA – Centro Europeo de Empresas e Innovación de Málaga, Spain, Ms Sandra García Torres, sandragarcia@bic.es

IPN – Incubadora Associacao para o Devesvolvimento de Actividades de Incubacao de Ideias e Empresas, Portugal, Ms María Teresa Mendes, info@ipn-incubadora.pt

2) Paola Z. from Italy goes to Judita J. in Slovakia

Sector of activity: Consultancy, corporate social responsibility, Duration: 3 months (June 2009 – September 2009)

Paola Z. is interested in Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR). She would like to learn what incentives and support is available at national and European level for SMEs to apply this concept. She intends to develop her capacity to manage operational plans, take part in call for proposals and deal with projects so that she can best advise companies on how to commit to CSR. The host company is interested in extending on the Slovakian market. They would like to extent their services and support to clients concerned with Quality Management and CSR.

More information:

Taliansko Slovenska Obchodna Komora, Slovakia, Mr Alessandro Villa, a.villa@camitslovakia.sk
Institút pre vzdelávanie a regionálny rozvoj, Slovakia, Ms Laura Bettini, laura@ipvarr.sk

3) Kaisu M. from Finland goes to Maria Luisa V. in Italy

Sector of activity: Jewellery design, Duration: 3 months (September 2009 – December 2009)

Kaisu is a Finnish jewellery designer. She is looking for new perspectives in jewellery design; acquire knowledge from a different culture and new contacts. She would like to improve her skills in product design, techniques and methods. Maria Luisa, with her 25-year entrepreneurial experience in designing jewellery, would like to create synergies with an SME in the same sector but in a different culture and to share concepts.

More information:

Mikkelin Seudun elinkeinoyhtio Miset Oy, Finland, Ms. Anitta Sihvonen,
anitta.sihvonen@miset.fi

Alintec S.c.a.r.l., Italy, Ms Natalia Katana, Natalia.katana@alintec.it

4) Merle H. from Estonia goes to Jela S. in Slovakia

Sector of activity: Luxury goods retail, Duration: 3 months (June 2009 – September 2009)

Merle is interested in introducing a luxury brand of Scottish cashmere in Estonia. Since the Estonian market is similar to Slovakia, she sets out to learn from the Slovakian entrepreneur and learn from her experience how to position this brand and how to use various marketing tools. Jela hopes to take advantage of Merle's experience as an international model and to increase awareness of the Scottish brand among the young clientele.

More information:

Taliansko Slovenska Obchodna Komora, Slovakia, Mr Alessandro Villa,
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Institút pre vzdelávanie a regionálny rozvoj, Ms Laura Bettini, laura@ipvarr.sk

5) Giancarlo G. from Italy goes to Markus T. in Germany

Sector of activity: ICT, Duration: 2 months (February 2010 – April 2010)

Giancarlo G would like to learn how to manage a start-up in the ICT sector and would like to get a first-hand experience of the different tasks that a CEO has to deal with. Giancarlo G would like to explore the analogies and differences in their patent applications. From a global perspective, they will be comparing their chosen business models.

More information:

Alintec S.c.a.r.l., Italy, Ms Natalia Katana, Natalia.katana@alintec.it

IHK-Projektgesellschaft mbH, Germany, Ms Monika Koeckeritz, koeckeritz@ihk-projekt.de

6) Yaiza R. from Spain goes to Jesús B. in Belgium

Sector of activity: IT, communication services, Duration: 6 months (June 2009 – December 2009)

Yaiza is an engineer who would like to open her own business in Spain but lacks knowledge and experience to do so. She is interested in services linked to speech recognition and has been in contact with a speech recognition consulting company in Belgium. They found an agreement and will work together for six months to set up a prospective business cooperation between the two countries.

More information:

Cámara Oficial de Comercio, Industria y Navegación de Cantabria, Spain, Ms Marta Garrido, mgarrido@camaracantabria.com

Agentschap Economie, Belgium, Ms Lugart Spaepen, lutgart.spaepen@ewi.vlaanderen.be

7) Ulrike A. from Austria goes to Janet S. in the United Kingdom

Sector of activity: education and training services, Duration: 2 months (July 2009 – August 2009)

Ulrike is an economist and has worked for several years in a company. Some months ago she became self-employed and offers training and consultancy services for managers. She would like to professionalise her company's services and acquire international experience and competencies. Janet has a consultancy firm in the UK that has been in operation for 6 years. It offers services in the field of human resource development. Janet is interested in the development of her company and will help Ulrike to gain know-how about marketing, financial planning and how to conduct trainings and seminars.

More information:

Wirtschaftskammer Österreich, Austria, Ms Semiha Honic, semiha.honic@wko.at

The University Wolverhampton, United Kingdom, Mr Mike Simpson, mike.simpson@wlv.ac.uk

8) Romain V. from France goes to Marco B. in Italy

Sector of activity: ICT services in the field of security, environment and natural hazards, Duration: 6 months (September 2009 – March 2010)

Romain has a business degree and would like to start up an innovative ICT company in France, specialised in environment monitoring which is a growing sector offering great opportunities. Marco is an Italian entrepreneur who has a company with 13 employees active in the field of wild fire detection using innovative ICT solutions. Marco would like to expand his business in Europe. He is eager to cooperate with Romain which will help him to build a future partnership in order to distribute his company's services abroad. Romain will also profit from this cooperation since he will learn from Marco how to run an enterprise, how to find new clients and sell the products. It is a win-win situation for both and Romain and Marco might decide to continue the cooperation after the exchange.

More information:

CICOM Centre International de Communication et d'Operations Multimedia s.a.r.l, France, Mr. François Courty, courty@cicom.fr

Alintec S.c.a.r.l., Italy, Ms Natalia Katana, Natalia.katana@alintec.it

9) Luca P. from Italy goes to Francine H. in Spain

Sector of activity: Health and beauty services, Duration: 2 months (June 2009 – September 2009)

Luca is a young medical doctor from Italy who has been practicing for 2 years. He has the idea to develop a better healthcare environment which is a kind of fusion of pharmacy, hospital and spa, oriented to people with more difficulty in obtaining a good health care service, such as e.g. older citizens. Francine is an experience business woman who runs an aesthetic centre in Spain with 8 employees. She would like to share her experience with a new entrepreneur and help him to start up his new business.

More information:

Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Terrassa, Ms. Anna Pajarón, apajaron@cambraterrassa.es

Alintec S.c.a.r.l., Italy, Ms Natalia Katana, Natalia.katana@alintec.it

10) Patricia T. from Luxembourg goes to Daniela B. in Germany

Sector of activity: piercing and tattoo, Duration: 6 months (June 2009 – December 2009)

Patricia wants to start a piercing-tattoo and jewellery shop that offers products to people from 16 to 40 and piercing and tattoos to everyone. She is ready to buy an already existing shop. Her idea is to focus on extravagant jewellery for which demand is high and she would like to offer extended opening hours of her future shop. Daniela from Germany is the owner of a tattoo and piercing shop for more than 10 years. She would like to open a new shop in another city and is looking for a young entrepreneur who will run the existing shop that already exists. She is convinced that the old and the new shop will have better chances on the market and she is ready to share her experience and give a young entrepreneur the chance to build his/her own career.

More information:

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