



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
Directorate-General for Education and Culture
Education

ERASMUS MUNDUS

**The Community Action programme for the enhancement of quality in higher education
and the promotion of intercultural understanding through co-operation with third
countries**

CALL FOR PROPOSALS (EAC/22/04)

**for the implementation of Action 1, Action 2 and Action 3 of the Erasmus Mundus
programme in the academic year 2005/2006**

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1. CONTEXT

The decision establishing the Erasmus Mundus programme was adopted by the European Parliament and Council on 5 December 2003 (Decision No 2317/2003/EC).¹ The programme covers the 2004 - 2008 period and has a budget (EU 25) of € 230 million.

The programme provides a response to the challenges of globalisation faced by European higher education today, in particular the need to adapt education systems to the demands of the knowledge society, to enhance the attractiveness and visibility of European higher education world-wide and to stimulate the process of convergence of degree structures across Europe. These themes are central to national reform processes in higher education going on in Member States.

In the original proposal for the Erasmus Mundus programme, the Commission opened up the possibility of directing students participating in various regional cooperation programmes towards the Erasmus Mundus programme. Against this background and within the context of co-operation between the European Union and Asia (with the exception of Japan and Korea), the Commission intends to adopt financing decisions which would allow for an increased participation of Asian nationals in the Erasmus Mundus programme. These funds would be added to the Erasmus Mundus budget and would be spent from the year 2005 onwards. If and when these financing decisions are taken, the Commission will inform the public via its website at the address indicated under point 15 about the concrete implementation modalities for these additional funds.

2. PROGRAMME OBJECTIVES

The Erasmus Mundus programme's overall aim is to enhance the quality of European higher education by fostering co-operation with third countries in order to improve the development of human resources and to promote dialogue and understanding between peoples and cultures.

The programme's specific objectives are:

- to promote a quality offer in higher education with a distinct European added value, attractive both within the European Union and beyond its borders;
- to encourage and enable highly qualified graduates and scholars from all over the world to obtain qualifications and/or experience in the European Union;
- to develop more structured co-operation between European Union and third-country institutions and greater European Union outgoing mobility as part of European study programmes;
- to improve accessibility and enhance the profile and visibility of higher education in the European Union.

3. SUMMARY DESCRIPTION OF THE PROGRAMME ACTIONS

The programme comprises four Actions.

¹ OJ L 345, 31.12.2003, p. 1.

Action 1 - Erasmus Mundus Masters Courses:² The Commission will support top-quality Masters Courses of between one and two years offered by a group of higher education institutions (called the “consortium”), which consists of a minimum of three higher education institutions coming from three different Member States or EEA-EFTA states. Masters Courses must exist at the time of application, i.e. they must be ready to run in the academic year the consortia are applying for.³ They are selected for a period of five years and therefore will not change significantly (other than up-dating and adaptation to experience) during that period. Apart from the participation of European graduate students, selected Masters Courses will be open to the participation of third-country graduate students and scholars (see Action 2), involve mobility between the institutions of the consortium and will lead to the award of a recognised double, multiple or joint degree. Neither undergraduate nor doctoral studies, but only studies leading to a master degree are eligible for Erasmus Mundus Masters Courses.

Action 2 - Scholarships: The Commission will grant scholarships to highly qualified third-country graduate students and scholars – to students to follow a selected Erasmus Mundus Masters Course, to scholars to carry out teaching and research assignments and scholarly work in the institutions participating in the Course. Students and scholars must apply to Erasmus Mundus Masters consortia. If they are accepted to participate in the Masters Courses, Erasmus Mundus consortia apply to the Commission for scholarship funds. Scholarships are paid through the Erasmus Mundus Masters consortia.

Action 3 - Partnerships: The Commission will support Partnerships between Erasmus Mundus Masters consortia and third-country higher education institutions with a view to allowing EU-resident participants in the Erasmus Mundus Masters Courses (both graduate students and scholars), to spend a short period of time at the third-country partner universities as part of the Masters Course.

Action 4 – Enhancing attractiveness: The Commission will support European co-operation projects which aim at improving the brand image, visibility and accessibility of European higher education; or which deal with the international dimension of quality assurance, of credit recognition, of mutual recognition of qualifications with third countries, of curriculum development or of mobility.

The present call for proposals refers to the implementation of Actions 1, 2 and 3 in the academic year 2005/2006. The implementation of Action 4 in the year 2005/2006 will be covered by the following Erasmus Mundus call for proposals to be published in March 2005.

4. PARTICIPATING AND THIRD COUNTRIES

In 2005, institutions and individuals coming from the following countries can participate in the programme:

- Action 1: higher education institutions in the 25 current and new EU Member States⁴ and the countries of the European Economic Area / European Free Trade Association (Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway);

² Article 2 of the programme Decision defines Masters Courses as “graduate or postgraduate studies which are courses of higher education study that follow a first degree lasting a minimum of three years and lead to a second or further degree”.

³ Special conditions apply to preparatory years. For details please refer to point 6.1.

⁴ In the unlikely event of one or several of the 10 new Member States not joining the Union on 1 May 2004, institutions coming from the country(ies) concerned would not be eligible for Action 1 of the Erasmus Mundus programme.

- Action 2: individuals from third countries, i.e. any country other than the 25 current and new EU Member States, the countries of the European Economic Area / European Free Trade Association (Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway) and the candidate countries for accession to the EU (Bulgaria, Romania, and Turkey);
- Action 3: higher education institutions from all countries of the world.

As regards institutions from the countries of the European Economic Area / European Free Trade Association (Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway), they will be able to participate under the present call for proposals for Action 1 only if the official participation of these countries in the programme has been formalised through the relevant instruments governing the relations between the European Community and those countries before the selection decision is taken (January 2005). Otherwise, institutions coming from those countries are not eligible for Action 1 under the present call for proposals.

In principle, the Erasmus Mundus programme is open to the participation of the candidate countries for accession to the EU (Bulgaria, Romania, and Turkey). However, as the official participation of these countries in the programme has not yet been formalised through the relevant instruments governing the relations between the European Community and those countries, institutions coming from those countries are not eligible for Action 1 under the present call for proposals.

