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2022 GUIDE FOR NATIONAL AGENCIES

IMPLEMENTING

**THE ERASMUS+ AND EUROPEAN SOLIDARITY
CORPS PROGRAMMES**

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1. INTRODUCTION

In line with the Regulation establishing the Erasmus+ Programme¹ and the Regulation establishing the European Solidarity Corps Programme², actions under the two Programmes may be implemented in indirect management with bodies referred to in Article 62(1)(c) of the Financial Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 2018/1046 (FR)³. In accordance with the regulations above, the implementation of the Programmes is to be entrusted to the National Agencies (NAs).

The NA designated by the National Authority of the relevant country, shall have a legal personality or be part of an entity having a legal personality (i.e. hosting organisation).

The NA is responsible for the successful implementation in indirect management of the Programmes at national level in full respect of the policy priorities, with high quality, impact and return on investment of the EU funds that they manage.

In line with article 154 of the Financial Regulation, “The Commission shall, in accordance with the principle of proportionality and with due consideration for the nature of the action and the financial risks involved, assess that persons and entities implementing Union funds pursuant to point (c) of the first subparagraph of Article 62(1):

(a) set up and ensure the functioning of an effective and efficient internal control system based on international best practices and allowing in particular to prevent, detect and correct irregularities and fraud;

(b) use an accounting system that provides accurate, complete and reliable information in a timely manner;

(c) are subject to an independent external audit, performed in accordance with internationally accepted auditing standards by an audit service functionally independent of the person or entity concerned;

(d) apply appropriate rules and procedures for providing financing to third parties, including transparent, non-discriminatory, efficient and effective review procedures, rules for recovering funds unduly paid and rules for excluding from access to funding;

(e) make public adequate information on their recipients equivalent to that provided for under Article 38;

(f) ensure protection of personal data equivalent to that referred to in Article 5.”

¹ Regulation (EU) 2021/817 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20 May 2021 establishing Erasmus+: the Union Programme for education and training, youth and sport and repealing Regulation (EU) No 1288/2013

² Regulation (EU) 2021/888 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20 May 2021 establishing the European Solidarity Corps Programme and repealing Regulations (EU) 2018/1475 and (EU) No 375/2014

³ Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 2018/1046 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 July 2018 on the financial rules applicable to the general budget of the Union, amending Regulations (EU) No 1296/2013, (EU) No 1301/2013, (EU) No 1303/2013, (EU) No 1304/2013, (EU) No 1309/2013, (EU) No 1316/2013, (EU) No 223/2014, (EU) No 283/2014, and Decision No 541/2014/EU and repealing Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 966/2012.

Thus the NA shall comply with a number of minimum requirements, applicable both to the general structure and functioning of an NA as well as to its management of the Programmes. Compliance with these requirements is compulsory to ensure sound and efficient management of EU funds.

The present Guide for National Agencies, hereinafter referred to as “Guide for NAs”, sets out these minimum requirements for the standards of internal control, accounting, independent external audit, rules and procedures for providing financing from EU funds through grants, exclusion from access to funding, publication of information on recipients, protection of personal data standards applicable to the NA and for the management of the project lifecycle.

If the NA is part of a hosting organisation, the services provided by this hosting organisation for the implementation of the Programmes shall comply with the provisions of the Guide for NAs when implementing the tasks in relation to the Programmes.

The Guide for NAs shall be annexed to the Contribution Agreement signed between the Commission and each NA, and thus it is contractually binding for NA and, as applicable, to its hosting organisation, when implementing the entrusted tasks in relation to the Programmes.

In addition, the Guide for NAs is the reference framework for the key controls and supervision of the NA that will be undertaken by the Commission and the National Authority, as well as by the Independent Audit Body.

The Commission reserves the right to amend the Guide for NAs as appropriate. As the Guide for NAs constitutes a contractual annex to the Contribution Agreement, the NA shall obtain prior authorisation in writing from the Commission in case it wishes to deviate from any of the obligations set out in the Guide for NAs.

As a transitional measure, the NA is also responsible for continuing and winding up the management of the Delegation Agreements under the previous Erasmus+ (2014-2020) and European Solidarity Corps (2018-2020) Programmes. However, the rules applicable in the Guide for NAs shall only apply to the management of actions funded under the Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps calls for proposals 2022.

2. STANDARDS OF INTERNAL CONTROL FOR NA

The NA shall set up and ensure the functioning in all material respects of an effective, efficient and economical internal control system based on international best practices and in line with the criteria set by the European Commission, in line with Article 154 FR.

2.1 Integrity and ethical values

1. The NA shall take all measures required to guarantee the sound and efficient management of EU funds and to preserve the good reputation of the EU and of the EU Programmes they are called to manage at national level.

2. In support of the above, the NA shall have a policy on integrity and ethical values⁴, resulting in clear and formalised rules for NA staff members. These rules shall constitute a code of conduct for NA staff and comprise preventive and corrective measures (e.g. disciplinary sanctions, financial and personal liability) for staff who do not comply with the integrity rules and ethical values.
3. The rules for NA staff shall cover at least the following areas: prevention of conflicts of interest⁵ including a disclosure obligation; use of official information and public resources; working outside the NA; receiving gifts or benefits; dealing with and reporting on irregularities and fraud; whistle blowing.
4. The rules shall clearly establish the rights and obligations of the NA staff in terms of signalling actual or suspected wrongdoing. It shall set out the formal chain of responsibility and procedures to follow, including in terms of reporting to the Commission. The NA shall systematically inform the Commission of (presumed) cases of irregularity and fraud⁶ occurring at NA level.
5. NA staff shall be systematically informed of the applicable rules on integrity and ethical values, which shall be made binding on them. In addition and as appropriate, the NA shall offer guidance and training to its staff to raise their awareness and common understanding of the rules as well as to give them advice on how to apply the rules.

2.2 NA staff

2.2.1 General requirements

1. The NA staff refers to the staff working for the implementation of the Programmes either full or part time. It shall be declared in the NA Work Programme.
2. The NA shall have or be able to use sufficient staff in number and qualification to deliver quality work in the following areas in all fields of the Programmes:
 - Project management, including evaluation of grant applications, support to beneficiaries and monitoring of projects and accreditations⁷;
 - Information and promotion, evaluation and impact analysis, as well as dissemination and exploitation of results in all areas of the Programmes;
 - Contract and financial management and accounting;
 - Control strategy and checks of beneficiaries;

⁴ For example existing rules for the conduct of staff employed by public institutions.

⁵ FR (EU, Euratom) No 2018/1046 Art. 61(3): "a conflict of interests exists where the impartial and objective exercise of the functions of a financial actor or other person, [...], is compromised for reasons involving family, emotional life, political or national affinity, economic interest or any other direct or indirect personal interest."

⁶ Refer for details to section "Dealing with irregularities and fraud" within Section 3 of the Guide for NAs.

⁷ The Quality Label under the European Solidarity Corps is assimilated to accreditation in the frame of the Guide for NAs. Any reference to accreditation therefore covers the Quality Label unless mentioned otherwise.

- Human resources management;
 - Office and IT management;
 - Internal control systems and internal audit activities.
3. In order to cooperate and communicate effectively with the Commission and the network of NAs in the EU Member States and third countries associated to the programmes, NA staff shall have adequate foreign language skills and be able to operate in the working languages of the Commission.
 4. In order to deliver high quality work in the areas related to the management of indirect management actions of the Programme, the NA staff shall have adequate knowledge of the national and European policy context and of international cooperation in the field of education, training and youth.
 5. The NA may draw on human resources from transversal services of its hosting organisation or, in so far as no delegation of budget implementation tasks are involved, from external bodies for certain tasks related to the implementation of the Programmes or the management of the NA.
 6. The NA may not delegate any task of budget implementation involving public mission discretionary powers such as awarding of grants or public contracts, making budgetary and legal commitments, validating and authorising expenditure, establishing and issuing recovery orders. As a consequence, the tasks for which the NA may draw human resources from external contractors are those for which technical expertise may be needed (such as audit, accounting or IT support and maintenance) or other support tasks (such as archiving). See also Section 8 on procurement of the Guide for NAs.

2.2.2 Recruitment

1. For the recruitment of staff, the national or statutory regulations of the organisation hosting the NA apply.
2. The recruitment of staff shall be organised in a transparent way, ensuring equal opportunities to potential candidates and preventing conflict of interest. Job descriptions shall be made available by the NA.

2.2.3 Tasks and responsibilities

1. NA staff members shall be adequately informed of their responsibilities and main tasks, as well as of the competences required for the job. They shall be in particular duly informed about the existing rules for delegation and financial responsibility at the NA.
2. NA staff members shall be notified of the above elements at recruitment stage and whenever major changes occur that affect them directly.

2.2.4 *Training*

1. The NA shall implement an adequate staff training policy to ensure its staff members are competent for the tasks they shall fulfil.
2. In the case of training provided by the Commission, the targeted NA staff members shall attend.

2.3 **Operational structure**

2.3.1 *Internal organisation*

1. A proper NA management structure shall be set up for the implementation of the Programmes. It shall be responsible for the coordination and administration of tasks related to the implementation of the Programmes. The NA Director shall be a part of the NA management structure.
2. The NA Director shall have the overall control of the implementation of the Programmes and, in cooperation with the related management structure, ensure the Programmes' implementation in line with the provisions of the Guide for NAs.
3. The NA shall set up an effective governance process in order to provide strategic orientation to NA management and ensure that objectives are achieved in a qualitative and timely way, risks are managed properly and resources are used in an efficient and effective manner.
4. The NA operational structure shall support effective decision-making by suitable delegation of powers. Risks associated with sensitive functions, in particular in relation to the management of funds for grant support, shall be managed through mitigating controls by the NA management.
5. The NA shall record the rights and obligations of each NA staff member with regard to decisions and actions that they may take in so far as these decisions and actions may result in legal and/or financial commitments⁸ for the NA. These rights and obligations shall be clearly assigned and communicated in writing to the persons concerned.
6. The NA shall pay particular attention to organising the financial circuits in such way as to prevent the possible occurrence of irregularities or fraud. The NA shall define clear roles and responsibilities and implement the four eyes principle with regard to all financial transactions related to the EU funds entrusted to it in the context of the Contribution Agreement.

2.3.2 *Segregation of duties*

1. The NA shall respect the principle of segregation of duties for ensuring a high-quality internal control environment.

⁸ E.g. communication on the outcomes of grant application assessments, taking grant award decisions, signature of grant agreements, authorisation of payments, etc.

2. Overlap between certain functions is incompatible and not authorised. Thus, an individual member of NA staff cannot be entrusted with the following combinations of duties:
 - Counselling of individual potential applicants, evaluating their grant applications and taking grant award decisions in the context of one and the same selection round;
 - Authorising payments (electronically or on paper) and recording these payments in the NA accounts;
 - Monitoring/counselling of individual beneficiaries and on-the-spot checks after completion of the project of the same beneficiaries;
 - Checks of final reports or desk checks of individual beneficiaries on the one hand and on-the-spot checks after completion of the project of the same beneficiaries on the other hand;
 - Checks of beneficiaries and authorising payments to the same beneficiaries;
 - Internal audit function and any other function in the NA, i.e. staff in charge of internal audit cannot be involved in any other operational activity of the NA that is potentially subject to internal audit.

2.4 Processes and procedures

2.4.1 Internal NA procedures

1. The NA shall document its main internal processes and procedures. This document shall set out the NA methods of operation and management in conformity with the applicable rules and the principles of sound financial management. It shall specify the role of each player in the various management cycles, on the basis of "who does what, at what moment, on the basis of which document".
2. The document shall:
 - include the main operational, administrative, financial and IT related procedures of the NA;
 - cover both the management of both Programmes' actions as well as the various cycles of NA operations (procurement and purchasing cycle, payment cycle, payroll cycle, etc.);
 - be coherent as well as regularly revised and updated in the light of changes that occur, such as organisational changes, regulatory changes, etc.
3. The NA management shall ensure that this document is available to all NA staff. The staff shall be continuously informed of any decisions, changes or updates concerning the internal processes and procedures.

2.4.2 Coordinated Programmes management at national level

1. For both Erasmus+ and the European Solidarity Corps, an appropriate mechanism for the coordinated management of the Programmes must be established, in particular in countries where more than one NA is designated to implement the same Programme at national level.
2. In such case, the NA shall cooperate with the other NA(s) in the country in order to promote a unified, clear and comprehensive image of the Programmes and make it easily accessible to all potential target publics of the Programmes. In agreement with the other NA(s) in the country, the NA shall ensure a harmonised implementation of the Programmes on the basis of commonly agreed standards and procedures ensuring a coherent, fair and equal treatment of applicants and beneficiaries regardless of the NA concerned.
3. The NA is expected to cooperate with the other NA(s) in the country at least in the following areas: information and promotion activities, selection and grant award, monitoring and checks of beneficiaries, selection of good practice examples and dissemination activities, preparation of the NA Work Programme, regular exchange of information and agreement on project management issues, structured cooperation with the National Authority/ies, and translations and proofreading of Programme related documents in the national language(s). Other useful areas of cooperation may be job-shadowing, common NA staff training sessions, joint evaluations, studies, etc.

