



Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency

**Erasmus+ : Higher Education - International Capacity Building**

Brussels, 29/07/2016

**PHD SIMA AVRAMOVIC  
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RS - BELGRADE**

*sima@ius.bg.ac.rs  
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**Subject: Erasmus+ Capacity Building in Higher Education - Call for Proposals  
EAC/A04/2015 – Selection Results**

**Your application: 573820-EPP-1-2016-1-RS-EPPKA2-CBHE-SP**

Dear Phd Sima Avramovic,

You have submitted an application to the Erasmus+ Programme for the action Capacity- Building in Higher Education (CBHE). The Call for proposals closed on 10 February 2016. The Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA) received a total of 736 applications.

I am writing to inform you about the selection decision taken by the Head of Department of the Agency, acting in her capacity as authorising officer, based on the recommendations of an Evaluation Committee. A panel of external experts assisted the Evaluation Committee in the evaluation of applications against the award criteria indicated in the Call for Proposals.

The selection decision is based on the quality of the application, its relative position in comparison with the other applications submitted and the budget available. Applications were assessed on a scale from 0 to 100 and were ranked according to merit. In addition, and in line with the provision of the Programme Guide regarding the definition of the list of projects recommended for funding, the Evaluation Committee has also taken into account the results of the consultation with the EU Delegations in the Partner Countries and, where applicable, with the Ministries responsible for Higher Education and the Erasmus+ Offices in the Partner Countries. Lastly, the selection decision took into account the geographical balance within a region in terms of the number of projects per country (within the limits of the available budget) and the respect of the condition that an applicant organisation cannot receive more than three grants under this Call.

I am pleased to inform you that your application has been selected for EU co-funding.

For your information, out of the 736 applications submitted, 653 have been considered eligible, 147 have been selected for funding and 18 have been placed on a reserve list.

The list of all selected projects will be published on the website of the Executive Agency when all applicants have been notified about the selection results. ([http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/erasmus-plus/selection-results\\_en](http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/erasmus-plus/selection-results_en)).

Attached to this letter you will find an evaluation report based on the opinion of the external experts. Please take into account that most of the evaluation reports were written by non-native speakers. The Executive Agency will not elaborate further on these assessments.

The maximum amount of funding to be awarded to your project is € 826.350,00.


**Please note that your budget has been revised following the experts' assessment and financial analysis of your budget by the Agency's staff. You will find attached to this letter an explanation of the changes; you are requested to confirm in writing (by signing the document) that you are able to implement your project and to achieve all its objectives and outcomes, as described in your application, with the amended budget. The document must be signed by the legal representative of the applicant organisation.**

The process of awarding a grant can only be finalised once the Executive Agency has received and analysed the documents as requested in the list of documents to be submitted (see Appendix). The documentation specified must be submitted as soon as possible and no later than 9 September 2016.

This letter does not represent a financial or legal commitment of the Executive Agency. The offer of an award is confirmed only when the legal representative of the Executive Agency signs the Grant Agreement associated with this application.

Please do not hesitate to contact us should you have any further questions.

Yours sincerely,



Ralf RAHDERS  
Head of Unit

Contact: [eacea-eplus-cbhe-projects@ec.europa.eu](mailto:eacea-eplus-cbhe-projects@ec.europa.eu)

Appendix:

- I. Evaluation report
- II. Documents to be submitted
- III. Budget Revision



Erasmus+ Capacity Building in Higher Education  
Call for Proposals EAC/A04/2015  
**EVALUATION REPORT**

Proposal number:	<b>573820-EPP-1-2016-1-RS-EPPKA2-CBHE-SP</b>
Proposal title:	<b>DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF SYSTEM FOR PERFORMANCE EVALUATION FOR SERBIAN HEIS AND SYSTEM</b>
Applicant organisation:	<b>UNIVERZITET U BEOGRADU</b>

#### Award Criteria

##### Relevance of the project

The proposed project is in line with the Capacity Building in Higher Education (CBHE) action as it aims to produce results and impact on management, operation and quality of Higher education system in Serbia. The application identifies aims and objectives under the Capacity Building call that are well reflected in the proposal; however, the proposed results, though valid, do not guarantee that such objectives as improvement of quality or modernisation of higher education will be fully achieved. The proposed outputs are tied more to measuring performance rather than changing existing culture and mindset within the higher education institutions (HEIs).