5. POTENTIAL BENEFICIARIES AND MINIMUM PROJECT PARTNERSHIP

The following beneficiaries and project partnerships are eligible under the Actions covered by this call for proposals:

Action 1- Erasmus Mundus Masters Courses:

- Eligible beneficiaries: higher education institutions recognised as such and as able to offer recognised Masters Courses in one of the 25 Members States of the European Union or one of the EEA-EFTA states. Article 2 of the programme Decision defines “higher education institution” as follows:

“Higher education institution means any institution which according to national legislation or practice offers qualifications or degrees at that level, whatever such establishments may be called”;

- Minimum project partnership: three higher education institutions coming from three different eligible countries constitute the minimum “consortium”. In cases where the consortium includes higher education institutions from an EEA-EFTA state, at least two of the participating institutions must be located in Member States. Candidates are invited to note that if the minimum consortium involves an institution from an EEA-EFTA state and if that country has not officially joined the programme by January 2005, the application would become ineligible.

Action 2 – Scholarships:

- Eligible beneficiaries: third-country graduate students and third-country scholars. Article 2 of the programme Decision defines “third-country graduate student” and “third-country scholar” as follows:

“Third-country graduate student means a national of a third country other than those from EEA-EFTA States and candidate countries for accession to the European Union; who has already obtained a first higher education degree; who is not a resident of any of the

Member States or the participating countries as provided for in Article 11; who has not carried out his or her main activity (studies, work, etc.) for more than a total of 12 months over the last five years in any of the Member States or the participating countries; and who has been accepted to register or is registered in an Erasmus Mundus Masters Course as described in the Annex.”

“Third-country scholar means a national of a third country other than those from EEA- EFTA States and candidate countries for accession to the European Union; who is not a resident of any of the Member States or the participating countries as provided for in Article 11; who has not carried out his or her main activity (studies, work, etc.) for more than a total of 12 months over the last five years in any of the Member States or the participating countries; and who has outstanding academic and/or professional experience.”

Action 3 - Partnerships:

– Eligible beneficiaries:

For Partnerships: Erasmus Mundus Masters consortia selected under Action 1 under the previous call for proposals referring to the academic year 2004/2005 (including those selected for a preparatory year), Erasmus Mundus Masters consortia selected under Action 1 under the present call for proposals referring to the academic year 2005/2006 (excluding those selected for a preparatory year) and third-country higher education institutions;

For outgoing mobility grants: European students and scholars participating in the Erasmus Mundus Masters Courses which have established Partnerships with third-country higher education institutions. The annex to the Decision defines eligible students and scholars as follows:

“Eligible students and scholars must be citizens of the European Union or third-country nationals who had been legal residents in the European Union of at least three years (and for purposes other than study) before the start of the outgoing mobility.”

– Minimum project partnership: Partnerships must be established with at least one third-country higher education institution.

6. ACTION 1 - ERASMUS MUNDUS MASTERS COURSES

This Action is addressed to consortia of higher education institutions proposing to submit a Masters Course for selection. Masters Courses will be selected for a five-year period subject to the renewal of the programme in 2008. The first year may be a preparatory year.

The present call for proposals is open to Masters Courses operating in all fields of study. Against the experience gathered during the first years of implementing the programme, the Commission may envisage identifying yearly priority themes during the last years of the programme, in order to ensure a balanced representation of different fields of study over the duration of the programme.

Erasmus Mundus Masters consortia shall design their applications for Erasmus Mundus Masters Courses with due regard to the following provisions:

6.1. Integrated study programme

Applying consortia must be able to offer an integrated study programme of high quality as from the academic year 2005/2006 onwards. An integrated study programme must already exist at the time of application, i.e. it must be ready to run in the academic year the consortium is applying for.

An integrated study programme must already exist, even if the applicant asks for a year's preparatory activities. A year of preparatory activities serves the purpose of preparing the Erasmus Mundus Masters consortium to receive and host third-country students and scholars (e.g. publicising the Masters Course world-wide, identifying and adjusting premises, etc.) and of enhancing certain co-operation aspects (e.g. identification and appointment of staff, testing internal mobility mechanisms, etc.). The consortium may decide to run the Erasmus Mundus Masters Course with the participation of European students during the preparatory year.

An Erasmus Mundus Masters Course carries between a minimum of 60 and up to 120 ECTS (European Credit Transfer System) credits at master level, thus lasting from one to two academic years.

An integrated study programme has the following features:

- Joint criteria for admission and examination: students must be able to apply to a single Course with common standards for admission, a common application procedure and a joint student selection process in accordance with national legislations. Examinations passed at one institution of the Erasmus Mundus Masters consortium are recognised fully and automatically by the other institutions of the consortium;
- Course integration: delivery of a jointly developed curriculum or full recognition by the Erasmus Mundus Masters consortium of courses which are developed and delivered separately, but make up a common standard Masters Course;
- Mobility: students must carry out a period of study in at least two of the three participating institutions. The sequence of study periods spent in the various hosting institutions and the various possible mobility combinations⁵ must be known at the time of application for the Masters Course and made known to potential students in advance. In cases where the consortium includes institutions from EEA-EFTA states, at least one of the hosting institutions must be located in a Member State. The length of the study period in each of the participating institutions is not prescribed; it is rather determined by the need to ensure that students are granted a joint or a double or a multiple degree (see below) and the need to ensure an integrated approach. However, the Erasmus Mundus Masters Course must, in principle, foresee that at least 30% of the ECTS credits be acquired in each hosting institution. All three higher education institutions involved in the minimum consortium must be in the position to be a hosting institution, i.e. to offer in principle at least 30% of the credits necessary for course completion;
- Guaranteed award of a joint, or a double or a multiple degree after successful conclusion of the Erasmus Mundus Masters Course:⁶ a clear definition of the nature and the form of the final degree(s) delivered is required. The possibility to deliver a double degree is a

⁵ In a minimum consortia of three partners (A, B, C), mobility combinations would normally be A+B, A+C, B+C and A+B+C.

⁶ A double or multiple degree is defined as two or more national diplomas issued officially by two or more institutions involved in an integrated study programme. A joint degree is defined as a single diploma issued by at least two of the institutions offering an integrated study programme.

minimal requirement. This condition must be fulfilled at the time of application for the Erasmus Mundus Masters Course;⁷

- Recognition: Applying consortia must prove that the participating countries concerned recognise the degrees delivered at the end of the Masters Course. To fulfil this condition the appropriate arrangements must exist at national level.