2.5 Management supervision

2.5.1. General requirements

1. NA management shall establish appropriate supervision arrangements to ensure that the implementation of NA activities is efficient and effective while complying with the applicable rules set by the Commission and taking into account the applicable rules and specific environment in which the NA is operating. In case of delegation of authority, the NA management remains responsible and delegated entities/persons become accountable.
2. NA management shall set up an organisational structure, internal control system and clear and shared rules for management and control in order to be in a position to have an effective and efficient monitoring and control of the activities performed. Supervision shall ensure that errors and irregularities are prevented, detected and corrected by reviewing regularly that established internal control procedures are implemented consistently and as intended.
3. The supervisory activities shall be organised in such a way as to provide structured information to the NA management on a continuous basis and in view to provide assurance based thereon. The NA management shall be in a position to issue the Yearly Management Declaration within the NA Yearly Report, in which it will express its opinion on the level of assurance that the NA systems and procedures provide, as well as any reservations in relation to shortcomings found, and establish an action plan with remedial and precautionary measures as necessary.
4. All management supervision activities shall be documented to ensure an adequate audit trail.

2.5.2 Planning and risk assessment

1. The NA has to establish an annual Work Programme translating its long-term strategy into operational objectives and activities planned as well as the available resources (budget and staff). The purpose is to help the NA management to identify their objectives and indicators, set performance targets, identify the main risks, plan and manage activities, monitor progress during the year and provide reliable reporting on achievements per Programme in the NA Yearly Report. It should also serve as an engagement tool by giving NA staff a reference for understanding the mission and strategic objectives of the NA and, subsequently, their role in contributing to their achievement.
2. Risk management shall be embedded in the planning and decision making processes of the NA, as well as in its supervisory activities, which shall be sufficiently focused on high-risk areas (complex operations, transactions of high monetary value, lack of experienced or skilled personnel, etc.).
3. Following its risk assessment, the NA management shall establish the necessary control mechanisms and undertake regular checks to prevent the identified risks, irregularities and frauds to occur in any of its activities, including its internal operations (such as recruitment of staff, procurement) as well as the management of the Programmes' actions entrusted to it.

2.5.3 Governance

- 1 The NA shall set up a governance structure that ensures that NA management can rely on relevant and well prepared information to facilitate the decision making process, reliable reporting and indicators to monitor progress and achievement of results.
- 2 The NA management shall clearly define and document supervisory activities and relevant information on the basis of which it provides confirmation that:
 - the yearly accounts drawn up for the expenditure incurred for entrusted tasks per Programme are properly presented, complete and accurate,
 - the expenditure was used for its intended purpose, as defined in the Contribution Agreements,
 - the control systems put in place give the necessary guarantees concerning the legality and regularity of the underlying transactions.
- 3 The NA management shall implement an effective monitoring and reporting system to ensure the timely and adequate implementation of recommendations issued to it in relation to weaknesses detected by any internal or external controls.

2.5.4 Authorisation, recording and correction of exceptions

1. The NA shall ensure that all cases of overriding of controls or deviations from established policies and procedures under exceptional circumstances are documented, justified and approved at the appropriate level before action is taken.

2. A method of dealing with and recording exceptions to main procedures shall be established, including who may authorise such exceptions. Exceptions shall be recorded per Programme in a single central register. This register shall fall under the direct responsibility of the NA management and shall be available to NA staff for consultation.
3. Similarly, the NA shall have a clearly defined procedure for the systematic registration and correction where possible of cases of overriding of controls or deviations from main procedures that are discovered ex-post.

2.6 Accounting and financial reporting

1. The NA shall have a computerised accounting system and adequate procedures and controls in place to ensure that accounting data and related information used for preparing, per Programme, the organisation's annual accounts and financial reports are accurate, complete and timely as set out in the Contribution Agreement and its annexes.
2. Each transaction made shall be supported by a sufficient audit trail, regardless of the system in which it is recorded. Supporting documents shall be filed in a consistent and logical manner (such as the Programme, chronological numbering, dating, classification by type, etc.) so that their location can be accurately traced on the basis of the computerised accounts.
3. In line with Article 209(4) and 80 of the Financial Regulation, the NA has to comply with one of the international accounting standards (including financial reporting) or accounting policies and rules prescribed by specific regulations or conventions as indicated below:
 - International Public Sector Accounting Standards (IPSAS)
 - International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRSs)
 - Other specific conventions and rules such as for example the United Nations System accounting Standards (UNSAS).

2.7 Internal audit

1. In order to ensure an effective internal control system, the NA shall have in place an independent internal audit function. The internal auditor shall report directly to the NA management and provide it on a regular basis with a detailed appreciation of the general functioning of the NA and of key aspects of its operations, in particular with regard to the management of the indirect management actions of the Programmes.
2. The internal auditor shall establish a multiannual work programme based on a risk assessment of NA activities and taking into account the results of prior internal and external audits and controls.
3. The internal auditor shall provide independent, objective assurance and consulting services designed to add value and improve the operations of the NA. The internal auditor should help the NA management to accomplish its objectives by bringing a systematic, disciplined approach to evaluate and make recommendations for the

improvement of the effectiveness of risk management, control, and governance processes. The internal auditor shall ensure that action is taken by NA management on recommendations resulting from internal audits and check their follow-up.

4. Depending on its size and needs, the NA or its host organisation may employ a staff member as internal auditor or hire the services of an external expert in order to carry out the internal audit function.
5. The person who performs internal audit tasks for the NA shall be independent from the audited activities. Any conflict of interest shall be avoided.
6. The internal auditor of the NA shall be different from the Independent Audit Body designated by the National Authority in accordance with the Regulations establishing the Programmes.

2.8 Document management

1. The NA shall have appropriate processes and procedures in place to ensure that its document management is secure, effective and efficient (in particular as regards retrieving appropriate information), allows for a complete audit trail and complies with applicable legislation.
2. The NA shall put in place an adequate registration system for incoming and outgoing mail covering at least all administrative, contractual and financial management documents identifiable per Programme managed. The NA system shall enable the efficient monitoring of deadlines and be accessible to all NA staff concerned.
3. The NA shall have an adequate filing system allowing for systematic and secure filing of documents relevant to NA operations and to the Programme and the management of the project life cycle of indirect management actions by the NA to allow for a complete audit trail.
4. All documents related to the Contribution Agreements shall be kept on file for 5 years upon the latest of the following: a) the balance payment by the Commission or the reimbursement thereof to the Commission by the NA in relation to any related Contribution Agreement, or b) the end of Programmes lifetime.
5. The NA may store documents in digital/electronic format if authorised by national law. However, when a paper document is handwritten signed, the NA shall archive this document in paper format. The NA shall require the same compliance from grant beneficiaries.
6. As from 2021, the Commission shall sign all Contribution Agreements with a qualified electronic signature in line with Regulation (EU) No 910/2014. The NA is encouraged to also use qualified electronic signature if national legislation allows to do so. Documents signed with a qualified electronic signature by all parts are only exchanged and archived in electronic format.
7. The NA shall ensure that all administrative, contractual and financial information in relation to individual activities supported under the indirect management actions of the Programmes is archived within a single project file. In case use is made of on-line or other electronic tools for the Programme management, access to the information

not available in hard copy shall be organised in such a way as to allow easy access to a single project file, which will be adequately secured against unauthorised access.

2.9 Business continuity

1. The NA management shall ensure that the necessary conditions and measures are in place to be able to ensure that the core activities required for the management of the Programmes are maintained and/or resumed as soon as possible in case of a major disruption whatever its nature. This includes IT systems as well as document archives.
2. Where such conditions/measures do not exist as part of an overall business continuity plan within the NA host organisation, the NA management shall establish them specifically for the purposes of the NA and Programme management.
3. The NA management shall ensure that the conditions and measures in place to ensure business continuity are known to and can be applied by all NA staff concerned.
4. Business continuity shall be ensured also for cases of normal interruptions (such as departure of staff, long term absences) by implementing appropriate back-up and handover arrangements.

2.10 Infrastructure

1. The volume and quality of the NA premises shall provide for safe and healthy working conditions for NA staff. Sufficient space shall be foreseen for offices, as well as for equipment, filing and meeting facilities. The NA premises shall have easy access for NA staff and visitors, including persons with disabilities.
2. The NA shall take all measures to prevent unauthorised access to NA systems and files to prevent loss of data and to prevent that doubt would be cast on the accuracy and authenticity of the data.

2.11 Green dimension of Erasmus+ and the European Solidarity Corps

As regards the functioning of the NA, the NA shall adopt sustainable behaviours in order to reduce its own carbon and ecological footprint, through green measures, in their daily and long-term practice, as approved in the NA Work Programme.

3. COMMUNICATION, INFORMATION, DISSEMINATION AND EXPLOITATION OF PROGRAMME RESULTS

3.1 Common provisions

1. The NA shall:
 - implement communication, information and promotion activities;
 - ensure dissemination and exploitation of Programmes' results,

in line with the strategic framework for the implementation of the Erasmus+ Programme and, where applicable, the European Solidarity Corps, as presented by the NA in its approved Work Programme.

2. The NA shall follow and contribute to the implementation of the overall communication strategies for the Programmes⁹ issued by the Commission, to ensure a coherent Europe-wide visibility and awareness of the aims and the actions of the Programmes.

NA communication products and activities shall be in line with the communication package for Erasmus+¹⁰ and the European Solidarity Corps¹¹ provided by the Commission on NAconnECt. The NA shall follow the visual guidelines provided by the Commission. The NA is recommended to use the Commission's communication material.

3. The NA shall actively participate in the communication activities organised by the NA Communication Network, including online meetings, webinars, working groups, workshops and the "Project Story Challenge". The NA shall regularly consult the European Commission communications shared via the available online communication tools (e.g. Microsoft Teams) and provide one point of contact for communication to be inserted in the list of communication officers uploaded on NAconnECt.
4. The NA shall set up separately and keep updated an Erasmus+ Programme website and a European Solidarity Corps Programme website, as applicable, related to the 2021-2027 programming period¹². The European Solidarity Corps website cannot be within a section of the Erasmus+ programme website, nor can "Erasmus+" feature as part of the URL.
5. The Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps Programme websites shall follow the visual and branding guidelines issued by the European Commission and provide all necessary information on the opportunities offered by the Programmes as well as the results of projects¹³. This includes in particular access to the following documents and information:
 - all documents, forms and information referred to in articles 4.6 (Publication of Call for proposals) and 4.15 (Ex-post publication of grant award results) of the Guide for NAs,

⁹ Erasmus+:

<https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/fpfis/wikis/pages/viewpage.action?pageId=690913841&preview=/690913841/698746244/Erasmus%2B%20Communication%20Strategy.pdf>

European Solidarity Corps:

<https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/fpfis/wikis/display/ErasmusPlus/European+Solidarity+Corps+2021-2027+campaign?preview=/690913846/698746267/EuropeanSolidarityCorps%20Communication%20Strategy.pdf>

¹⁰ [Erasmus+ 2021-2027 campaign - NAconnECt Wiki - EC Extranet Wiki \(europa.eu\)](#)

¹¹ [European Solidarity Corps 2021-2027 campaign - NAconnECt Wiki - EC Extranet Wiki \(europa.eu\)](#)

¹² The programme websites related to the 2021-2027 Erasmus+ Programme and European Solidarity Corps may be a continuation of the existing 2014-2020 Programmes' websites provided that the information and specificities related to the new programmes are clearly identifiable, prominently visible and easy to access by users. Furthermore, the NA shall maintain and keep up-to-date the 2014-2020 Programme websites in accordance with the obligations established in the 2020 Guide for NAs.

¹³ Access to information and websites shall take due account of the [Strategy for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2021-2030 COM\(2021\)101 final](#).

- available budget,
 - list of funded projects,
 - updated FAQ on the most recurrent questions from beneficiaries,
 - links to social media accounts managed by the NA and the Commission in relation to the programme,
 - contact points for further information,
 - dissemination guidelines¹⁴,
 - communication guidelines for beneficiaries¹⁵,
 - for Erasmus+, links to the DG EAC and EACEA (European Education and Culture Executive Agency) Programme website and to the Erasmus+ Project Results Platform,
 - for the European Solidarity Corps, links to the European Solidarity Corps Portal¹⁶, the EACEA website and to the European Solidarity Corps Projects Platform¹⁷,
 - any other useful link and information in order to provide a complete and up-to-date overview of the Programmes.
6. In the case of countries with more than one NA designated for the Erasmus+ Programme, the NAs shall cooperate and establish a single Programme website, following the same principles. The single Programme website shall at least contain a detailed overview of the programme actions as well as the relevant links to each individual NA websites. The NA shall ensure easy navigation across the websites.
 7. If, in addition to the relevant programme websites, the NA manages other websites, it shall ensure that the information related to the programme is easy to access and not dispersed.
 8. In its communication and dissemination work, the NA shall use multimedia channels that are the best suited for the identified target groups and in line with the communication strategies for the Programmes as provided by the European Commission. Social media should be used where possible and appropriate as a timely and effective communication tool.
 9. The NA shall establish and develop contacts with the media at all appropriate levels (i.e. local, regional and national) and prepare relevant press-friendly material to ensure wide dissemination of information on the possibilities offered by the

¹⁴ For officers:

<https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/fpfis/wikis/download/attachments/166626376/E%2BPRP%20Guide%20for%20NA%20Officers.pdf?version=1&modificationDate=1588173186986&api=v2>

For beneficiaries:

<https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/fpfis/wikis/download/attachments/166626376/E%2BPRP%20Guide%20for%20Beneficiaries.pdf?version=1&modificationDate=1588066032708&api=v2>

¹⁵ <https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/429c34ff-7231-11ec-9136-01aa75ed71a1/language-en/format-PDF/source-248841143>

¹⁶ https://europa.eu/youth/solidarity_en

¹⁷ The European Solidarity Corps Projects platform is available under the following link: https://europa.eu/youth/solidarity/projects_en. It is integrated in the European Solidarity Corps portal and publicly available.