The proposal has been submitted as a structural project for Serbia in region 1 (Western Balkans) indicating the National Priority as “Modernisation of policies, governance and management of higher education systems“. The applicant specified and marked category B “Multidisciplinarity / Interdisciplinarity”, category C “Governance, strategic planning and management of HEIs” as well as “Quality assurance processes and mechanisms” as priorities. According to the national priorities for this call for proposals only category “Quality assurance processes and mechanisms” has been indicated as a priority for Serbia. “Governance, strategic planning and management of HEIs” has been specified as a priority for Region 1 (Western Balkans). Category B “Multidisciplinarity / Interdisciplinarity”, is not an identified as either regional or national priority for Serbia. Besides, it is relevant for the project only in so far as it aims to create a ranking system for Serbian study programmes and institutions.

The proposal offers a good and valid rationale why the project has been undertaken, however it is rather vague as it comes to meeting the needs of the target groups. The project aims to define performance based evaluation of higher education institutions and the system, implement multi-dimensional ranking of institutions and study programmes, and introduce performance measurement (quality indicators) in accreditation. These objectives and expected results are geared towards rather specific target groups. However, target groups are poorly identified throughout the application (for example, while the teachers, students and employers are tentatively mentioned, national decision and policy makers are not, though the project outputs are expected to have impact on financing of higher education and should lead to some legal solutions in accreditation). All this implies that the target groups are not well thought through.

Taking the national approach to the proposal, its objectives are clear and realistic leading to fulfilling national agenda: to ensure transparency and acquire tools for higher education management. The needs assessment with supporting information for the implementation of such a project has been clearly presented. National strategic plans (Education Development Strategy in Serbia until 2020) and other reports highlighting the need for quality improvement of Serbian HEIs have been specified. However, the application lacks deeper analysis of institutional or employers’ perception of the issues addressed. This gives a rather political colouring to the proposed results and outputs. Nevertheless, the fact that higher education institutions will be the main creators of the national multi-ranking system, as well as

will be able to improve accreditation practice according to the mutually agreed standards is highly encouraging.

The project is definitely innovative for Serbia and has the potential to affect the whole higher education system. Though similar initiatives have been undertaken in other countries this proposal seems to be unique for Serbia in its results if not in the offered methodology or proposed activities. The application did not offer any explanation whether similar results could be achieved through national funding. However, as the application is directly in line with the national action plan, some funds should have been planned on national level to implement the foreseen measures. Though the national funding would have narrowed the scope of activities and involvement of EU partners, there is no indication that the similar results would not be achieved. The European added value and innovative elements are the transfer of knowledge, experience and best practice, from EU institutions to Serbian HEIs, in management and measuring performance indicators.

The preparation for the project evolved through close cooperation with the National Council of Higher Education and the Ministry of education, science and technological development in Serbia. Participation in previous cooperation projects served as basis for the current partnership. As there has been previous inter-institutional cooperation between the partners, smooth collaboration and absence of conflicts should be expected.

#### **Quality of the project design and implementation**

The proposed activities are well-defined, incorporate relevant and detailed information, and will lead to the stated objective within the project's lifetime. The project has a solid structure with appropriate and realistic mechanisms to achieve the outcome and ultimately the objective of the proposal, which is to improve the quality of education by introducing quality indicators and performance measurement in Serbian HEIs. Nevertheless, the description of activities lacks clear articulation of who does what and what methodology will be used to reach one or another result. The purpose of travels is not clearly identified raising the question how many are needed. Neither the number of people nor results and target groups for trainings are specified. A more detailed approach in planning the activities would have made the proposal more comprehensive.

The proposed methodology is relevant to achieve foreseen results but is hardly innovative. The project relies on the help and support of the EU partners to fine-tune methodological details based on their experience, expertise and findings during the preparation stage. This approach is commendable as the application is quite complex in terms of its results and possible consequences for the whole higher education system.

Though, in general, the budget ties well with the proposed activities it still raises some questions. The allocation and distribution of funding in the partner country is fair. Allocated staff days especially for Management (work package 7) seem to be low. Applicant should consider adding additional staff days to ensure successful coordination. The application is not persuasive that such high number of mobilities is necessary though it claims that the purposes of the meetings will be combined to reduce costs. The application does not justify the need for the planned equipment and it is not clear why such a high number of Desktops plus Laptops for some HEIs are necessary to implement the project. The printing costs also seem to be very high and alternative measures should be sought to reduce these expenses. The lack of detailed explanations lead to believe that, though in general, the proposal is cost effective in terms of the proposed results its expenses might be further reduced.