6.2. Participation in the scholarship scheme

Erasmus Mundus Masters Courses will of course be open to European students, but applicants will have to reserve a specific number of study places for third-country students, commit themselves to fully participate in the Erasmus Mundus scholarship scheme (Action 2), demonstrate their capacity to implement it and respect its rules.

Erasmus Mundus Masters consortia should publicise the Erasmus Mundus Masters Course world-wide and create an application system for admission and scholarships. The Commission will also publish the list of selected Erasmus Mundus Masters Courses on the Commission's Europa website at the address mentioned under point 15. Each Erasmus Mundus Masters consortium must establish transparent application and admission conditions as well as transparent selection procedures for third-country students / scholars in accordance with national legislations. They must be explained and communicated to the Commission as part of the application under Action 1 and they will be explained in detail in the application system for scholarships. For more details, see point 7 below.

Applicants should also note that Erasmus Mundus Masters Courses are selected for five years. This implies that selected Erasmus Mundus Masters consortia commit themselves to maintaining the Course substantially in the form approved over that period (subject, of course, to up-dating and to adaptation to need); and to hosting third-country students and scholars for five academic years running. As for the implementation timetable of the Erasmus Mundus scholarship scheme over the five-year period, please refer to point 14.

6.3. Linguistic aspects

Study periods must provide students with the possibility of using at least two European languages spoken in the Member States where the institutions participating in the Erasmus Mundus Masters Courses are located. However, the use of at least two languages does not imply the use of two different languages of instruction. Also, there is no obligation that the institutions use the national language as the language of instruction.

Institutions should have a clear language policy to promote a national language. This could include language training or other induction courses (e.g. "survival language", cultural induction), regardless of the language of instruction.

6.4. Facilities

Erasmus Mundus Masters consortia must be able to welcome and host third-country students / scholars by providing high-quality hosting facilities and services, such as an "international office" with adequate opening hours and linguistic coverage, housing facilities,

⁷ As an exception to this rule and for the purpose of the calls for proposals to be published in 2004 only, a consortium must be in a position to guarantee the awarding of a joint, or a double or a multiple degree at the time of selecting the Masters Courses at the latest. In other words, if a consortium cannot guarantee the awarding of a joint, or a double or a multiple degree at application stage, it has to add a declaration that it will be able to do so at the time of selection (January 2005). This declaration will be checked against its truthfulness before taking a selection decision. In case of non-fulfilment of this criterion the application will be rejected.

coaching, language courses, activities aiming at social integration, assistance with visas and social insurance, etc.

7. ACTION 2 – SCHOLARSHIPS

This Action is addressed to third-country graduate students / scholars who apply to and are accepted by selected Erasmus Mundus Masters Courses, regardless of the year of selection of the Masters Courses (unless Masters Courses are in their preparatory year). Students apply to follow the Course, scholars to carry out teaching and research assignments and scholarly work in the institutions participating in the Course.

This call for proposals refers to the award of scholarships for the academic year 2005/2006.

The Action is implemented through a two-step procedure:

- Firstly, applicants apply to the Erasmus Mundus Masters Courses and Erasmus Mundus Masters consortia select them. Applicants can apply to any of the Masters Courses selected under the Erasmus Mundus programme, regardless of the year of selection of the Masters Course. For details on the application process see point 9.2.
- Secondly, on the basis of this selection, Erasmus Mundus Masters consortia apply to the Commission for scholarships for the selected persons by proposing a list of potential grantees, including a reserve list which contains the same number of students / scholars as proposed for selection. The Commission will agree to the award of a specific number of scholarships; these are then paid to the individual grantees through the Masters consortia. For further details on the application process see point 9.2.

These two steps will be repeated each year throughout the five-year period for which an Erasmus Mundus Masters Course has been selected.⁸ Details on how to apply for the scholarships in the coming years will be communicated in future calls for proposals.

Applications addressed to the Commission by the Erasmus Mundus Masters consortia shall be in accordance with the following principles:

7.1. Number of third-country students / scholars

In 2005, an Erasmus Mundus Masters consortium (regardless of its year of selection) must reserve 19 places for third-country students and 4 places for third-country scholars who will be granted a scholarship for the academic year 2005/2006. In the subsequent years for which an Erasmus Mundus Masters Course has been selected consortia will have to reserve a minimum of 20 places for third-country students and 4 to 5 places for third-country scholars every year.

If a new applicant consortium applies for a preparatory year in 2005/2006, third-country students / scholars will not be funded before the academic year 2006/2007.

7.2. Geographical balance

Without prejudice to the respect of high academic standards, in order to ensure a geographical balance across third-country students / scholars, Erasmus Mundus Masters

⁸ If an Erasmus Mundus Masters consortium is selected for a preparatory year, these steps repeat each other from the second year onwards, i.e. only four times.

consortia shall respect the following basic criteria when selecting third-country students / scholars:

- no more than 25% of the selected third-country students should come from the same country. Each selected third-country scholar should come from a different country (but they can come from the same countries as students);
- no more than 10% of the selected third-country students should come from the same institution (20% where a Partnership under Action 3 has been established).

If consortia want to diverge from these criteria, special permission to do so must be obtained from the Commission. If the financing decisions for Asian countries (referred to under point 1 above) are taken, the Commission will inform applicants via its website on relevant implementation modalities.

Higher education institutions forming an Erasmus Mundus Masters Course consortium may already participate in wider networks involving third-country higher education institutions. In such a case, the consortium is invited to select students / scholars from beyond such established networks.

8. ACTION 3 – PARTNERSHIPS

This Action is addressed to selected Erasmus Mundus Masters consortia which are invited to establish a Partnership with at least one third-country higher education institution. The Partnership will start with the academic year 2005/2006.

Erasmus Mundus Masters consortia should design their applications for Erasmus Mundus Partnerships with due regard to the following provisions:

- Partnerships must provide a framework for outgoing mobility for graduate students and scholars who respect the definition given in the Annex to the programme Decision and quoted under point 5 above and who participate in the Erasmus Mundus Masters Courses. Mobility grants serve the purpose of spending a short period of time at the third-country partner university/ies as part of the Masters Course. Every year, a minimum of 5 students per EU institution involved in an Erasmus Mundus Masters consortium and 3 scholars per Masters consortium should be sent out;
- Recognition of study periods at the host institution (i.e. non-European institution) must be guaranteed by the Erasmus Mundus Masters consortia;
- Partnership activities may also include teaching assignments at a partner institution, teachers' exchanges, development and dissemination of new methodologies in higher education (including the use of information and communication technologies, e-learning and open and distance learning), development of cooperation schemes with third-country higher education institutions, etc.