Programmes as well as the results and impact of the projects supported, putting a special emphasis on publicising examples of good practice projects. To achieve this goal, the NA should establish its own database of media contacts¹⁸ and established procedures to communicate about the Programmes and their impact, through press and media at the appropriate level. The NA shall regularly monitor the media coverage and publish a review on their websites. It will develop and offer guidance to beneficiaries in approaching local media effectively.

10. The NA shall establish regular and structured contacts with relevant policy makers to disseminate and exploit the results and showcase impact of the projects supported by the Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps Programmes. When relevant, the NA shall also establish a structured process for submitting examples of good practice projects and their results to the policy makers.
11. The NA shall cooperate with the Commission and with the EACEA, where necessary, through involvement in European Union stands at events (both physical and online) relevant to the Programmes (trade and academic fairs, exhibitions, conferences, compendia, studies, surveys, etc.).
12. The NA shall provide beneficiaries with adequate support in relation to communication work (information and promotion, as well as dissemination and exploitation of results) carried out at the local (project) level. The NA shall distribute and translate the communication guidelines for beneficiaries

3.2 Information and promotion of the Programmes

1. The NA shall:
 - organise at least one info day for each Call for proposals,
 - provide information on and promote all Programmes' actions; promotion tools are available to NAs on NAconnECt¹⁹
 - contribute together with the Commission to promoting the Programmes' platforms: the European Youth Portal, European Solidarity Corps portal, eTwinning, School Education Gateway and EPALE, in particular where the eTwinning and EPALE National Support Services are hosted in organisations other than the respective NA;
 - cooperate with National Support Services, for example: organise peer training, participation in each other's events / meetings, job shadowing, joint and/or cross promotion of the platforms and other Erasmus+ activities including the dissemination of promotional materials; provide coordinated information to Erasmus+ beneficiaries and non-successful applicants, shared visits to the beneficiaries; inform National Support Services about good practices / projects which could be the subject of an article in EPALE or School Education Gateway; indicate potential stakeholders for events or animation of certain parts of the platform.

¹⁸ Such lists must comply with relevant personal data protection rules and regulations.

¹⁹ <https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/fpfis/wikis/display/ErasmusPlus/Promotion+tools>

- promote the Erasmus+ Project Results Platform and the European Solidarity Corps Projects Platform;
 - promote the Programmes' initiatives that recognise excellence, such as the European Language Label and European Innovative Teaching Award.
2. The NA shall provide general information about the direct management actions to the national public and refer those interested in detailed information to the relevant implementing body (the Commission or EACEA), and to the Results Platforms for information on funded projects. In this regard, the NA is bound to confidentiality as regards informing the public about the results of selections carried out at central level, until this information is disclosed by the EACEA.
 3. In the case of DiscoverEU, the relevant NA shall ensure that the specific target group is reached with each application round, particularly through the involvement of youth organisations and schools.
 4. When promoting activities on international mobility to and from third countries not associated to the programme in Erasmus+ (Higher Education and Vocational Education and Training staff and students/learners, youth workers and young people) or the European Solidarity Corps (volunteering activities), the information provided by the NA to higher education institutions, VET and youth organisations shall encourage them to seek the widest possible geographical representation, and the involvement of higher education and VET institutions, youth organisations and other relevant stakeholders that are less experienced in the programme. The NA shall as well highlight in relevant communication and information activities, the importance of promoting and ensuring equity of access to young people, learners and students with fewer opportunities. Where relevant, the NA is encouraged to involve National Erasmus+ Offices (NEOs) or Erasmus+ National Focal Points (ENFPs) in its promotion activities in the countries covered by a given event or promotion initiative, and to inform EU Delegations when organising an event.
 5. The NAs in charge of Erasmus+ higher education shall identify a contact person for the international cooperation in Erasmus+. The role of these International Contact Points (ICPs) in NAs is to coordinate the promotion of the international dimension of Erasmus+ in their countries and support the implementation of activities targeting third countries not associated to the programme that their stakeholders take part in. The ICPs shall involve also the fields of vocational education and training, youth and sport as well as the European Solidarity Corps. In countries with more than one NA, the ICPs shall liaise with the other NAs in the country.

The responsibilities of the ICPs include but are not limited to:

- promote the international dimension of Erasmus+ to stakeholders and potential applicants in their country and support the dissemination of project results,
- provide guidance to applicants about the application process,
- support cooperation through the network of ICPs, the National Erasmus+ Offices (NEOs), Erasmus+ National Focal Points (ENFPs) and national Embassies,
- liaise on a regular basis with DG EAC and EACEA's services,
- provide, on limited occasions, ad-hoc support to EACEA for the international centralised actions during the selection process of applications (e.g. eligibility check of institutions, accreditation of programmes, national tuition fee policy),

- support EACEA, if needed, with information during project implementation (e.g. national requirements for visa and insurance).
5. The NA shall ensure that a maximum of potential applicants will be reached in a non-discriminatory way. Specific attention shall be given, in this context, to the inclusion and diversity measures in place at the NA and, in particular, the implementation guidelines for the Inclusion and Diversity Strategy in Annex IV.14 of the Guide for NAs.
 6. The NA shall develop information and promotion material – in line with the communication strategy and visual guidelines of the European Commission - and organise/participate in diverse activities (e.g. meetings, conferences, tutorial modules) that will be conducive to attracting a sufficient number of interested applicants so as to ensure a genuine competition between good quality applications.
 7. The NA has the right to re-use beneficiaries' materials related to the funded project, documents and information, in accordance with the contribution and grant agreements, for information, communication and publicity purposes.
 8. For all the events and activities it organises and in all publications and materials it produces, the NA shall comply with the visual guidelines provided by the Commission. The NA shall take special care to give clear visibility to the Programmes through an appropriate display of the relevant EU emblem with programme name²⁰. This includes, in particular, placing the relevant EU emblem with programme name both inside and outside of the building where it is located, in particular when the organisation hosting the NA also administers other schemes or fulfils other functions than the Programme implementation tasks as NA.
 9. If the NA wishes to mention in addition to the name of its legal entity also the Programmes and the Erasmus+ fields for which it has been designated, it shall denote its function as NA as follows in all materials and documents produced by the NA.
 - First line:
 - "Erasmus+ National Agency", or
 - "Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps National Agency"
 - Second line - specify the fields for which the NA has been designated:
 - If the NA has been designated for all fields of Erasmus+ and both Programmes: "Education, Training, Youth";
 - If the NA has been designated only for Erasmus+ and for all fields except youth: "Education and Training";
 - If the NA has been designated only for Erasmus+ and another (combination of) field(s), it shall list them using the following terms: "School Education", "Vocational Education and Training", "Higher Education", "Adult Education", "Youth";

²⁰ It is composed by the name of relevant programme (i.e. Erasmus+, European Solidarity Corps) and the European Union emblem (EU flag). Please refer to section 3.4.5 for more information on the Graphic Design User Guide.

- If the NA has been designated for Erasmus+ for the field of youth, and the European Solidarity Corps, it shall specify "Youth".

3.3 Dissemination and exploitation of Programme results

1. Each year, the NA shall identify national good practice examples of the Erasmus+ and the European Solidarity Corps Programmes, and it shall systematically flag these in the Project Management Module (PMM)²¹ in accordance with the guidelines in Section 3.3 and Annex IV.10 of the Guide for NAs. The NA shall pay particular attention that relevant mandatory results have been uploaded either in the Erasmus+ Project Results Platform or in the European Solidarity Corps Projects Platform as applicable, when identifying and flagging good practice examples in PMM.

The NA shall ensure the dissemination of good practice projects at national level.

2. The NA shall inform Erasmus+ Key Action 2 beneficiaries about the obligation to upload their results on the Erasmus+ Project Results Platform and submit them for validation at the final report stage. The NA shall check whether the beneficiary has uploaded into the platform the project results which are mandatory to be displayed in the platform. NA officers shall use the platform to validate and publish projects results.
3. The NA should encourage other Actions beneficiaries to upload project results – if and when available - on the Project Results Platforms to enhance the visibility of their projects and impact.
4. To facilitate beneficiaries' access to the Erasmus+ Project Results Platform, the NA shall place one of the banners of the platform and the relevant tracking codes provided by the Commission²² on its Erasmus+ Programme website as an active link to the platform. The banner shall be placed in an easily accessible and visible section of the website. The NA shall create a link from its European Solidarity Corps website to the European Solidarity Corps Projects Platform.
5. The NA shall provide support and guidance to beneficiaries for their participation in the dissemination activities and on the use of the Erasmus+ Project Results Platform and the European Solidarity Corps Projects Platform (see Annex IV.10 of the Guide for NAs).
6. The NA shall be responsible for the quality of the contractual data published on the Erasmus+ Project Results Platform and the European Solidarity Corps Projects Platform, including public project summaries uploaded from electronic forms and project results. The NA shall perform a quality check of the updated project summaries and, when applicable, review the results uploaded directly by beneficiaries in the platforms, at final report stage.

²¹ In EPlusLink for projects from previous programmes.

²² The banners and the tracking codes for each NA are available on NAConnECT:

<https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/fpfis/wikis/display/ErasmusPlus/Dissemination+and+Project+Results+Platform>

7. The NA shall be responsible for the compliance with Regulation (EU) 2018/1725 in all project information, including results uploaded by beneficiaries, published on the Erasmus+ Project Results Platform and the European Solidarity Corps Projects Platform, such as reference to natural persons, photos of participants, etc.
8. The NA shall also attend and/or organise specific events in order to promote, showcase and debate Programmes' results.
9. In light of the specific objective of the Erasmus+ Programme to improve the teaching and learning of languages and to promote the Union's broad linguistic diversity, the NA shall implement the European Language Label (ELL) initiative at national level as described in the guidelines in Annex IV.9 of the Guide for NAs.
10. Erasmus+ projects that received the European Language Label shall be flagged in the Erasmus+ Project Results Platform to increase their visibility. The NA shall promote the tool via the different events it organises, including events around the European Day of Languages. The NA shall also include the European Language Label in its dissemination and exploitation strategy, for example by preparing and disseminating project stories that received the European Language Label awards and inviting organisations to promote the label in their networks (for example acting as an ambassador and inform about the possibilities that opens with the European Language project).
11. In light of supporting the objectives of the European Education Area, the NA shall contribute to the implementation of the European Innovative Teaching Award (EITA). On an annual basis, the NA shall select projects under the categories and thematic topics of the award as described in the guidelines in Annex IV.15 of the Guide for NAs. Furthermore, the NA shall participate in the communication and promotion activities related to the implementation of the European Innovative Teaching Award.

3.4 Use of the EU emblem in the context of the Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps Programmes

1. In addition to the provisions under Article II.8.2 and Article II.8.3 of the Contribution agreement, the NA shall display the name of Erasmus+ and the European Solidarity Corps, as applicable, on all communication and promotion materials (including letter heads) it produces in relation to the Programmes.
2. The NA shall ensure a prominent visibility of the EU emblem with programme name on the Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps on the European Solidarity Corps websites²³, as applicable, as well as for all the events and activities the NA organises.
3. General information and conditions of use of the EU emblem are available at:

²³ This means that the Programme name with EU emblem should be prominently displayed in all the pages of the Programme website(s). If the NA makes use of its own website to inform about Erasmus+ and/or the European Solidarity Corps, the programme name(s) with EU emblem should be prominently displayed on both the homepage and any other sub-page referring to Erasmus+ and/or the European Solidarity Corps. This has to be ensured especially if the NA manages also other EU, international or national programmes.

https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/info/files/eu_emblem_rules.pdf.

The composition of the EU emblem with programme name is available in the communication package provided by the Commission on NAconnECT.

The ready-to-use EU emblem including the funding statement can be downloaded at: https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/en/information/logos_downloadcenter

4. The NA shall ensure that all beneficiaries use the EU emblem including the funding statement in all communication and promotion material to acknowledge the support received by the European Union.

3.5 Translations and proofreading

1. If requested by the Commission, the NA shall translate or proofread translations provided by the Commission of Programme-related documents in their national language.
2. The NA shall collaborate with those NAs sharing the same language to provide in due time a unique version per language of the documents concerned. The Commission may propose one NA to coordinate the translation effort in case several NAs share the same language needs.

4. GRANT ADMINISTRATION

4.1 Principles for applying the grants

1. The NA shall award grants either through a call for proposals either without a call for proposals.
2. The NA shall award a grant without a call for proposals only in the following cases:
 - to bodies with a de jure or de facto monopoly or to bodies designated by Member States, under their responsibility, where those Member States are in a de jure or de facto monopoly situation;
 - for activities with specific characteristics that require a particular type of body on account of its technical competence, its high degree of specialisation or its administrative powers, on condition that the activities concerned do not fall within the scope of a call for proposals
3. These exceptions to call for proposals do not apply to actions funded from the EU contribution for grant support.

4.1.1 Transparency

The NA shall ensure that the target population of potential applicants obtain accurate and timely information on actions being undertaken under the Programmes. All grants awarded in the course of a financial year shall be published on the NA's website (see Section 4.15 of the Guide for NAs).