The work plan indicates clear activities with the necessary time-lines and is coherent with the logical framework matrix, project description and work packages. The work packages are in general, detailed and contain relevant information including target groups, assumptions, and activity descriptions. Nevertheless some of the planned issues can be questioned (e.g. it is not clear why each year 6 weeks are devoted to the establishment of quality assurance work group). Activities themselves, though lack details as to their implementation, are clearly defined. Some of the deliverables would have benefitted from detailed description (especially events). The proposal includes all appropriate phases for preparation, implementation, evaluation, follow up and dissemination of results.

The logical framework matrix has a clear and comprehensive plan with relevant qualitative and quantitative indicators that will measure the outcomes and outputs to achieve the expected specific and wider objectives. Challenges and assumptions are clearly identified, though the risks are not defined in

a manner that would raise great concern. It needs to be noted that the consortium might guarantee smooth delivery of the project results, while the real risk is to ensure their acceptance, embedment into institutional practices and working cultures. These aspects are not identified as possible risks.

The application does not present clear quality assurance plan, though basic strategy is given. There are plans to evaluate both – deliverables and stakeholders' satisfaction with them as well as project implementation and activities. The body responsible for quality control is clearly identified and the whole approach to quality seems to be based on monitoring, control, ISO standards and audit. At the moment the application does not specify what indicators will be used to monitor the quality or present plans to develop a more comprehensive evaluation (not control) based approach. The applicant should have also demonstrated what kind of evaluation and monitoring tools will be used to ensure successful project implementation (example: reports, assessments, surveys, interviews, etc.). The consortium should be urged to discuss their quality assurance strategies and approaches as quality of the results is of utmost importance in the project aiming to influence the whole higher education system.

### **Quality of the project team and the cooperation arrangements**

The consortium encompasses a great number of partners from complementary fields of specialisations. The project's aims and objectives to some extent dictate the composition of consortium that involves all Serbian state universities, one private university and a number of organizations that can be treated as both – stakeholders and institutions that have important role in project implementation (Statistical office; National council for higher education; National employment service; Conference of academies for applied studies, and Ministry of education). The EU partners have been chosen with equal care so as to ensure necessary support and expertise. The project integrates urban and rural Serbian HEIs and will enhance therefore, the capacity building process. However the application does not have any associate partners from direct employment sector. Employers, claimed to be one of the target groups, could provide feasible feedback on the produced results and their usefulness.

The application demonstrates that the project team has necessary skills and expertise to manage and support project implementation. The persons involved have experience in European projects, however their profile and educational/scientific background is quite homogeneous – technical or technological sciences with very few representatives from social sciences.

It is expected that the project will be coordinated and implemented smoothly thanks to previous project management skills of most partners including the grant holder. The coordination strategy of the project is very well defined and layered, incorporating a project consortium board, a national coordination board and working groups for effective management in the partner country. The applicant should be urged to consider, in addition to the regular face-to-face meetings, to use online tools for communication and collaboration purposes.

The active participation of partner country institutions including their lead roles in the work packages has been clearly demonstrated. Each partner will be assigned management tasks and measures have been put in place to mitigate risks and conflicts. While most partners have been involved in previous capacity building projects some non-HEIs are relatively inexperienced. The mixture of partners will be an added value in the competence building process.

### **Impact and sustainability**

Introduction of quality indicators and performance measurement in Serbian HEIs will have a strong impact at institutional, national and regional level. The final result will help to redefine institutional strategies and should lead to a more responsible study programme management. The policy makers will possess reliable data enabling them to form national policy and adjust legal framework while industry and business representatives will be able to get information on quality of the study programmes. These promises made in the application seem to be very realistic bearing in mind the final project results. However the proposal is rather hazy on who will be the owners of the developed tool, how exactly it will be institutionalised and institutional rankings will take place. Though the results have very good potential for country-wide impact, likewise they might easily become prescriptive straightjacket and manipulation tool. These risks have to be faced at the beginning of the project.