9. APPLICATION PROCEDURES AND DEADLINES

9.1. Action 1

Higher education institutions are invited to submit proposals for Erasmus Mundus Masters Courses as described under point 6. Applications may include a first year of preparatory activities.

There will be one co-ordinating institution which submits the application on behalf of the whole Erasmus Mundus Masters Course consortium. The co-ordinator will be the Commission's contact point and contract partner for the Masters consortium in question; it will speak and report for the consortium.

Proposals must be submitted to the Commission to the address indicated in the application form and copied to the national structures of the higher education institutions involved in the proposed consortium

by 31 October 2004 (date of postmark)

using the application form provided by the Commission (see annex A). All instructions on the application form must be followed.

9.2. Action 2

This call for proposals refers to the award of scholarships for third-country graduate students and scholars for the academic year 2005/2006.

As mentioned under point 7, this Action runs through the following two-step application procedure:

9.2.1. Applications by third-country students / scholars to Erasmus Mundus Masters consortia

Third-country graduate students and scholars are invited to apply for a scholarship to a selected Erasmus Mundus Masters consortium, regardless of the year of selection of the Masters Course (unless the Course is in its year of preparatory activities). The list of the Erasmus Mundus Masters Courses selected under the previous call for proposals will be known in September 2004; those selected under the present call for proposals in early January 2005. The complete list will be available from the Europa website at the address mentioned under point 15.

Applicants must submit their applications

by the deadline fixed by the Erasmus Mundus Masters consortium

they are applying to using the application system provided for by the Masters Course in question and by following all relevant instructions given in the application system. By fixing this deadline, Erasmus Mundus Masters consortia must bear in mind that they will have to send their selection proposals to the Commission by 31 March 2005 (see point 9.2.2. below).

Erasmus Mundus Masters consortia carry out a selection on the basis of applications received by using a transparent selection system.

9.2.2. Funding applications by Erasmus Mundus Masters consortia to Commission

On the basis of the selection referred to under point 9.2.1 above and respecting the principles outlined under point 7, Erasmus Mundus Masters consortia apply to the Commission for the corresponding scholarship funds by submitting a list of potential grantees, including a reserve list. All Masters consortia, regardless of their year of selection (unless they are in their year of preparatory activities) are therefore invited to submit a list of 19 third-country students and 4 third-country scholars proposed to receive a scholarship under Action 2, including a reserve list of 19 students and 4 scholars

by 31 March 2005 (date of postmark)

using the application form provided by the Commission (see annex A). All instructions on the application form must be followed. A copy of the application must be sent to the national structures of the higher education institutions involved in the consortium.

9.3. Action 3

Erasmus Mundus Masters consortia (including those in their preparatory year) are invited to submit proposals for Partnerships as described under point 8. Proposals will contain a description of the proposed Partnership as well as the number of students and scholars proposed for the outgoing mobility.

The co-ordinating institution of the Erasmus Mundus Masters consortium submits the application on behalf of the whole consortium. The co-ordinator will be the Commission's contact point and contract partner for the Partnership in question; it will speak and report for the consortium.

Proposals must be submitted to the Commission to the address indicated in the application form and copied to the national structures of the higher education institutions involved in the applying consortium

by 31 March 2005 (date of postmark)

using the application form provided by the Commission (see annex A). All instructions on the application form must be followed.

10. SELECTION AND AWARD PROCEDURES

10.1. Summary of procedures

10.1.1. Action 1

- (1) Registration of proposals by the Commission;
- (2) Check for eligibility and selection criteria (see eligibility and selection criteria under point 10.2.1.) carried out by the Commission;
- (3) Assessment of proposals (see award criteria under point 10.3.1.) carried out by high-level international academic experts covering the appropriate disciplines and having experience in international co-operation projects in the field of higher education;
- (4) In parallel to step 3, consultation of national structures;
- (5) Meeting of the Selection Board to recommend proposals for selection;
- (6) Adoption of a draft selection proposal by the Commission taking into account the opinions issued during steps 3, 4 and 5 above;
- (7) Submission of the draft selection proposal to the programme Committee for official opinion;
- (8) Submission of the draft selection proposal to the European Parliament for its right of inspection;

- (9) Adoption of the selection proposal by the Commission;
- (10) Information to applicants on the selection decision taken by the Commission. A summary of the experts' assessments will be provided to applicants.

10.1.2. Action 2

- (1) Registration of applications for third-country students and scholars by the co-ordinating institution of the Erasmus Mundus Masters consortium;
- (2) Check for eligibility and selection criteria (see eligibility and selection criteria under point 10.2.2.1.) carried out by the Erasmus Mundus Masters Course consortium;
- (3) Selection of applications (see award criteria under point 10.3.2.1.) carried out by the Erasmus Mundus Masters consortium;
- (4) Submission of an application for scholarship funds to the Commission by the Erasmus Mundus Masters consortium by presenting the draft selection proposal;
- (5) Approval of the application for scholarship funds and the draft selection proposal by the Commission (see eligibility and selection criteria under point 10.2.2.2. and award criteria under point 10.3.2.2.)
- (6) In parallel to step 5, consultation of national structures;
- (7) Submission of the draft selection proposal to the programme Committee for consultation;
- (8) Adoption of the selection proposal by the Commission;
- (9) Information to the Erasmus Mundus Masters consortia on the selection decision taken by the Commission; and information to students and scholars by the Erasmus Mundus Masters consortia.

10.1.3. Action 3

- (1) Registration of proposals by the Commission;
- (2) Check for eligibility and selection criteria (see eligibility and selection criteria under point 10.2.3.) carried out by the Commission;
- (3) Assessment of proposals (see award criteria under point 10.3.3.) carried out by international academic experts covering the appropriate academic disciplines and having experience in international co-operation projects in the field of higher education;
- (4) In parallel to step 3, consultation of national structures;
- (5) Meeting of the Selection Board to recommend proposals for selection;
- (6) Adoption of a draft selection proposal by the Commission taking into account the opinions issued during steps 3, 4 and 5 above;
- (7) Submission of the draft selection proposal to the programme Committee for consultation;

- (8) Adoption of the selection proposal by the Commission;
- (9) Information to applicants on the selection decision taken by the Commission. A summary of the experts' assessments will be provided to applicants.