4.1.2 *Equal treatment*

The NA shall guarantee the absence of favouritism in grant award and administration procedures as well as their impartiality. No preferential treatment may be given to any potential beneficiary.

4.1.3 *Co-financing*

The NA shall fund only part of the action, the rest being funded by the beneficiary or covered by contributions other than those made from the EU budget²⁴. This principle is intended to ensure that beneficiaries maintain a certain degree of financial independence from EU funding while increasing and diversifying the resources from which the action may benefit.

4.1.4 *Non-profit*

The NA shall guarantee that the beneficiary does not derive any profit from the activities funded by the grant²⁵.

4.1.5 *Non-cumulative award. Double funding and multiple submission check*

1. In order to prevent double funding, applicants can submit the same application only once.
2. In case of multiple submissions of the same application by the same applicant organisation or consortium to different NAs, all applications shall be rejected.
3. The NA shall verify the existence of almost identical or similar applications and projects under the Programmes: This applies to Erasmus+ Key Action 1 – Learning mobility of individuals (except accredited grants applications), Key Action 2 – Partnerships for Cooperation, as well as to the European Solidarity Corps – Solidarity Projects.
4. In order to provide reasonable assurance on detecting and preventing double funding, the NA shall undertake a check of proposals selected for funding based on a number of key control elements, by using the Multiple Submissions and Double Funding Dashboard (MSDF) provided by the Commission on the NAconnECt platform for comparison of applications: <https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/fpfis/wikis/x/X5UOEg>.²⁶ Furthermore, the NA may use the European Commission tools for comparison of applications which are currently under development and will be gradually made available for the different actions.
5. In case almost identical or similar applications are submitted by the same or different applicant organisations or consortia to the same or different NAs, the NA may reject them all.

²⁴ Lump sums and unit costs comply with this principle.

²⁵ Lump sums and unit costs comply with this principle.

²⁶ Double Funding Tool Guidelines:

<https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/fpfis/wikis/display/ErasmusPlus/Double+Funding+Dashboard>

6. The NA shall ensure that the list of proposals selected for funding is cross-checked across different fields, countries, rounds and call years of the Erasmus+ Programme before the grant award decision is taken, so as to ensure that no proposal for a Programme action is funded twice with EU grants.
7. If the NA suspects that there is a risk of double funding it should contact the counterpart NA(s) for a detailed cross-check of the application in question. The NAs concerned are responsible for verifying and deciding whether the applications need to be rejected on the grounds of the "non-cumulative award principle" as defined in the Programme Guides.

4.1.6 Non-retroactivity

1. The NA shall ensure that no grant is awarded retroactively for activities already completed at the time of submission of the grant application.
2. A grant may be awarded for an activity which has already begun only where the applicant can demonstrate the need to start the activity before the grant agreement is signed. In such case, expenditure eligible for financing may not have been incurred prior to the date of submission of the grant application;

4.2 The forms of grants

1. The NA shall award grants under one of the following forms:
 - reimbursement of a specified proportion of the eligible costs actually incurred;
 - lump sums;
 - flat-rate financing;
 - reimbursement on the basis of unit costs;
 - combination of the different forms referred above.
2. The Programme Guides set out the applicable rules for the different forms of grants applicable to the Programmes' actions. These rules apply as such for grants awarded by the NA.
3. In so far as the grant request relates to budget categories for which unit contributions apply and the NA – in line with the indications provided by experts – decides to award a grant amount lower than the request in the grant application, the NA shall reduce the number of units that determine the budget.

4.3 Grant award procedure

1. The award of grants shall be organised in a fully transparent way, guaranteeing impartiality and equal treatment to all applicants. All stages in the grant award process shall be documented.
2. Grant applications submitted outside the framework of a call for proposals cannot be considered for support under the Programmes.

3. The Authorising Officer of the NA shall establish an evaluation methodology that shall cover at least guidance on carrying out the evaluation and on the organisation of the evaluation process and the related administrative arrangements.
4. The evaluation methodology shall not put into question the conditions of the call. It shall in particular be based solely on the criteria specified in the Call for proposal and shall not modify or deviate from any of them. The methodology shall be made known to all actors involved in the grant award process.
5. The NA shall inform all actors involved in the grant award process (and in particular external experts) about the actions concerned by giving them adequate training, documentation and guidelines on the applicable grant award rules.
6. Each of the actors in the grant award process shall perform their checks and assessment individually and independently. An identified and secured access to the relevant IT tool for recording the assessment shall be ensured.
7. Unless otherwise specified in the applicable annexes of the Guide for NAs, the award procedure for accreditations follows the same principles as the procedure for grant applications except that it results in the award of an accreditation instead of a grant.
8. For the assessment of applications and award of Erasmus accreditations in adult education, vocational education and training, and school education, please refer to Annex IV.3 of the Guide for NAs.
9. For the assessment of applications and award of Erasmus accreditations in the field of youth, please refer to Annex IV.4 of the Guide for NAs.
10. Under Key Action 1 in the fields of vocational education and training, school education, adult education and youth, the NA should allocate the available funding between accredited projects and short-term/standard projects in such a way to ensure that accredited organisations can receive an appropriate grant considering their number and average size, and that applicants for short-term/standard projects have a reasonable chance to receive a grant.

The NA will submit its proposed indicative allocation for assessment by DG EAC as part of the NA Work Programme. DG EAC may request a modification of this proposal to ensure the respect of the above principle.

The indicative allocation must be published on the NA's website ahead of the call deadline. The NA may request changes to the allocation. However, the NA does not need to make a request to transfer funds between accredited and short-term/standard projects of the same field if all possibilities to spend the funds have been exhausted for either type of projects.

4.4 Evaluation committee

1. The NA shall appoint an evaluation committee for each grant award procedure (selection round) and for the award of accreditations/European Solidarity Corps Quality Label.

2. One or several evaluation committees may be designated for the various indirect management actions and Programmes managed by the NA. Evaluation committees may be designated for specific selection rounds or for a specific period of time.

4.4.1 Role of the evaluation committee

1. The evaluation committee shall make a proposal to the Authorising Officer of the NA for grant applications to be accepted, rejected or put on the reserve list, based on their quality in compliance with the corresponding Call criteria. Particular attention shall be paid to applications which are close to the funding threshold.
2. Upon completion of their work, the members of the evaluation committee shall sign a record listing all the grant applications evaluated, identifying those that are eligible for funding and indicating the proposed grant amounts. This record shall include the minutes of the meetings and the written consultation of the evaluation committee and it shall be dated and signed by all members of the evaluation committee.
3. In the case of Erasmus+ mobility projects in the field of higher education supported by external policy funds (KA171), the evaluation committee shall propose a list of mobility flows per region, each ranked in order of merit. The evaluation committee may propose to reject mobility flows with certain countries within a region for the purpose of achieving the indicative geographical targets as specified in the Erasmus+ Programme Guide.
4. The record of the evaluation committee shall be kept for future reference until 5 years after the closure of the related Contribution Agreement.

4.4.2 Composition and internal organisation of the evaluation committee

1. An evaluation committee shall consist of at least three members representing at least two organisational entities with no hierarchical link between them. The latter condition does not apply if the evaluation committee consists only of NA staff and there are no such distinct organisational entities within the NA.
2. The following persons, who are not empowered to vote on the selection of proposals, may assist the evaluation committee: experts, observers, persons responsible for providing technical advice and representatives of the evaluation committee secretariat.
3. The evaluation committee shall work in accordance with rules of procedure, which shall be decided by the NA and communicated to the members of the evaluation committee before they start working.
4. The rules of procedure of the evaluation committee shall provide an objective method for dealing with grant applications of the same quality level (e.g. assessment by a third expert).
5. The members of the evaluation committee shall meet or proceed in writing in view of preparing the grant award proposal.

4.5 Conflict of interest

1. In accordance with the principles of transparency and equal treatment, any actor involved in any stage of the grant award process shall sign a declaration on the prevention of conflicts of interest and confidentiality in relation to the given selection round. Members of evaluation committees shall sign this declaration for each given selection round. The declaration shall follow the template provided in Annex I of the Guide for NAs.
2. If such a conflict arises, the person in question has to refrain from taking part in the evaluation procedure and timely refer to the Authorising Officer of the NA who shall then confirm in writing whether or not there is a conflict of interests and, if such a conflict exists, take any appropriate decision such as replacing the person for the whole evaluation procedure or only part of it.
3. Without prejudice to the circumstances of exclusion described in the Erasmus+ and the European Solidarity Corps Programme Guides, before being awarded a grant or a contract, structures and networks which have been identified or designated in the Erasmus+ Programme or in the European Solidarity Corps or in any Annual Commission Work programme adopted for the implementation of the Erasmus+ Programme or the European Solidarity Corps, shall be able to demonstrate that they are not in a conflict of interest either because precautionary measures are taken by them or because their internal organisation is such that there is a clear separation of interests. The same applies also to legal entities hosting the Erasmus+ and the European Solidarity Corps NA but dealing with other activities inside or outside the remit of the Erasmus+ Programme and European Solidarity Corps, as well as entities affiliated to these legal entities.
4. External experts assisting the NA in the grant award process shall be chosen on the basis of their professional capacity, preferably through an open call. For the selection of experts, the NA shall respect the principles of transparency, equal treatment and absence of conflicts of interest.
5. Persons who have a function in the supervision of the NA cannot take part in the grant award process.
6. Any internal or external expert who has participated in the quality assessment of a grant application in the selection round concerned shall not have a decision-making role in the evaluation committee, but may be called upon to provide information to the evaluation committee.
7. The Authorising Officer of the NA taking the grant award decision may participate as an observer, but shall not have a voting right in the evaluation committee.

4.6 Publication of call for proposals

1. The NA shall publicise on its website all necessary information on the grant opportunities offered by the Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps Programmes in the NA's area of responsibility:
 - the relevant Calls for proposals,

- the Erasmus+ Programme Guide and, where applicable, the European Solidarity Corps Guide,
 - all forms and documents required to apply,
 - all forms and documents allowing Erasmus+ and the European Solidarity Corps beneficiaries to fulfil their contractual obligations towards the NA,
 - available budgets per selection round,
 - relevant contact points for further information,
2. Any information published at national level shall comply fully with the provisions and guidelines contained in the respective Programme Guides and the Guide for NAs.

4.7 Support to potential applicants

1. The NA shall provide objective advice and assistance to potential applicants. To that effect, the NA shall organise training and supporting activities that take due account of the specific needs of the different target groups of the Programmes (in addition to its general information and promotion activities), while ensuring equal treatment and transparency principle
2. The NA shall encourage accredited organisations, whenever applicable, to apply for funding and monitor closely their submission of grant applications.
3. The NA shall support potential applicants in finding partners (in EU Member States and third countries associated to the programme as well as in third countries not associated to the programme) and in developing and consolidating transnational partnerships and networks between various players in the Programmes, through the organisation of activities such as contact seminars, use of social media, etc,

4.8 Reception of applications

1. If an applicant could not submit an application by the deadline due to technical problems and informs the NA about the issue within 24 hours after the submission deadline, the NA shall assess whether the technical reasons justify the delay, take a decision, and inform the applicant accordingly.
2. In case an applicant sent the same application (with the same form ID) more than once in the same selection round to the same NA, the NA shall consider valid the last version received before the deadline has expired.
3. If an NA receives an application which should have been submitted to another NA within the deadline, the NA having received the application by mistake shall redirect this application to the correct NA, i.e. the NA in the country of the applicant and in charge of the relevant field. The correct NA may consider the wrong submission as a clerical error and analyse on a case-by-case basis, while ensuring equal treatment among applicants, if to accept it or not.
4. Modifications or additional information that substantially change the application shall be disregarded during the grant award process if they were sent to the NA after the closing date of the Call for proposals.

4.9 Evaluation of the applications

The evaluation of every application has to follow rigorously the criteria published in the relevant Programme Guide in order to ensure equal treatment of all applicants.

4.9.1 Admissibility, exclusion and eligibility criteria check

The admissibility, exclusion and eligibility criteria check shall result in a list of grant applications that will be further subject to a quality assessment or considered for a grant, in case of accredited organisations, and a list of rejected grant applications. In case of doubt with regard to any of the admissibility, exclusion or eligibility criteria, the NA may request further proof from the applicant or from other competent instances (such as chambers of commerce, courts, etc.) in respect of applicable privacy protection rules.

4.9.1.1 Admissibility criteria

The NA shall verify whether all applications comply with the admissibility criteria as published in part C of the Erasmus+ Programme Guide and in part E of the European Solidarity Corps Programme Guide. Failure to comply with one of the admissibility criteria will lead to rejection of an application even if the other criteria are well satisfied.

4.9.1.2 Eligibility criteria

1. The NA shall verify whether all applications comply with the eligibility criteria as published in the Erasmus+ and the European Solidarity Corps Programme Guides. Failure to comply with one of the eligibility criteria will lead to rejection of an application even if the other criteria are well satisfied.
2. The eligibility check of any type of grant application may be undertaken by a single NA staff member based on application data available in PMM.
3. In case an organisation takes part (as applicant and/or consortium member) in more Key Action 1 applications than allowed according to the eligibility criteria, the NA should offer the organisation to voluntarily withdraw from some of the applications. If the organisation does not reply in the time period specified by the NA, only the last submitted applications shall be taken into account.
4. For actions where the definition of eligible applicant is established by the competent National Authority in each country, the NA shall ensure that the definitions and accompanying explanations established for the previous calls are reviewed and re-approved in advance of the first concerned submission deadline each year. Approved definitions shall be published on the website of the NA at least six weeks before the relevant submission deadline.