The project has potential to produce multiplier effect outside the participating institutions – private universities, vocational sector as well as neighbouring countries interested in project results. Though the project mentions the possibilities it does not fully explore them and the dissemination strategy does not give any indication as to the outreach planned by the project. The project impact is envisaged through the changes in accreditation standards, higher education funding scheme, and improved performance of the institutions. However, at this stage the proposal lacks reliable quantitative and qualitative indicators and the estimated impact remains on the level of assumptions.

The dissemination plan is adequately thought through and demonstrates detailed activities including traditional advertisement tools, seminars, workshops, conferences, public relations meetings, brochures, and the establishment of a website. Though various activities are planned the application does not define how many of these events will take place and what is expected of them. As the Ministry of education is the leader of this workpackage, the question of the ownership of results comes into forefront. Rankings and accreditation are sensitive themes in higher education therefore transparent information on these issues is essential. Furthermore, the dissemination strategy should benefit by incorporating social networks like Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter etc., as means for reaching the identified target groups and the wider audience.

The sustainability of the project outcomes is ensured by the importance of the project results and support of various stakeholders. The involvement of key stakeholders including the National council of higher education, Ministry of education, and HEIs in Serbia, which have a key stake in achieving the objectives, will ensure the implementation of results and their use after the project lifetime. Sustainability, seemingly, completely rests on political priorities and will, and at the moment is not an issue of concern for the project. On the one hand, it poses some risks in case the national authorities should decide to change the course. On the other hand, the project might be able to ensure necessary political and financial support to sustain the results and, if necessary, develop and adapt them to the changing realities of the country. The project results will be incorporated in future government requirements (accreditation of study programmes, etc.) for Serbian HEIs.

**Quality of the design and implementation of the Special Mobility Action**

N/A

## **Annex II - Documents to be submitted & Questions to be answered**

**Warning: The following issues need to be resolved before any grant may be awarded. Failure to provide the necessary information in time may result in the grant not being awarded.**

### **A- List of documents to be submitted**

#### **A.1- Financial identification form**

Please confirm that the Bank Account you have given for the validation of the PIC of the applicant organisation has not changed since your application was submitted.

- The Bank Account has not changed since my organisation submitted the application. The Bank Account number is : **RS35 9085 0413 8000 2145 26**.
- The Bank Account has changed. In this case, please submit a new signed and scanned financial identification form for the application organisation only, downloadable from the website: [http://ec.europa.eu/budget/contracts\\_grants/info\\_contracts/financial\\_id/financial\\_id\\_en.cfm](http://ec.europa.eu/budget/contracts_grants/info_contracts/financial_id/financial_id_en.cfm).

The form must be signed by the account holder and either stamped and signed by the bank concerned or accompanied by a recent bank statement (not older than 6 months). Please note we cannot accept a financial identification form which is not signed. The account indicated in the financial identification form will be used for payments to your project.

#### **A.2 - Project budget**

Please confirm in writing, by signing the amended budget (Annex III - Estimated and eligible budget of the action), that you are able to implement your project and to achieve all its objectives and outcomes, as described in your application, with the amended budget.

The budget has to be signed by the Legal representative of the Beneficiary institution (PI in the application form) and sent to the Agency as electronic document.

### **B- Questions to be answered**

#### **B.1 Legal representative of the Applicant Organisation**

Please confirm that the name of the legal representative of the Applicant Organisation has not changed since your application was submitted.

If the legal representative has changed, please fill in the grid below and provide proof that the named **person is authorised** to enter into legally binding commitments on behalf of the Applicant Organisation in compliance with the "Instructions for applicants" (Section 4.3) available on this website, under the tab 'Guidelines':

[https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/sites/eacea-site/files/instructions\\_for\\_applicants\\_cbhe\\_en\\_call\\_2016.pdf](https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/sites/eacea-site/files/instructions_for_applicants_cbhe_en_call_2016.pdf)

- The legal representative has not changed since my organisation submitted the application. The actual legal representative registered in our database and entitled to sign the grant agreement is **PhD Sima Avramovic, Professor, Dean of the Faculty**.

- The legal representative has changed and the new data is provided below.

<b>A.3. Person authorised to represent the organisation in legally binding agreements (Legal representative)</b>			
Title*:	Family name* :	First name*:	
Department/Faculty:			
Role in the organisation* :		E-mail address*:	
Address			
Street name and number*:			Postcode*:
Town*:	Cedex:	P.O Box:	
Country*:	Region*:		
Telephone 1*:	Telephone 2:	Fax:	

## B.2 Contact person

Please confirm that the name of the person responsible for the management of the project has not changed since your application was submitted. If the contact person has changed, please fill in the grid below.