10.2. Eligibility and selection criteria

10.2.1. Action 1

- Applicants must not be in one of the situations listed as exclusion criteria under point 11;
- Applicants must declare on their honour that they have the operational and financial capacity to complete the proposed project;
- Applicants and partners must be higher education institutions recognised as such by the participating countries where they are located. The Commission will deem a higher education institution as recognised if it has been awarded an Erasmus University Charter under the Socrates programme. If an applicant or a partner has not been awarded an Erasmus University Charter, the Commission will check with the national structure concerned whether the institution in question corresponds to the definition of higher education institution given in article 2 of the programme Decision;
- The minimum consortium must consist of three higher education institutions from three different eligible countries;
- Higher education institutions must be located in one of the countries eligible for Action 1. In cases where the minimum consortium includes higher education institutions from an EEA-EFTA state, at least two of the participating institutions must be located in Member States;
- The submission deadline and all other formal eligibility criteria as explained in the application form in Annex A must be respected.

10.2.2. Action 2

10.2.2.1. Applications by third-country students / scholars to Erasmus Mundus Masters consortia

- Only third-country graduate students and scholars who have applied to and have been accepted by an Erasmus Mundus Masters Course are eligible for a scholarship;
- All countries of the world - with the exception of the Member States, the EEA-EFTA states and the candidate countries for accession to the EU (Bulgaria, Romania and Turkey) - are considered third countries for the purpose of the present call for proposals;
- Third-country students and applicants must use the application system provided by the Erasmus Mundus Masters consortia and respect the specific application, admission and selection criteria established by each consortium;
- Erasmus Mundus Masters consortia must ensure that third-country students / scholars meet the definition established in article 2 of the programme Decision. Non-compliance with this definition may lead to the cancellation of the scholarship granted to a student / scholar. However, students may be admitted conditionally to Erasmus Mundus Masters Courses, and selected conditionally for scholarships, on the basis that the scholarship grants only become effective when the students fulfil all the eligibility criteria.

10.2.2.2. Funding applications by Erasmus Mundus Masters consortia to Commission

The criteria mentioned under Action 1 (see point 10.2.1.) apply.

10.2.3. Action 3

- Applicants must not be in one of the situations listed as exclusion criteria under point 11;
- Applicants must declare on their honour that they have the operational and financial capacity to complete the proposed project;
- Only selected Erasmus Mundus Masters consortia can apply for a Partnership;
- If a Partnership is established with more than one third-country higher education institution, each of them must be located in a different country;
- Partnership grants will not exceed three years. They are, however, renewable.
- The submission deadline and all other formal eligibility criteria as explained in the application form in Annex A must be respected.

10.3. Award criteria

10.3.1. Action 1

The selection of Erasmus Mundus Masters Courses will be a competitive process based on the assessment of the quality of content and of co-operation of the proposed Masters Courses, against the background of the description of the Action under point 6.

High-level international academic experts covering the disciplines in question and with experience in European co-operation projects in the field of higher education will assess the proposals.

As regards the quality of the content of the Masters Course, the assessment will include the following elements:

- the academic quality of the integrated study programme compared with courses that already exist in the same field at national and international level;
- the extent to which the Masters Course has a distinctive European added value;
- the quality of the learning outcomes and the acquired competencies;
- the extent to which quality and ECTS mechanisms (including the “grading scale”) or other built-in mechanisms for the recognition of study periods based on, or compatible with the ECTS are assured (by e.g. the institutions themselves or by national, international or professional bodies);
- whether or not the Diploma Supplement is used in order to improve international transparency and to facilitate the academic and professional recognition of qualifications;
- the extent to which appropriate internal evaluation and quality assessment mechanisms are in place (e.g. student feed-back systems, etc.);

- the extent to which the Masters Course is linked to research activities in the field (where appropriate) or to recognised professional standards in other courses.

As regards the quality of co-operation, the following issues will be examined:

- How sound are the co-operation mechanisms established within the Masters consortium (degree of institutionalisation, regular meetings, clearly defined and active role of all partners, established feed-back system, etc.)?
- How adequately are content-related and administrative aspects of the Masters Course staffed and funded?
- To which extent is the Masters Course truly integrated and fully recognised?
- How adequately structured is the Masters Course and in particular how adequate are the mechanisms for students' / scholars' mobility between hosting institutions?
- How developed are mechanisms to reach out to potentially interested third-country students / scholars?
- How adequate are the provisions to deliver the scholarship scheme, in particular, the common standards for joint application, selection and admission procedures, the distribution of scholarships between institutions and the financial management of scholarships?
- How developed are services provided to host third-country students / scholars (existence of an "international office" with adequate opening hours and linguistic coverage, housing facilities, coaching, language courses, activities aiming at social integration, assistance with visas and social insurance)?
- How well are the linguistic aspects of mobility developed (e.g. training facilities, mentorship, etc.)? Is there a clear language policy in place?

10.3.2. Action 2

10.3.2.1. Applications by third-country students / scholars to Erasmus Mundus Masters consortia⁹

The selection of grantees will be a competitive process based on the academic performance and credentials of the applicants.

The Erasmus Mundus consortia will select high-quality students / scholars only. Each Masters consortium will select an appropriate way of checking the academic quality of applicants (for students e.g.: study records, exam results, letters of recommendation, cross-checking with home universities; for scholars e.g.: publication records, research activities, etc.).

⁹ These award criteria only refer to the selection of third-country students who will receive a scholarship from the Commission. As European students who want to follow Erasmus Mundus Masters Courses do not receive a scholarship from the Erasmus Mundus programme, the Commission does not prescribe any admission or award criteria for them; they will be defined by each Erasmus Mundus Masters consortium.

10.3.2.2. Funding applications by Erasmus Mundus Masters consortia to Commission

The Commission will accept the application for scholarship funds and the draft selection proposal for third-country scholarships on the condition that:

- The principles of the Action described under point 7 have been respected;
- A certain geographical balance is respected across all Erasmus Mundus Masters Courses over the medium term;
- No student / scholar has been selected by more than one Erasmus Mundus Masters consortium.