4.9.1.3 Exclusion criteria

1. The NA shall verify whether all applicants comply with the exclusion criteria as published in the Erasmus+ and the European Solidarity Corps Programme Guides. The applicant may not be in any situation giving rise to exclusion. Failure to comply with the exclusion criteria will lead to rejection of an application even if the other criteria are well satisfied.

2. The NA is required to consult the European Commission's early detection and exclusion system (EDES)²⁷ when checking exclusion criteria for any beneficiary and co-beneficiary receiving EU funds, before taking a grant award decision and before signing a grant agreement. The obligation to consult the EDES may also extend to natural persons with powers of representation, decision-making or control over the entities concerned, particularly in case of doubt on one of these persons.
3. Where the NA considers that an entity should be included in the EDES database, it shall notify DG EAC thereof by applying the procedure for dealing with irregularities and frauds in Section 5.7 of the Guide for NAs.

4.9.2 Selection criteria

4.9.2.1 Operational capacity check

1. If specified by the relevant Programme Guide, the NA shall check the operational capacity of the applicant before taking the grant award decision in order to ensure that applicants have the professional competencies and qualifications required to carry out the proposed project, such as adequate resources in terms of skilled personnel, specific qualifications, professional experience and references in the field concerned, materials, equipment, etc.
2. Supportive documents must be checked at the latest before signature of the grant agreement.
3. An operational capacity check does not need to be performed if the application has already been proposed for rejection based on other grounds.
4. The NA shall verify the operational capacity, in accordance with the requirements specified in the Programme Guides, based on the application (including information about the applicant's past participation in the current and previous Programmes) and the documents submitted in the Organisation Registration System. The NA may ask for additional supporting documents to verify the information included in the application.
5. If the applicant's operational capacity is deemed to be insufficient, the application shall be rejected.

4.9.2.2 Financial capacity check

1. If specified by the relevant Programme Guide, the NA shall check the financial capacity of the applicant²⁸ before taking the grant award decision. The applicant's financial capacity is verified on the basis of the supporting documents prescribed in the Programme Guides.

²⁷ In order to access EDES, each NA should appoint an Organisation User Administrator (OUA) responsible for managing the access rights of the NA. The OUA should contact BUDG-EDES-DB@ec.europa.eu, to request the administrator right and obtain from DG BUDG necessary instructions.

²⁸ For low value grants of less than or equal to EUR 60.000, the NA shall not verify the financial capacity of the applicant. This rule on low value grants applies to each grant separately, therefore also in cases when an organisation applies for several grants of less than EUR 60.000, the sum of which exceeds EUR 60.000.

2. Supporting documents must be checked at the latest before the signature of the grant agreement.
3. A financial capacity check does not need to be performed if the application has already been proposed for rejection based on other grounds.
4. Guidelines for the assessment of the financial capacity are provided in Annex IV.5 of the Guide for NAs.
5. In case the analysis of the financial capacity of a beneficiary reveals weaknesses that result in the risk of EU funds being lost, the NA shall indicate in the grant agreement the precautionary measures: grant without pre-financing, grant with pre-financing in instalments, grant with pre-financing subject to submission of a pre-financing guarantee up to the amount of the pre-financing.
6. If the applicant's financial capacity is deemed to be insufficient, the application shall be rejected.

4.9.3 Risk assessment

1. The objective of the risk assessment is to assess the applicant's status with respect to the globality of its ongoing activity (past projects, number of concurrent projects, number of sectors).
2. The NA should assess the specific risks linked to the organisation to enable the relevant risk ratings to be integrated in the management and monitoring of the project, as well as any eventual risk-based check.
3. This assessment is qualitative and can lead to exclusion or rejection if the applicant is in one of the exclusion conditions listed in the Programme Guides. The aim is to make a first assessment based on available information to guide both the control approach for this beneficiary, and also to develop a knowledge base which can be used by other NAs when looking at project applicants and participants.
4. The risk assessment linked to any particular applicant is a continuous process and can be amended at any time as new information becomes available.
5. For the first years of the Programmes, the risk assessment process is in its early stages, so most applicants will have by default a "low risk" rating, but the aim is to develop this over time to more efficiently target checks and monitoring. The NA is invited to introduce risk ratings based on past performance if these are available and supported by concrete evidence.

4.9.4 Assessment of award criteria (quality assessment)

1. Unless otherwise specified in the relevant Programme Guides, all grant applications that have successfully passed the admissibility, exclusion and eligibility criteria check shall undergo a quality assessment on the basis of the award criteria published in the Programme Guides.
2. Grant applications that do not undergo a quality assessment shall be allocated funding in accordance with the rules defined in the Programme Guides.

3. In view of proposing an adequate grant amount, the quality assessment shall include also an assessment of the grant request in relation to the activities proposed. On the basis of this assessment and the grant allocation rules, a grant amount shall be proposed for each grant application that is of sufficient quality to receive a grant.
4. Guidelines on quality assessment are provided in Annex IV of the Guide for NAs.
5. The outcome of the quality assessment of the grant applications shall be a ranking list of proposals with a proposed grant amount per grant application.
6. The quality assessment of applications for accreditations shall result in a list of proposals to award the accreditation.
7. In the case of Erasmus+ mobility projects in the field of higher education supported by external policy funds (KA171), the ranking list of proposals shall indicate, in addition, the following information:
 - the region(s) of which a grant has been requested,
 - the score of the region(s) following the quality assessment
 - the number of mobilities allocated to the region(s) and the sending/receiving countries within each region.
8. The required number and mix of internal and external experts for evaluating the award criteria (quality assessment) depends on the complexity and risk involved. For grants above EUR 60.000, the NA is advised to involve as much as possible external experts to increase the objectiveness of the assessment of the applications.

For quality assessment of grant applications, the following minima apply with regard of the type and number of experts:

- a. Erasmus+ Key Action 1 – Learning mobility of individuals and Key Action 2 – Small-scale Partnerships and the European Solidarity Corps actions:
 - if the grant requested is less than or equal to EUR 60.000, the application shall be assessed by minimum 1 expert; no external expert is required;
 - if the grant requested is higher than EUR 60.000, the application shall be assessed by minimum 2 experts²⁹; no external expert is required.
- b. Erasmus+ Key Action 2 – Cooperation Partnerships
 - the application shall be assessed by minimum 2 experts, out of which at least one shall be external to the NA;
- c. European Solidarity Corps Quality Label for partners:
 - the application shall be assessed by minimum 1 expert; no external expert is required;
- d. Erasmus accreditations in the fields of higher education (mobility consortia), adult education, VET, school education and youth and including the Quality

²⁹ In the case of Erasmus+ mobility projects in the field of higher education supported by external policy funds (KA171) the application shall be assessed by minimum 1 expert; no external expert is required.

Label for lead organisations (but not the European Solidarity Corps Quality Label for partners):

- the application shall be assessed by minimum 2 experts; no external expert is required.

4.10 NA certification of organisations

1. All accredited organisations and all organisations that take part in any grant agreement as beneficiaries or co-beneficiaries have to register in the Organisation Registration system available in the Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps platforms.
2. The NA shall certify the relevant participating organisations by checking if the data registered in the Organisation Registration system corresponds to the organisation's legal data as defined in the corresponding supporting documents.
3. The NA shall check if the participating organisation used the correct Organisation ID and link any multiple Organisation IDs (e.g. duplicate registrations of the same organisation).
4. The NA shall certify at the latest before issuing the grant agreement / accreditation decision:
 - the applicant organisation in selected projects and projects on the reserve list in Erasmus+ Key Action 1, Key Action 2 and the European Solidarity Corps Actions;
 - the member organisations in mobility consortia under Erasmus+ Key Action 1;
 - the successful applicants for an accreditation.³⁰
 - the partner organisations in selected projects and projects on the reserve list in Erasmus+ Key Action 1 and Key Action 2 projects, that are party to a grant agreement.
5. The certification of partner organisations that are party to a grant agreement is performed by the NA of the country in which the organisation is established. The certification status of partner organisations is shared with the NA of the applicant organisation in PMM. Organisations from third countries not associated to the programme shall be certified by the NA of the applicant organisation. If an organisation from third countries not associated to the programme participates in different applications submitted in different EU Member States and third countries associated to the programme, the NA that certifies the organisation first takes the ownership of the certification.
6. If the status of the applicant organisation is invalid, the NA shall reject the application.

³⁰ The certification of Higher Education Institutions applying for an Erasmus Charter is undertaken at Commission level (by EACEA).

7. If the status of any of the co-beneficiary organisations is invalid, the NA of the applicant organisation shall inquire about the reason of invalidity with the certifying NA. If the reason is of a technical type (e.g. a document not linked to the certification process is missing):
 - a. For Erasmus+ Key Action 1 the NA may proceed with the selection process.
 - b. For Erasmus+ Key Action 2, the certifying NA may contact the organisation to take the necessary measures. Following positive corrective action, the project cannot be rejected nor the partner excluded on the basis of invalidity.

In other cases, the NA may:

- a. reject the application as a whole, or
- b. re-evaluate the application to assess whether the project could be accepted for funding in the absence of the partner organisation concerned and eventually award the project without the invalid partner, with consequent reduction and/or redistribution of the awarded grant among the remaining partners;

4.11 Contacts with applicants before the grant award decision: adjustments and corrections

1. Contacts between the NA and applicants during the evaluation stage are permitted in the following circumstances:
 - The purpose of these contacts is to clarify a situation which the NA is not in a position to assess properly, and the clarification does not substantially change the proposal.
 - The principle of equal treatment of applicants is upheld, i.e. the purpose or effect of the contacts is not to secure preferential treatment of any submitted proposals.
 - The contacts do not give rise to any legitimate expectations on the part of the contacted applicants.
2. All communication must be initiated in writing, and the NA must retain an appropriate record of the contacts it had with applicants in the course of a procedure.
3. If the applicant omits to submit evidence or supportive documents due to an obvious clerical error or a technical issue, the NA shall ask the applicant to provide the missing information or supporting documents. The NA shall make the request in writing, notifying the final date for submission of missing information. Such information or clarifications shall not substantially change the application or alter the terms of the Calls for proposals.
4. The NA may invite an applicant to adjust its proposal in the light of the recommendations of the evaluation committee. The adjustments shall be minor and non-substantial. An adjustment cannot be imposed as a condition for awarding a grant.

4.12 Grant award decision

1. The grant award decision shall be taken by the Authorising Officer of the NA.

2. The grant award decision shall be based on the grant award proposal prepared by the evaluation committee. The Authorising Officer may depart from this proposal if considered appropriate, while fully respecting the eligibility, selection and award criteria laid down in the Programme Guides. Such deviation shall be duly justified in the grant award decision.
3. The grant award decision shall be clearly labelled as constituting the award decision in the form of a separate note, that is duly dated and signed. It shall show the subject, the amount available and the overall amount awarded.
4. In annex to the grant award decision, the related list of applications shall be separated between awarded and rejected applications, as well as applications placed on the reserve list. This annex shall specify at least:
 - For approved applications: the name of successful applicants, the title of the granted activity, the grant amount awarded and the reasons for this choice, in particular where it departs from the opinion of the evaluation committee;
 - For applications put on the reserve list: the name of the applicant, the title of the activity applied for, the grant amount to be awarded in case the application could be financed at a later stage, and the reasons for this choice, in particular where it departs from the opinion of the evaluation committee;

In the case of Erasmus+ mobility projects in the field of higher education supported by external policy funds (KA171), the reserve list shall include the proposals in a ranking order based on the score of the regions, and indicate the following information:

 - the applicant,
 - grant requested,
 - the region(s) and the third countries not associated to the programme, for which a grant request has been rejected due to lack of funds or geographical balance,
 - the score of the region(s), indicating the third countries not associated to the programme
 - For rejected applications: the name of the rejected applicants, the title of the activity applied for and the reasons for rejection.
5. The grant award decision shall be kept for future reference until 5 years after the closure of the related Contribution Agreement.

4.13 Reserve lists

1. Applications having passed the quality threshold which cannot be funded due to lack of funds shall be put on reserve lists, and accepted later if funds become available.
2. The proposals shall be entered in the reserve lists following the ranking order. The NA shall respect the ranking order when accepting applications from reserve lists.
3. Projects accepted from the reserve lists must end by the latest possible end date indicated in the calendars for the use of funds for grant support.

4. If, for the reason mentioned above, the project duration has to be shorter than included in the application, the beneficiary may propose changes to the project work-plan and the budget. The NA shall assess the proposed changes and take a decision if the project can carry out the planned core activities and it can reach its intended objectives within a shorter duration and with a reduced budget.

4.14 Notification of grant award results to the applicants

1. The NA shall notify all applicants of the outcome of the grant award process and, in the case of successful grant applications, of the grant amount awarded before the start of the activities for which support has been requested.
2. This notification shall be done in writing in hard copy or in electronic format no later than six months after the final date for submission of the grant applications. However, in view of good administration, the NA shall comply with the indicative deadlines indicated in the Calendars for the use of funds annexed to the Contribution Agreement. The NA shall include the Organisation ID and the project code in the notification of results.
3. The NA shall clearly inform all applicants about their right of redress for grant award decisions affecting them adversely, as detailed in Section 5.8 of the Guide for NAs.
4. The NA may decide to inform applicants whose application is rejected on the basis of the eligibility check before the grant award decision is taken. In that case, due care shall be taken to specify the provisional and non-binding character of the information provided, which will be final only after the grant award decision is taken by Authorising Officer of the NA.