- The contact person has not changed since my organisation submitted the application.

The contact details are the following :

**PhD Sima Avramovic**  
**Faculty of Law**  
**UNIVERZITET U BEOGRADU**  
**Bulevar Kralja Aleksandra 67**  
**RS Belgrade Serbia**  
**+381 11 3027-700**  
**sima@ius.bg.ac.rs**

- The contact person has changed and the new data is provided below.

<b>A.2. Person responsible for the management of the application (Contact person)</b>			
Title*:	Family name* :	First name*:	
Department/Faculty:			
Role in the organisation* :		E-mail address*:	
Address			



Street name and number*:		Postcode*:	
Town*:	Cedex:	P.O Box:	
Country*:	Region*:		
Telephone 1*:	Telephone 2:	Fax:	

***⚡ Please send the documents to the following email address as soon as possible and by 09/09/2016 at the latest: (with indication, in the email subject, of your application number as stated in the header up left of this annex)***

Philippe Raynaud  
 Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency, Unit A.4  
[eacea-eplus-cbhe-projects@ec.europa.eu](mailto:eacea-eplus-cbhe-projects@ec.europa.eu)

## Annex III – Budget Revision

**Project number: 573820-EPP-1-2016-1-RS-EPPKA2-CBHE-SP**

As you will note from the grant agreement, your project's budget has been revised.

Listed below are some of the reasons for the reduction or revision of the breakdown of the figures costed into your original budget.

*The application does not specify what **equipment** is needed for what purpose and it is not clear why such a high number of desktops, laptops and tablets for some HEIs are needed to implement the project. The lack of clarity and detailed explanations lead to believe the Equipment budget heading is a bit over estimated and has therefore been reduced by approximately 10%, corresponding to € 23.750,00.*

*The **sub-contracting** costs seem overestimated and could be reduced by taking a more cost-efficient approach. This refers especially to the printing costs of 49,150 €, which have been reduced to a more reasonable amount of € 35,000 €.*

*Following these reductions, which had an impact on the total grant requested, the **Staff Costs** budget heading had to be adjusted in order to respect the ceiling of 40% of the total grant (Erasmus+ Programme Guide pp.161-162). Therefore, the maximum eligible amount for the staff costs is now € 330.540,00 and an additional amount of € 15.816,00 has been subtracted from your grant.*

As a consequence of the above remarks, your original budget has been reduced by a total amount of 53.716,00 € and it will result in an eligible budget of € 826.350,00.

The above-mentioned budget reduction or modification resulted from the observations and comments from the external evaluators as well as an internal in-depth analysis of the proposal by the Erasmus+ CBHE team at the Executive Agency.

We would like to draw your attention to the fact that the approval of the budget enclosed, does not mean confirmation, at the end of the project, of the eligibility of all the expenses costed into your budget at present. Before incurring any expenses on your project, always check first the rules in the Grant Agreement and consult the 'Guidelines for the Use of the Grant' and the Frequently Asked Questions to ensure that these expenses are in fact eligible under the CBHE rules.

The project can only be funded under the revised budget figures.

The project can only be funded under the following revised budget figures:

<b>APPLICATION N°</b>	
573820-EPP-1-2016-1-RS-EPPKA2-CBHE-SP	

<b>PROJECT COSTS</b>		<b>EUR</b>
<b>1</b>	Staff costs	330.540,00
<b>2</b>	Travel Costs	60.500,00
<b>3</b>	Costs of Stay	183.600,00
<b>4</b>	Equipment Costs	195.000,00
<b>5</b>	Subcontracting Costs	56.710,00
<b>A – Grant for Project Activities (1+2+3+4+5)</b>		<b>826.350,00</b>
<b>B – Additional Grant for Special Mobility Strand</b>		0,00
<b>Total Grant requested from the European Union (A+B)</b>		<b>826.350,00</b>

By signing this Annex III, you confirm that you are able to implement your project and to achieve all its objectives and outcomes, as described in your application, with the amended budget.

This Annex has to be signed by the Legal representative of the Beneficiary institution (P1 in the application form) and sent to the Agency as electronic document.

Signature of the Legal representative,

Date,

(Name, Surname, Function)