10.3.3. Action 3

The selection of Partnerships will be a competitive process based on the assessment of the quality of co-operation and of content of the proposed Partnerships, against the background of the description of the Action under point 8 above.

International academic experts covering the disciplines in question and with experience in European co-operation projects in the field of higher education will assess the proposals.

The following issues will be examined:

- How sound are the co-operation mechanisms established within the Partnership (mechanisms for students' mobility, regular meetings, established feed-back system, etc.)?
- How is the recognition of study periods guaranteed?
- How consistent, open and transparent are the mechanisms for the selection of out-going EU students and scholars?
- How developed are services provided to host EU students by third-country partner institutions?
- Does the Partnership foresee the exchanges of teachers, trainers, administrators, and other relevant specialists, possibly supporting the project's curriculum development?
- How well are the linguistic aspects of mobility developed?
- Are the learning outcomes and the acquired competencies at the third-country institution of high quality?
- Are development and dissemination of new methodologies in higher education, including the use of ICTs, e-learning and open and distance learning included in the Partnership?
- Is the Partnership linked to research activities in the field?

11. EXCLUSION CRITERIA

According to the Financial Regulation applicable to all Community spending, applicants are subject to the following exclusion criteria. Therefore, when submitting an application candidates shall declare on their honour that

- they are not bankrupt or being wound up, are not having their affairs administered by the courts, have not entered into an arrangement with creditors, have not suspended business activities, are not subject of proceedings concerning those matters, and are not in any analogous situation arising from a similar procedure provided for under national legislation or regulations;
- they have not been guilty of grave professional misconduct proven by any means which the contracting authority can justify;
- they have not been convicted of an offence concerning their professional conduct by a judgement which has the force of *res judicata*;
- they have not been subject of a judgement which has the force of *res judicata* for fraud, corruption, involvement in a criminal organisation or any other illegal activity detrimental to the Communities' financial interests;
- following a procurement procedure or another grant award procedure financed by the Community budget, they have not been declared to be in serious breach of contract for failure to comply with their contractual obligations;
- they have fulfilled obligations relating to the payment of social security contributions or the payment of taxes in accordance with the legal provisions of the country in which they are established or with those of the country of the contracting authority or those of the country where the contract is to be performed.

Applicants who are found guilty of false declarations may receive financial penalties in proportion to the value of the grants in question.

12. AVAILABLE BUDGET

The budget available for the present call for proposals amounts to EUR 23.4 million (EU 25):

- EUR 0.7 million for Action 1 which allow for the selection of about 15 new one or two-year Courses, 5 new Courses for a preparatory year and the prolongation of the Courses selected under the previous call for proposals;
- EUR 18.2 million for Action 2 which allow for the award of about 530 student grants and 110 scholar grants;
- EUR 4.5 million for Action 3 which allow for the selection of about 15 Partnerships as well as the award of about 680 student grants and 140 scholar grants.

All of these figures are indicative. Shifts between the various Actions are possible. Furthermore, the Commission reserves the possibility not to attribute all available funds.

13. ADMINISTRATIVE AND FINANCIAL PROVISIONS

13.1. General Rules

13.1.1. Applications

Applications shall be made on the application forms which are available in annex A and from the electronic addresses listed under point 15.

Where the applicant is an institution / organisation, the application shall show that the applicant exists as a legal person by specifying its legal status.

Where the applicant is a private institution / organisation, the application shall show that the applicant has the financial, operational and professional capacity to complete the proposed project. For that purpose the Commission shall request a declaration on the honour which is to be filed with the application.

The profit and loss account, the balance sheet for the last financial year for which the accounts have been closed and CVs of persons involved in the project may be requested by the Commission at any moment in the selection procedure.

Only projects which respect all eligibility and selection criteria listed under point 10.2. above will be considered. Projects will be selected on the basis of the budget available and the relative quality of proposals submitted. Applications from individuals to the Commission are not acceptable.

13.1.2. Grants and grant agreements

Each project may give rise to the award of only one grant to any one beneficiary. The award of grants shall be subject to the principle of transparency and equal treatment. With the exception of scholarships for individuals, the grant may not have the purpose or effect of producing a profit for the beneficiary. Grants may not be cumulative or awarded retrospectively.

If the Commission approves a proposal, a grant agreement in Euro setting out the conditions and the level of funding will be signed by the Commission and the beneficiary. Beneficiaries who have been found to have seriously failed to meet their contractual obligations may have their agreements cancelled and/or receive financial penalties.

13.1.3. Payments

The grant amount can be paid through pre-financing, interim payments and balance payments. If, under exceptional circumstances, the Commission pre-finances more than 80% of the project, it will require the beneficiary to lodge a bank guarantee in advance, unless the beneficiary is a public-sector body or the Commission has concluded a framework partnership agreement with the beneficiary.

If the total of pre-financing and interim payments exceeds EUR 750,000 per financial year and per agreement or if a balance payment exceeds EUR 150,000, an external audit report will be requested from the beneficiary, unless the beneficiary is a public-sector body.

Interim payments and payments of the balance are subject to receipt and approval of interim reports and final reports including a financial statement. Payment shall be made upon proof that the relevant project has been carried out in accordance with the provisions of the grant agreement.

13.1.4. Ex-post publicity

Except in the case of grants allocated to individuals, the Commission will publish the names and addresses of beneficiaries, the grant amount, the financing rate (when applicable) and the object of the grant on the Commission's Europa website. Applicants will agree to this through the application form.

13.2. Action 1

Erasmus Mundus Masters Courses will be selected for a five-year period. The Commission envisages concluding a five-year “framework partnership agreement” with each selected Erasmus Mundus Masters consortium. A model of this framework partnership agreement can be found in annex B. The framework partnership agreement will be concluded between the Commission and the co-ordinator of the Erasmus Mundus Masters consortium and will entail annual financial agreements.