4.15 Ex-post publication of grant award results

1. For a matter of transparency, the NA shall make available information on the recipients of the EU funds, in an appropriate time manner and no later than 30 June of the year following the year of the signature of the grant agreements. This shall be done at least via an easily accessible publication on the NA Programmes' websites and may also to be done in its newsletter, in the national press, etc.
2. The following information shall be published with due observance of the requirements of confidentiality and security in particular regarding the protection of personal data³¹:
 - a) the name of the beneficiary;
 - b) the locality of the beneficiary;
 - c) the amount awarded;
 - d) the nature and the purpose of the measure.

For the purpose of point (b) the term 'locality' shall mean:

³¹ As laid down in Regulation (EU) 2018/1725 of the European Parliament and of the Council on the protection of natural persons with regard to the processing of personal data by the Union institutions, bodies, offices and agencies and on the free movement of such data.

- (i) when the beneficiary is a legal person, its address;
 - (ii) when the beneficiary is a natural person, the region at NUTS 2 level or, in the case of third countries, the equivalent to the region at NUTS 2 level.
3. In addition, the NA may publish compendia of selected projects (including information such as project summaries, name and country of participating organisations).
4. As far as personal data referring to natural persons are concerned (e.g. the information related to the data of legal representative or contact person), please refer to the privacy statement³² for Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps indirect management actions..

5. MANAGEMENT OF GRANT AGREEMENTS

5.1 Issuing of grant agreements

1. The NA shall use the standard templates for the grant agreements enclosed in Annex II (for Erasmus+) and in Annex III (for the European Solidarity Corps) of the Guide for NAs. In view of transparency, the Commission will publish these templates also on its website.
2. If the applicant organisation is the sole beneficiary of a grant, the mono-beneficiary grant agreement template shall be used. If the applicant organisation applies on behalf of organisations participating in the project, the multi-beneficiary grant agreement template shall be used.
3. The NA may introduce changes to the grant agreement templates only if required by national legislation and provided that:
 - they do not conflict with any of the provisions therein, and
 - they do not introduce unnecessary restrictions for grant beneficiaries.

Where such national adaptations are deemed necessary, the NA shall obtain prior written authorisation from the Commission and provide the necessary documentation on the underlying legal requirements.

4. Grant agreements shall be issued in two copies in hard copy or in an electronic format. They may be sent to beneficiaries in hard copy or in an electronic format. If the NA decides to issue the grant agreement in an electronic format, it shall protect the electronic documents adequately from potential modification by beneficiaries. The "General Conditions" part of the grant agreement can be published on the NA website only, and they do not need to be sent to the beneficiaries.

³² [Privacy notice | Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps programmes \(europa.eu\)](#) (“How long do we keep your data ?”)

5. When issuing a grant agreement, the NA shall send an accompanying letter or message stating the final date by which the signed agreement is to be returned to the NA, after which the grant offer is cancelled.
6. In case the beneficiary wishes to introduce changes to the grant agreement, s/he shall not alter the text of the grant agreement but introduce a separate request thereto to the NA. In case the NA agrees with the proposed changes, it shall issue a modified grant agreement proposal to the beneficiary. If not, the grant agreement offer shall be deemed cancelled unless the beneficiary is still prepared to accept the conditions of the initial grant agreement.
7. The grant agreement shall be signed and dated by the beneficiary before being signed and dated by the NA. If issued in hard copy, as last of the signing parties, the NA shall send one copy of the grant agreement signed and dated by both parties to the beneficiary and keep the other copy for the NA. Grant agreements shall be signed by both parties in respect of the applicable Calendars for use of funds and no later than three months after the grant award notifications were sent to successful applicants.
8. Provided that the underlying Contribution Agreement has been signed by the NA and the Commission, the NA shall send to the successful applicants the grant agreement before the start of the selected project.
9. In the case of EU Member States, the NA shall use one of the official EU languages in grant agreements and in written communication with beneficiaries about contractual issues.
10. In the case of EFTA/EEA countries or acceding or candidate countries, the NA may choose to use one of the official EU languages or the official language of its country for grant agreements and contractual correspondence with beneficiaries. In the event that the language chosen is not one of the official EU languages, the NA shall be in charge of providing translations of good quality at the request of the Commission, the European Court of Auditors, OLAF, EPPO (European Public Prosecutor's Office) or any persons mandated by either institution undertaking an evaluation, control or audit on their behalf.

5.2 Amendment to grant agreements

1. The beneficiary or the NA may request an amendment to the grant agreement in accordance with the contractual provisions as set out therein.
2. In case of a request for an amendment concerning a minor change or a change that does not affect substantial aspects of the grant agreement, the modification to the grant agreement may be confirmed by a letter signed solely by the NA. If the amendment request concerns substantial changes of the grant agreement (e.g. exceeding the provisions of contractual flexibility), this may be done following one of the following procedures: a) a formal amendment signed by both parties on the same document; b) exchange of letters with signed acknowledgement of receipt (see template of amendment).
3. Any request for amendment submitted by the beneficiary shall be received by the NA in good time, before the change is planned to take effect, and in all events one month before the end of the implementation period set in the grant agreement, except in

cases duly substantiated by the beneficiary and accepted by the NA. To be valid, any amendment to a grant agreement shall be issued by the NA before the end date of the grant agreement concerned.

4. Amendments to grant agreements may not have the purpose or effect to call into question the grant award decision or be contrary to the equal treatment of applicants. Thus, amendments with the purpose of increasing or decreasing the maximum grant amount or co-financing percentage are authorised only if the NA puts in place a transparent procedure for redistribution of unspent funds guaranteeing the equal treatment of all applicants/beneficiaries (see Section 7.1.3.3 of the Guide for NAs, on the redistribution of unspent funds).
5. Accredited beneficiaries of mobility grants in Erasmus+ projects may submit to the NA a request for additional exceptional costs and inclusion support for participants during the contractual period, in accordance with the conditions set out in the grant agreement. Similarly, beneficiaries of European Solidarity Corps volunteering projects may submit to the NA a request for additional exceptional costs. The NA shall reserve a portion of the funds available for the respective action in order to be able to treat such requests in accordance with the conditions set out in the grant agreement. If such additional grant request is accepted, the NA shall take a formal grant award decision; however, preliminary consultation of the evaluation committee is not required in such case. The additional grant support shall be made available following a formal amendment to the grant agreement signed by both parties. In line with the grant agreement, the NA may issue the amendment immediately following the approval of additional costs, or at a later stage.

5.3 Grant payments

1. The NA shall make payments in Euro. The NA is strongly recommended to require the beneficiary to open a bank account in Euro in order to avoid exchange rate losses on pre-financing payments.
2. EU grants are payable in full to the beneficiaries. The NA shall not make any deductions whatsoever for direct or indirect taxes, fees, social security, contributions or administrative, management or registration charges.
3. The NA shall apply the payment conditions as set out in the signed grant agreement.
4. If the treasury situation of the EU funds on the NA bank accounts does not allow for a single first pre-financing payment to beneficiaries, the NA may split the first pre-financing in two or more instalments and pay the further instalments without requiring a progress or interim report from the beneficiary.
5. The NA shall do payments to beneficiaries within the timeframe set in the applicable Calendars for the use of funds as well as in the signed grant agreement.

5.4 Checks of grant beneficiaries

1. The NA shall give assurance on reality and eligibility of the activities supported with EU funds as well as on the legality and regularity of the underlying operations. To that effect, the NA shall undertake so-called "primary checks", which have to be

embedded in the overall control strategy included in the governance structure of the NA (see Section 2.5 of the Guide for NAs). The NA shall put in place a robust system of checks of grant beneficiaries, which will constitute one of the essential building blocks of its overall assurance system.

2. The checks of grant beneficiaries to be undertaken by the NA consist of the following types:
 - Final report check (and interim report check where applicable)³³;
 - Desk check of additional supporting material submitted by beneficiaries;
 - On-the-spot check during the project implementation of a supported activity;
 - On-the-spot check (audit) undertaken after completion of the project;
 - Systems check of recurrent beneficiaries.
3. In case an on-the-spot check is organised simultaneously with a monitoring visit (see Section 5.6 of the Guide for NAs), the role of the team members in charge of the on-the-spot check shall be clearly separated from the activities of the person(s) in charge of the monitoring visit and both shall be adequately explained to the beneficiary.
4. In countries where more than one NA has been designated for the management of the Programmes, the NA shall closely cooperate with the other NA(s) for the organisation of checks of grant beneficiaries, in order to ensure the necessary coherence between the different indirect management actions at national level. The NA shall communicate to each other on a yearly basis its planned on the spot checks as well as the results of the checks undertaken. This will ensure that the same beneficiaries for which during an on the spot check no major errors or weaknesses were detected in a given year, will not be revisited again during the two years following that year and that problem cases are adequately followed up by all NAs concerned.
5. The checks on beneficiaries related to projects of the previous Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps Programmes have to be carried out according to the rules and technical instructions applicable for these Programmes.

Further clarifications on selection of checks of grant beneficiaries, types of checks and formal requirements are included in Annex IV.11 of the Guide for NAs.

5.5 Recovery of EU funds from beneficiaries

1. If the NA is subject to specific national legislation with regard to the procedure for recoveries from beneficiaries, it shall implement the national legal requirements incumbent on it. However, in view of the principle of transparency and sound financial management, the NA shall always first notify the beneficiary of its intention to recover any amount unduly paid. If no specific national legislation applies, the NA shall implement the procedure set out hereafter.

³³ See also Guidelines for NAs on assessment of beneficiary final reports in Annex IV.6 of the Guide for NAs.

2. Once the NA has calculated and established the amount unduly paid to the beneficiary – either as the result of the final report assessment or following further desk or on the spot checks – the NA shall notify the beneficiary of its intention to recover this amount. The NA shall send the notification by registered letter or any other means allowing to check that and when the notification has been received by the beneficiary.
3. The notification letter shall state the amount to be recovered, the reasons for recovery and invite the beneficiary to make any observations within 30 calendar days from the receipt of the notification letter.
4. Within 30 calendar days of receipt of the observations, the NA shall analyse any additional information received from the beneficiary, and shall inform the beneficiary of its final decision, including if applicable, the information on the revised final grant amount and the amount still to be recovered. This period of 30 calendar days can be suspended if further supporting evidence has to be requested from the beneficiary.
5. If no observations have been submitted or if, despite the observations submitted by the beneficiary, the NA decides to pursue the recovery procedure, the NA shall confirm recovery by notifying to the beneficiary a debit note (“debit note”). The debit note shall specify the amount due, the terms and the date for payment.
6. In the debit note, the NA shall request the payment of the amount due within a period of 30 calendar days of the date of receipt of the debit note. The NA may decide to shorten the notice period for specific and duly justified reasons (e.g. risk of loss of EU funds), and shall then duly record the reasons in the project file.
7. If a payment has not been made by the date specified in the debit note, the NA may choose between different recovery mechanisms as appropriate and depending on the nature of each individual case as set out in Sections 5.5.1. – 5.5.3 of the Guide for NAs.
8. The maximum period for closing a grant agreement after dispatch of the notification letter by the NA is 6 months. If the beneficiary does not provide the required information and/or supporting evidence in case of observations within that period, the NA shall recover the amount considered ineligible within 15 calendar days without further possibility of submitting observations by the beneficiary after the expiration of the 6 months period. The maximum period for closing a grant agreement after dispatch of the notification letter may be extended only in view of a reimbursement in instalments by the beneficiary, in which case the period may be maximum 1 year.
9. If a final report due is not received, the NA shall send a formal reminder within 15 calendar days of the deadline. If the final report is not received within 60 calendar days after this reminder, the NA shall send a notification by registered mail terminating the grant agreement and requesting the reimbursement of the full amount of pre-financing payment(s), in accordance with the provisions set out in the grant agreement.
10. In the case of countries with more than one NA, the NA shall exchange with the other NA(s) information on problematic debtors, in view of a coordinated approach in case the same organisation benefits from Programme grants awarded by different NAs.

11. In case the NA does not implement the recovery procedure according to the procedure and deadlines set out in this section of the Guide for NAs and except in duly justified cases accepted by the Commission (e.g. authorisation from the Commission to waive the recovery), the Commission shall consider the amount due as ineligible at the stage of the Yearly Management Declaration on the basis of which the Contribution Agreement is to be closed following the applicable Calendar for the use of funds annexed to the Contribution Agreement.

5.5.1. Recovery by offsetting

1. If the NA is managing several grant agreements with the same beneficiary over the same or successive periods, it shall recover funds through offsetting whenever possible, and at any time after issuing the debit note. In such case, the NA shall inform the beneficiary that the amount due will be deducted by the NA from a payment underway or from a future payment. The NA may offset recoveries due under the previous Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps Programmes also against payments due to the same beneficiary under the current Erasmus+ Programme and European Solidarity Corps Programmes.
2. The NA is required to keep rigorous accounting records, given that the amount due and the payment might correspond to two different Programmes, indirect management actions and/or two different Contribution Agreements³⁴.

5.5.2. Recovery by drawing on the financial guarantee

If the beneficiary was required to provide a financial guarantee (see Section 4.9.2.1 of the Guide for NAs) and if no recovery of the amounts due by offsetting is possible, the NA may draw on the financial guarantee.

5.5.3. Direct recovery

1. If the debtor has not reimbursed the amount due within the deadline indicated in the debit note, the NA shall send a first reminder letter by registered mail within 15 calendar days of the due date for reimbursement, requesting the immediate reimbursement of the amount due. This amount shall bear interest at the rate indicated in the agreement with the beneficiary and the reminder letter. Interest on late payment shall cover the period between the date set for payment, exclusive, and the date when the NA receives full payment of the amount owed, inclusive. This provision shall not apply to recipients of a grant which are public bodies of the Member States of the European Union. Any partial payment shall first be entered against charges and interest on late payment and then against the principal. The NA shall report on late payment interest recovered from debtors in the Yearly NA report.
2. If the debtor has not reimbursed the amount due within 15 calendar days of the date of receipt of the first reminder letter, the NA shall send a second and last reminder letter by registered mail within 30 calendar days of receipt of the first reminder letter, requesting the immediate reimbursement of the amount due and explaining that non-

³⁴ Or between a Contribution Agreement under the 2021-2027 Erasmus+ and the European Solidarity Corps and a Delegation Agreement under the previous Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps Programmes.

compliance with this request within 15 calendar days of receipt of the second reminder letter may result in legal action against the debtor referring to the applicable contractual rules.

3. If after 15 calendar days of receipt of the second reminder letter the debtor has not reimbursed the amount due and the NA is not in a position to offset the debt against other payments due to the beneficiary, the NA shall undertake actions to recover the funds, including any legal action, and inform the Commission in the NA Yearly Report.

In the exceptional case where the NA has exhausted all legal possibilities to recover the financial claim against a beneficiary, the NA may request within 45 calendar days authorisation from the Commission to waive the claim, provided that the requirements for requests for waiver as set out in Section 7.5 of the Guide for NAs are fulfilled.

4. Under exceptional circumstances the NA may allow additional time for payment or instalment payments at the written request of the debtor with due indication of the reasons provided that the following two conditions are fulfilled:
 - the debtor undertakes to pay interest at the rate indicated in the agreement with the beneficiary for the entire additional period allowed, starting from the deadline;
 - to safeguard the rights of the Union, the debtor lodges a financial guarantee covering the debt outstanding in both the principal sum and the interest which is accepted by the NA. This guarantee may be replaced by a joint and several guarantees by a third party approved by the NA.

5.5.4. Recovery of amounts due below EUR 200

1. If the amount due under a grant agreement is less than or equal to EUR 200, the NA did not succeed in recovering the amount due following the second reminder notification, and there is no possibility to recover the amount due by offsetting, the NA is allowed not to proceed with the recovery if the cost of the procedure to recover the amount due exceeds the amount due (cost-effectiveness principle).
2. The NA shall establish a transparent and fair system ensuring equal treatment for the waiver of recovery orders up to a maximum EUR 200, based on the cost-effectiveness principle. The system shall be documented and authorised at the appropriate level in the NA.

5.6 Support, guidance and monitoring of beneficiaries

5.6.1. Support to beneficiaries

1. The NA shall provide support to the Programmes' beneficiaries throughout the whole project lifecycle, as of the grant award procedure through the project implementation until the final report and the dissemination stage. The support shall take the form of at least guiding, counselling and advice.
2. To ensure equal opportunity to all, the NA shall adjust its supporting activities to the needs of different groups of beneficiaries, in line with the Inclusion and Diversity

Strategy as well as, in the field of youth, the Youth Participation Strategy, the Youthpass Strategy and the European Training Strategy. The NA shall give more assistance, whenever necessary, through advising, counselling, training, monitoring, and coaching systems.

3. The NA shall ensure that pre-departure training is provided for all participants in long-term pupil mobility under Key Action 1 for school education. It is recommended that the NA organises the pre-departure itself, however if appropriate in the national context the NA may fully or partially outsource the provision of the training to expert providers, or allow for the training to be organised by beneficiaries themselves in case sufficient capacity exists at their level. The training may also be provided in an online format, if needed.

5.6.2. Monitoring of beneficiaries

1. The NA shall monitor the implementation of granted Programme activities. Thus, the NA shall develop a coherent monitoring strategy providing for a structured approach, adequate methods and tools based on the needs of the Programmes' various target groups.
 - In the fields of adult education, vocational education and training, school education and youth, the NA shall monitor the Erasmus accreditation holders to verify compliance with the requirements specified in the related call for accreditations. The monitoring shall follow the reporting schedule defined for the relevant accreditation.
 - In the field of higher education, the NA shall monitor ECHE holding organisations to verify compliance with the ECHE. The NA shall in particular monitor the implementation of new features (such as blended mobility, international mobility and blended intensive programmes). Monitoring should be done regularly, including through the analysis of beneficiary and participant reports, and in line with the related guidelines included as Annex IV.13 of the Guide for NAs.
 - In the field of youth, the NA shall monitor organisations holding an Erasmus+ youth accreditation or a Quality Label under the European Solidarity Corps to verify compliance with the Programmes' principles, objectives and requirements as specified in the related calls.
2. In countries where more than one NA has been designated for the management of the Programmes, the NA shall closely cooperate with the other NAs for the organisation of monitoring activities, in order to ensure the necessary coherence at national level.

5.6.3. Desk monitoring

1. The NA shall make the necessary resources available to give advice by phone, e-mail, letter and on-line to beneficiaries seeking help. The contractual documents shall provide the necessary contact details of the desk officers in charge, as well as how and when they may be contacted.
2. Based on individual requests for advice, the NA shall establish and keep up to date lists of frequently asked questions which shall be put on the NA Programmes' websites.

3. The NA is encouraged to use various means and tools, including social media, to provide support to beneficiaries. It shall see to it, however, to duly respect contractual rules on confidentiality and implement the necessary measures for the protection of personal data as required by Regulation (EU) 2018/1725.

5.6.4. Project management meetings

1. The NA shall organise on a regular basis group meetings (physical or online) for beneficiaries of grants. Such meetings shall be organised at least once a year for each indirect management action covered by the Contribution Agreement. At such monitoring meetings, the NA shall provide advice both with regard to the implementation of the actions under the grant agreements as well as to the grant management and contractual reporting.
2. During these meetings, the NA shall also inform the beneficiaries on the obligation to report to the NA without delay any event or problematic situation that may occur to beneficiaries or participants of the Programme that may harm the reputation of the Programmes. Consequently, in such cases, the NA shall inform the Commission as stipulated in the Contribution Agreement.
3. In order to maximise the impact of the Programmes, beneficiaries' attention shall be drawn to the need to disseminate and exploit the results of the granted activities effectively, including the use of media as well as the Erasmus+ Project Results Platform and the European Solidarity Corps Projects Platform. Advice shall be provided at project management meetings. The NA is encouraged to use as examples good practice projects with significant dissemination activities.
4. The NA shall monitor the correct implementation of the requirements related to visibility of EU funding from projects' beneficiaries. Where needed, the NA shall provide advice and support to beneficiaries to ensure the application of EU visibility requirements in funded projects.
5. The NA shall provide the necessary expertise for these project management meetings and involve former beneficiaries to share their experience and good practices with new beneficiaries.
6. In order to limit the cost for beneficiaries of attending meetings with the NA, regional meetings can be envisaged. The NA may itself organise and attend regional meetings or make use of its network of promoters, local authorities in charge of education, training or youth etc. In such case the NA shall provide regular training to its local and regional contact points, to ensure that correct information is passed on to beneficiaries.
7. In small size countries where group meetings would not be cost-effective, the NA may replace them by one-to-one meetings with individual beneficiaries or other adequate means.

5.6.5. Thematic monitoring meetings

1. In order to strengthen the quality of activities receiving grant support and increase their added value and impact, the NA shall organise thematic monitoring meetings (physical or online) focussing on themes that aim at increasing the quality and impact

of the Programmes. These meetings shall foster the exchange of experiences between beneficiaries/projects during the lifetime of the supported activities, working in the same field or that are concerned by a common crosscutting theme.

2. All Erasmus+ fields of education, training and youth as well as the European Solidarity Corps shall be covered by at least one thematic monitoring meeting per year. Whenever a theme may benefit from the participation of beneficiaries working in different fields or programmes, the NA shall encourage cross-sectoral cooperation and exchange.
3. In order to increase their added value, thematic monitoring activities shall involve as much as possible projects funded under both the indirect and direct management actions of the Programmes.
4. The thematic area(s) chosen at national level shall be in line with the Programmes' priorities set at EU level. The NA shall call on the support of experts and stakeholders in the thematic area as necessary in order to increase the added value for the participating beneficiaries.
5. For reasons of cost-effectiveness, the NA may organise combined meetings, covering both thematic monitoring and project management aspects for the same target public. However, in such case, sufficient and explicit provision shall be made for in-depth exchanges in the chosen thematic area, in order to provide meaningful support for an increase of the quality and impact of the projects in that area.

5.6.6. Monitoring visits

1. The NA may organise monitoring visits (physical or online) to the beneficiaries in view of monitoring the implementation of individual projects.
2. In the case of Erasmus+ mobility projects in the field of higher education supported by external policy funds (KA171), the NA may complement monitoring visits to beneficiaries with fact-finding missions to third countries not associated to the programme to gather information on project implementation in those countries. The NA shall inform the EU Delegations and, if they exist in the country concerned, National Erasmus+ Offices (NEOs) and Erasmus+ National Focal Points (ENFPs) about the carrying out of such fact-finding missions and their results.
3. Monitoring visits shall be used primarily to support and counsel the beneficiary as well as to gather and disseminate good practice examples. They can also contribute to collecting information on qualitative aspects of Programme management and on the effectiveness and impact of the granted project on the beneficiary organisation. Finally, monitoring visits will contribute also to the building of knowledge and expertise of NA staff on the Programme action concerned.
4. No specific criteria apply for the selection of beneficiaries for monitoring visits. However, the NA should consider the principle of cost effectiveness and the results of its risk analysis with regard to the checks of grant beneficiaries.

In the case of Erasmus+ mobility projects in the field of higher education supported by external policy funds (KA171), the NA shall take into account information provided by the EU Delegations and, if they exist in the country concerned, the

National Erasmus+ Offices (NEOs) and the Erasmus+ National Focal Points (ENFPs).

5. Monitoring visits may be undertaken by NA staff in charge of administering the action concerned and/or by external experts hired to that effect by the NA. Due measures shall be taken to prevent potential conflicts of interest, in particular as regards the involvement of external experts.
6. In case a monitoring visit is organised simultaneously with an on-the-spot check (see Section 3.11 of the Guide for NAs), the role of the team members in charge of the on-the-spot check shall be clearly separated from the activities of the person(s) in charge of the monitoring visit and both shall be adequately explained to the beneficiary.
7. Monitoring visits require a careful preparation and organisation. They should be organised on the basis of a draft agenda agreed in advance with the beneficiary to ensure that all issues to be discussed can be properly covered. At the end of the visit, a first oral feedback shall be given to the beneficiary institution.
8. Within one month after the visit, the NA shall communicate the conclusions and any points of advice to the beneficiary in writing. The beneficiary shall be given the opportunity to comment on the draft report in relation to matters of fact or interpretation.
9. On the basis of the comments received from the beneficiary, the draft report is either amended - if the comments/factual modifications are accepted by the NA - or the beneficiary's response is included in a separate section of the final report. The final report is sent to the beneficiary within two months of the visit.
10. If important weaknesses are found during the monitoring visit, the final report shall clearly specify the points for improvement with a concrete timeframe for implementation and reporting. In addition, the NA shall ensure appropriate follow-up after the visit, including through additional targeted checks as necessary. In the case of Erasmus+ mobility projects in the field of higher education supported by external policy funds (KA171), the NA shall also inform the EU Delegations and, if they exist in the country concerned, the National Erasmus+ Offices (NEOs) and the Erasmus+ National Focal Points (ENFPs).
11. The NA shall disseminate good practice examples found during monitoring visits through different channels, e.g. using the NA website, presentations in conferences and seminars, etc. The outcomes from the visits can be used to feed into recommendations and guidelines to other beneficiaries to help them improve the quality of activities and outputs, as well as the management of their project.

5.7 Dealing with irregularities and frauds

1. The NA shall take appropriate measures to prevent irregularities and fraud³⁵ and if necessary bring prosecutions to recover Programmes funds lost, wrongly paid and incorrectly used by beneficiaries of an EU grant awarded in the framework of a Contribution Agreement. Specific guidelines for NAs are included in Annex IV.7.

³⁵ See definition of “irregularity” and “fraud” in Article II.1 of the Contribution Agreement.

2. Whistleblowing

The NA should have robust documented procedures to ensure issues raised by staff ('whistleblowing') are properly followed up and documented, in an environment of openness and impunity. Protection of whistleblowers enables improvements to be identified and contributes to the overall strength of the control system.

The NA shall treat the whistleblowing situations in line with Directive (EU) No 2019/1937 on the protection of persons who report breaches of Union law³⁶.

The NA shall inform its staff on how the NA staff can report possible cases of fraud within the NA directly to OLAF, available at: https://ec.europa.eu/anti-fraud/olaf-and-you/report-fraud_en.