An annual flat-rate amount of EUR 15,000 will be granted for a five-year period up until 2009 (provided the programme is renewed beyond the year 2008) to each selected Erasmus Mundus Masters consortium via an annual grant agreement subject to a light-weight annual renewal process. A model of this annual grant agreement can be found in annex B. The annual amount of EUR 15,000 is calculated as a flat-rate amount of EUR 5,000 to each partner of the minimum consortium. The beneficiary will not be asked to report on the use of the flat-rate amount. 100% of the flat-rate amount will be paid as pre-financing after signature of the annual financial agreement.

The renewal process will be based on an activity report from the co-ordinating institution on behalf of the Erasmus Mundus Masters consortium. The decision to renew will be based on proof that the Erasmus Mundus Masters Course has been delivered, that third-country students have followed it and that high standards of quality are maintained. In cases of patent non-compliance with high quality standards the Commission may refuse to renew the grant and designation of the Masters Course, or even ask for the reimbursement of the grant. The respective national structure and, maybe, third-country students / scholars involved in the Erasmus Mundus Masters Course in question could be consulted.

13.3. Action 2

Scholarships will be distributed to the students via the Erasmus Mundus Masters consortia. To this end an annual grant agreement for individual scholarships will be concluded between the Commission and the co-ordinator of the Erasmus Mundus Masters consortium within the “framework partnership agreement” mentioned under point 13.2. above. A model of this annual grant agreement for scholarships can be found in annex B.

Provided the Commission approves the annual activity reports under Action 1, the annual grant agreement for scholarships will be repeated on an annual basis following the selection of scholarship grant-holders throughout the five-year period for which an Erasmus Mundus Masters Course has been selected.

The grant agreement for a one-year Erasmus Mundus Masters Course breaks down as follows:

- Scholarships: number of students x 10 months x EUR 1,600; plus
number of scholars x 3 months x EUR 4,000; plus
- Fixed amount for expenses: number of students x EUR 5,000; plus
number of scholars x EUR 1,000.

This amounts to a yearly total of EUR 21,000 per student and EUR 13,000 per scholar. The grant agreement for a two-year Erasmus Mundus Masters Course will be double the amount. As for Courses lasting more than one but less than two years, students will receive EUR 1,600 for each additional month of study following their first year at the Course. As from the 16th month of study onwards, the fixed amount of EUR 5,000 can be paid in full for the second year.¹⁰ On the other hand, students not having succeeded in completing the Course within its usual duration will not receive an additional grant for “catching-up”. Scholarships are intended for full-time studies.

As for the monthly scholarship, one amount will apply to all participating countries regardless of actual living costs. Regarding scholars, Erasmus Mundus Masters consortia will be allowed to increase the grant payment for scholars and / or decrease the duration of their stay, if this is necessary. Such an approach requires explicit permission from the Commission.

As for the fixed amount for expenses, this is a standard amount built into the grant to cater for items of expenditure such as travel expenses, registration and tuition fees, establishment and relocation costs, teaching material, etc. Erasmus Mundus Masters consortia are free to charge students as they wish according to their national legislation and according to the agreement reached within each consortium. The fixed amount is at the free disposal of grantees.

In principle, the Commission will allocate an equal number of grants to each Erasmus Mundus Masters consortium: 19 student grants and 4 scholar grants in 2005; and at least 20 student grants and 4 to 5 scholar grants for each of the following years. Details will be communicated in the calls for proposals relating to the academic year 2006/2007 and the following years.

Erasmus Mundus Masters consortia must predetermine how grants will be allocated within the consortia taking into account the mobility requirements of the Course as well as an appropriate balance in the distribution of students within the Course. However, consortia will have some flexibility for readjustments.

As for the reserve list to be submitted with the selection proposal, this will serve the purpose of redistributing grants between consortia, if certain consortia are unable to absorb the number of grants allocated to them for lack of high-quality applicants. Also, in case of students / scholars renouncing their grants or withdrawing from the Erasmus Mundus Masters Course, a person on the reserve list would receive the grant instead.

100% of the amount corresponding to the grant agreement will be paid to the co-ordinating institution of the Erasmus Mundus Masters consortia as pre-financing in two instalments. The second instalment will be paid if 70% of the first instalment has been spent. At final report stage the co-ordinator reports to the Commission on how many students / scholars have effectively received a grant and how much interest has been yielded by pre-financing. On the basis of this count of “units” spent and interest gained, the Commission will calculate the final grant amount.

Erasmus Mundus Masters consortia are free to establish their own payment modalities with their students and scholars provided that they respect the full amount to be paid out. Also, consortia will be obliged to provide their grantees with an advance and to perform payments on a regular basis. Students are free to use their grants as they wish.

¹⁰ Calculation examples for Masters Courses lasting between one and two years can be found in the application form.

13.4. Action 3

Erasmus Mundus Masters Courses will receive the following grant amount for Partnerships:

– Flat rate for Partnership:

A flat-rate amount of EUR 5,000 will be granted for each participating third-country institution. If the Partnership involves more than three third-country institutions, the annual amount will be a maximum of EUR 15,000. The annual flat rate assigned to Erasmus Mundus Master Courses for their Partnerships thus ranges from EUR 5,000 (one participating third-country institution) to EUR 15,000 (three or more participating third-country institution). The maximum annual amount of EUR 15,000 is calculated as a flat-rate amount of EUR 5,000 to each partner of the consortium. In case of two-year or three-year Partnerships, the annual flat-rate amount is also paid in year two and three.

– Amount for outgoing mobility based on unit costs:

The annual fixed amount is calculated on the basis that a minimum of 5 students per EU institution involved in a Masters Course and a minimum of 3 scholars per Masters Course will be sent out every year. A consortium of three higher education institutions should therefore send out a minimum of 15 students and 3 scholars per year. The average mobility cost of an outgoing Partnership student amounts to EUR 3,100 (three monthly grants of EUR 700 plus EUR 1,000 for travel), of an outgoing Partnership scholar to EUR 13,000 (three monthly grant payments of EUR 4,000 plus EUR 1,000 for travel). As the length of the stay abroad can vary, individual grants can be calculated by using the unit costs of monthly grants and travel expenses mentioned above. If study periods are calculated in weeks rather than months, the following applies: stays between 2 and 6 weeks are worth one monthly grant, stays between 7 and 11 weeks are worth two monthly grants, and stays between 12 and 15 weeks are worth three monthly grants.

The total grant, which depends on the duration of the Partnership, will be paid to the co-ordinator of the Masters Course consortium concerned by means of a specific grant agreement covering one, two or three years. A model of the grant agreement for Partnerships can be found in annex B. It will be concluded within the framework of the “framework partnership agreement” mentioned under point 13.2. above.

Payments are carried out through one or two pre-financing payments depending on the duration of the Partnership. The second instalment will be paid if 70% of the first instalment has been spent. The total of pre-financing will cover 100% of the grant. Payments will be subject to:

- the annual renewal process for the Masters consortium in question. Should the Erasmus Mundus Masters Course not be renewed, will the Partnership be cancelled;
- in case of Partnerships exceeding one year, the presentation of a progress report by the co-ordinating institution on behalf of the Erasmus Mundus Masters consortium. The progress reports will have to show that the Partnership is operational, that EU students and scholars have been sent out and that high standards of quality are maintained. In cases of patent non-compliance with high quality standards the Commission may ask for the reimbursement of the grant. The respective national structure and, maybe, EU students / scholars involved in the Partnership in question could be consulted.

At final report stage the co-ordinator has to prove that the Partnership has been carried out. The beneficiary will not be asked to report on the use of the flat rate. As for the amount used for mobility, the beneficiary will have to report on the “units” (students and scholars) actually

sent out. Also, the beneficiary will have to declare how much interest has been yielded by pre-financing. On the basis of this count of “units” spent and interest gained, the Commission will calculate the finale grant amount.

14. TIMETABLE

<i>Academic year 2005/2006</i>	
When?	What?
April 2004	Launch of 2005 call for proposals for Actions 1, 2 and 3
31 October 2004	Deadline for submitting proposals for 2005/2006 Erasmus Mundus Masters Courses (Action 1)
November/December 2004	Assessment (Action 1)
December 2004/January 2005	Selection procedure (Action 1)
January 2005	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Commission selection decision (Action 1) – Information of applicants on selection result (Action 1)
Deadline fixed by each Erasmus Mundus Masters consortium ¹¹	Individuals submit applications for 2005/2006 scholarships to Erasmus Mundus Masters consortia (Action 2)
March 2005	Assessment of scholarship applicants by consortia (Action 2)
31 March 2005	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Deadline for Erasmus Mundus Masters consortia to submit applications for 2005/2006 scholarships to Commission (Action 2) – Deadline for submitting proposals for Erasmus Mundus Partnerships to start in 2005/2006 (Action 3)
April/May 2005	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Selection procedure (Action 2) – Assessment (Action 3)
May 2005	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Commission selection decision (Action 2) – Information of applicants on selection result by Erasmus Mundus Masters consortia (Action 2)
May/June 2005	Selection procedure (Action 3)
June 2005	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Commission selection decision (Action 3) – Information of applicants on selection result (Action 3)
July 2005	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Award of contracts to Erasmus Mundus Masters consortia (Actions 1, 2 and 3) – Full payment by Commission to Erasmus Mundus Masters consortia (Action 1) – First instalments of pre-financing payments by Commission to Erasmus Mundus Masters consortia (Actions 2 and 3)
September/October 2005	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Start of Erasmus Mundus Masters Courses (Action 1), scholarships for academic year 2005/2006 (Action 2) and Erasmus Mundus Partnerships (Action 3) – Payment of scholarships 2005/2006 to grantees by Erasmus Mundus Masters consortia

As has been pointed out before, Erasmus Mundus Masters consortia will select third-country students and scholars each year throughout the five-year period for which the Erasmus Mundus Masters Courses have been selected. The following timetable shows the timing of this repetitive selection cycle for Actions 1 and 2 throughout the five years (but it does not include the timing of the other Actions).

¹¹ This deadline must be early enough in order for Erasmus Mundus Masters consortia to hit their application deadline of 31 March 2005.

Academic year 2006/2007 (Actions 1 and 2)¹²	
When?	What?
November 2005-January 2006 (deadline fixed by each Erasmus Mundus Masters consortium) ¹³	Individuals submit applications for 2006/2007 scholarships to Erasmus Mundus Masters consortia (Action 2)
February 2006	Assessment of scholarship applicants by consortia (Action 2 – 2006/2007)
28 February 2006	Deadline for Erasmus Mundus Masters consortia to submit applications for 2006/2007 scholarships to Commission (Action 2)
March/April 2006	Selection procedure (Action 2 - 2006/2007)
March 2006	Progress report 2005/2006 on Actions 1 and 2 to be submitted to Commission by Erasmus Mundus Masters consortia
April 2006	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – If progress report 2005/2006 on Actions 1 and 2 approved by Commission – Then Commission adopts selection decision (Action 2 – 2006/2007) – Information of applicants on selection result by Erasmus Mundus Masters consortia (Action 2 – 2006/2007) – Second instalment of pre-financing for scholarships (Action 2 – 2005/2006) by Commission to Erasmus Mundus Masters consortia
May 2006	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Renewal of contract for Erasmus Mundus Masters Courses (Action 1) for year 2006/2007 – Award of contract for 2006/2007 scholarships (Action 2) to Erasmus Mundus Masters consortia
June/July 2006	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Full payment by Commission to Erasmus Mundus Masters consortia for Action 1 in 2006/2007 – First instalment of pre-financing payment by Commission to Erasmus Mundus Masters consortia for Action 2 in 2006/2007
September/October 2006	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Final report 2005/2006 on Action 2 to be submitted to Commission by Erasmus Mundus Masters consortia – Closure of financial agreement for scholarships (Action 2 – 2005/2006) – Start of second year (2006/2007) of Erasmus Mundus Masters Courses (Action 1) – Start of scholarships for academic year 2006/2007 (Action 2) – Payment of scholarships 2006/2007 to grantees by Erasmus Mundus Masters consortia

¹² The following section repeats itself four times, unless the Erasmus Mundus programme should not be extended beyond the year 2008.

¹³ This deadline must be early enough in order for Erasmus Mundus Masters consortia to hit their application deadline of 28 February 2006.

15. FURTHER INFORMATION

Further details on the programme are available:

- from the Commission website for Erasmus Mundus at the Europa server at:
http://europa.eu.int/comm/education/programmes/mundus/index_en.html
- from the national contact points for the programme, the list of which appears in annex D and at the Commission website for Erasmus Mundus above;
- by writing to EAC-Erasmus-Mundus@cec.eu.int .