3. In case the NA presumes substantial errors, irregularities or fraud, the NA may suspend the implementation of the grant agreement or payments in order to verify whether presumed cases have actually occurred. If they are not confirmed, implementation shall resume as soon as possible. However, a formal contradictory procedure with the beneficiary concerned is compulsory before suspension of implementation or payments.
4. Where audit or control findings demonstrate systemic or recurrent errors, irregularities or fraud attributable to the beneficiary who has been awarded a number of grants under similar conditions, the NA may extend and apply the findings to all the grants concerned. However, a formal contradictory procedure with the beneficiary before suspension of implementation or payments is compulsory.
5. The NA shall report any case of irregularity or (suspected) fraud in relation to EU funds under the Contribution Agreement, regardless of whether the act is committed by a Programme beneficiary or by a NA member of staff.
6. The NA director shall address the initial ad hoc irregularity report to the functional mailbox EAC-ANTI-FRAUD@ec.europa.eu with copy to the person having signed the Contribution Agreement on behalf of the Commission and the contact person indicated in the Agreement. The report shall be made using the template provided in Annex I of the Guide for NAs.
7. The NA shall keep the Commission informed of its monitoring and follow-up of irregularities and fraud on a regular basis as part of its NA Yearly Report.

5.8 Information on means of redress and complaints

1. The NA shall clearly inform all applicants and beneficiaries about their right of redress for each NA decision affecting them adversely (e.g. grant award decisions, final grant amount, suspension of payment, recovery, conclusion of checks of grant beneficiaries).

³⁶ The Directive entered into force on 16/12/2019 and the EU Member States were required to transpose it into their national laws by 17/12/2021.

2. The means of redress shall be clearly indicated on the NA website, as well as in direct exchanges with applicants and beneficiaries. The NA shall specify to whom the information request or appeal should be addressed, by which final date and following which formal procedure.
3. For the establishment of the procedures for redress, the NA shall take due account of applicable calendars for the use of funds for grant support as well as the relevant selection roadmaps for the actions concerned.
4. The NA shall set up a dedicated procedure for dealing with redress and complaints, including those received by programme participants or transmitted by the Commission. The NA shall make sure that the complainant receives a reply within 15 working days. If a complaint requires more in-depth analysis, the NA shall send a holding reply, indicating a deadline, in principle not exceeding 15 working days, by when the complaint shall receive a full reply.
5. Dealing with redress and complaints related to Programme actions under the NA's responsibility, and in particular those related to decisions taken by the NA, are an integral part of the management tasks entrusted to the NA. The NA should therefore provide clear, concise and conclusive replies to the complainants, taking into account all applicable rules and regulations.

5.9 Invoking a case of *force majeure*

1. The NA may, at its own discretion, accept a case of *force majeure* invoked by a beneficiary, in compliance with the definition of *force majeure* in the Contribution Agreement and the relevant provisions in the grant agreement.
2. Any such decision should result from a case-by-case analysis considering if in the NA's judgment requests for cancellation, termination or suspension of a Programme activity are linked to a case of *force majeure*.
3. The NA may decide, on a case-by-case basis and on the condition that justifications are provided, to accept costs entailed by activities that have not taken place due to *force majeure* or additional costs that were caused by the exceptional circumstances, up to the maximum grant amount awarded.
4. In such case, the beneficiary has to be able to provide proof thereof to the NA including costs that are normally covered as a lump sum or a flat rate grant (e.g. additional accommodation costs on the basis of a hotel bill).

6. PROCESSING OF PERSONAL DATA BY THE NA

1. Where the Contribution Agreement requires the processing of personal data by the NA, the NA will act only on documented written instructions from the data controller in line with Article II.7 of the Contribution Agreement.
2. In particular, with regard to the purpose of the processing, the categories of data which may be processed and the recipients of the data and the means by which the data subject may exercise his or her rights, as further specified in the records published by the data controller concerning these personal data processing activities.

3. The NA may grant its personnel access only to data that is strictly necessary for implementing, managing and monitoring the Agreement. The NA must ensure that the personnel authorised to process personal data has committed itself to confidentiality or is under appropriate statutory obligation of confidentiality.
4. In line with the General Conditions of the Contribution Agreement and with Article 33 of Regulation 2018/1725, the NA must adopt appropriate technical and organisational security measures having regard to the risks inherent in the processing and to the nature, scope, context and purposes of processing of the personal data concerned, in order to ensure, as appropriate:
 - (a) the pseudonymisation and encryption of personal data;
 - (b) the ability to ensure the ongoing confidentiality, integrity, availability and resilience of processing systems and services;
 - (c) the ability to restore the availability and access to personal data in a timely manner in the event of a physical or technical incident;
 - (d) a process for regularly testing, assessing and evaluating the effectiveness of technical and organisational measures for ensuring the security of the processing;
 - (e) measures to protect personal data from accidental or unlawful destruction, loss, alteration, unauthorised disclosure of or access to personal data transmitted, stored or otherwise processed;
 - (f) prevent any unauthorised person from gaining access to computer systems processing personal data, and especially:
 - unauthorised reading, copying, alteration or removal of storage media;
 - unauthorised data input as well as any unauthorised disclosure, alteration or erasure of stored personal data;
 - unauthorised persons from using data-processing systems by means of data transmission facilities;
 - (g) ensure that authorised users of a data-processing system can access only the personal data to which their access right refers;
 - (h) record which personal data have been communicated, when and to whom;
 - (i) request prior written authorisation from the Commission when it intends to engage another processor;
 - (j) ensure that personal data being processed on behalf of third parties can be processed only in the manner prescribed by the Commission;
 - (k) ensure that, during communication of personal data and transport of storage media, the data cannot be read, copied or erased without authorisation;
 - (l) design its organisational structure in such a way that it meets data protection requirements.

Rules for personal data breaches

5. The NA shall notify to the data controller relevant personal data breaches to the data controller without undue delay and at the latest within 48 hours after the NA becomes aware of the breach. In such cases, the NA shall provide the data controller with at least the following information:
 - (a) nature of the personal data breach including where possible, the categories and approximate number of data subjects concerned and the categories and approximate number of personal data records concerned;
 - (b) likely consequences of the breach;
 - (c) measures taken or proposed to be taken to address the breach, including, where appropriate, measures to mitigate its possible adverse effects.

Rules for the infringement of the EU data protection

6. The NA shall immediately inform the data controller if, in its opinion, an instruction of the data controller infringes Regulation (EU) 2018/1725 or other Union data protection provisions.

Duration of the processing of personal data by the NA:

7. The duration of processing of personal data by the NA will not exceed the period referred to in Article I.2 of the Contribution Agreement. Upon expiry of this period, the NA will maintain the personal data processed as long as necessary and in compliance with the corresponding retention periods.
8. The NA may act only on documented written instructions and under the supervision of the data controller, in particular with regard to the purposes of the processing, the categories of data that may be processed, the recipients of the data and the means by which the data subjects may exercise their rights. Whenever the NA claims and demonstrates that the instructions are insufficient or inappropriate for a compliant performance of the processing, the NA will immediately inform the data controller accordingly.
9. The NA shall maintain a record of all data processing operations carried out on behalf of the data controller and inventories of all international transfers of personal data, of data breaches, responses to requests for exercising rights of people whose personal data is processed and requests for access to personal data by third parties.

Rules for the NA when beneficiaries act as data processors on its behalf

10. The NA cannot delegate processing of personal data to third party without prior authorisation from the Commission.
11. The NA should ensure that beneficiaries, when acting as processors for the NA, have put in place data protection measures that are compliant with Regulation (EU) 2018/1725.

Rules on data protection reporting

12. The NA shall report every year in the NA Yearly Report on the measures put in place for ensuring compliance of its data processing operations with the Regulation (EU) 2018/1725.
13. The NA should report on the measures put in place for ensuring compliance of its data processing operations with the Regulation (EU) 2018/1725 on the topics:
 - Security of processing – the appropriate technical and organisational measures put in place by the NA in order to ensure that processing meets the requirements of this Regulation and the protection of the rights of the data subject;
 - Confidentiality of processing – the authorisations given to NA staff to process the personal data i.e. staff have committed themselves to confidentiality or are under an appropriate statutory obligation of confidentiality;
 - Assistance to the controller – the appropriate technical and organisational measures, insofar as this is possible, for the fulfilment of the DG EAC obligation, as controller, to respond to requests for exercising the data subject’s rights laid down in Chapter III IDPR;
 - Data retention – measures put in place for deletion or return of all the personal data to the controller after the end of the provision of services relating to processing, and for deletion of existing copies unless Union or Member State law requires storage of the personal data;
 - Contribution to audits, including inspections, conducted by DG EAC or another auditor mandated by the DG EAC;
 - Supervision of beneficiaries in order to implement appropriate technical and organisational measures in such a manner that the processing will meet the requirements of IDPR.

7. MANAGEMENT OF THE CONTRIBUTION AGREEMENT

7.1 Use of EU funds

7.1.1. Contribution to management costs of the NA

1. In line with the legal base of the programmes, the Commission provides the NA with a financial contribution in support of the Programmes’ management tasks of the NA (“contribution to management costs”). The Commission will not check the individual expenses but rather the outputs and performance realised by the NA per Programme managed, based on the approved NA Work Programme and in relation to the requirements set out in the Guide for NAs.
2. The NA shall use the contribution to management costs exclusively in relation to expenses necessary for an effective and efficient management of the respective Programmes and in respect of the principles of sound financial management. Furthermore, the contribution to management costs cannot be used for activities having their own earmarked budget in the Contribution Agreement (e.g. TCA, NET, DiscoverEU Learning Cycle) and intended for purposes other than the management of the programme or the functioning of the NA, unless specifically authorized by the Commission.

7.1.2. Contribution to networks

1. In addition to the contribution to management costs, the Commission provides the NA with financial support to the network functions managed by the NA.
2. In case the NA is not designated as body responsible for the network function at national level, it shall sign a grant agreement with the designated body for the implementation of the related part of the NA Work Programme and for the related EU contribution.
3. The NA shall ensure that the designated body implements the related NA Work Programme part satisfactorily and manages the EU support in accordance with the provisions of the grant agreement. The NA shall report to the Commission on the implementation of the NA Work Programme and the use of the grant for the network functions as part of its NA Yearly Report.

7.1.3. EU Contribution for grant support and other EU funds

7.1.3.1 General principles

1. In addition to the contribution to management costs and, where applicable contribution to the networks, the Commission provides the NA with funds for grant support.
2. The NA shall respect the applicable Calendar for the use of funds annexed to the Contribution Agreement.
3. Funds remaining unused after the final dates for commitment and signature of grant agreements set out in the respective Calendar will be recovered by the Commission following analysis of the related NA reports and closure of the Contribution Agreement concerned.
4. In the case of countries with more than one NA, any transfer of funds for grant support between NAs may take place only by way of decommitting the available amount (recover if applicable) from one Contribution Agreement, by the Commission, committing it to the other Contribution Agreement and issuing an amendment. Direct transfers of funds between NAs are not authorised in any case.
5. In the case of more than one selection round, as specified in the Calls for proposals, the NA shall allocate funds for each activity type for each selection round thus ensuring that all types of activities are available to applicants under each round.

7.1.3.2. Budget transfers

1. The NA shall respect the ceiling for budget transfers as specified in the Contribution Agreement.
2. Any budget transfers exceeding the ceiling set in the Contribution Agreement shall be subject to a formal amendment to the Contribution Agreement.

7.1.3.3. Use and redistribution of unspent funds

1. The NA shall set up a fair and transparent system for the use and redistribution of funds per Programme in case of funds remaining unspent, including additional funds made available to the NA from the EU budget after conclusion of the main selection rounds or funds awarded that cannot be absorbed by grant beneficiaries.

Optional selection round

1. For Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps actions where one of the selection rounds is not compulsory, the NA may launch this optional selection round in order to maximise the consumption of the available budget.
2. Submission deadlines set at European level and published in the Programme Guide shall apply for the optional second selection rounds.
3. Given the IT support needed to organise the additional selection round, the NA shall notify the Commission if the NA wants to launch the optional second selection round.

Redistribution of funds to accredited beneficiaries

1. The NA may organise a redistribution of funds to accredited beneficiaries of Erasmus+ Key Action 1 and European Solidarity Corps volunteering projects, supported from the budget year concerned, in a transparent and non-discriminating way and in full respect of the applicable Calendar for the use of funds.
2. In the case of redistribution of funds to existing beneficiaries, the additional funds shall be used exclusively for granting new activities or for prolonging the current ones. In no case shall the NA allocate additional funds to grant beneficiaries in view of increasing the grant amount ex-post for activities already completed or underway, with the exception of funding made available for exceptional costs and inclusion support for participants.
3. Redistribution of funds to existing beneficiaries shall be implemented in accordance with the following conditions:
 - In accordance with the provisions stipulated in the relevant grant agreement, beneficiaries shall provide the NA with information on the realisation of their activities. They shall also indicate if they are able to absorb the remaining awarded funds and any further support that may become available.
 - In the field of higher education mobility (Mobility projects supported by internal policy funds (KA131) and by external policy funds (KA171)), all beneficiaries shall submit an interim report providing the above information. In other fields of education, training and youth, the NA may decide whether the submission of information about the current and expected absorption shall be obligatory for all beneficiaries or only those that express an interest to receive additional support as part of the redistribution exercise.

- On the basis of the information received from the beneficiaries about the number of implemented activities and consumed funds, the NA may recover funds that beneficiaries would not be able to spend within their contractual period. In this case, the grant amount may be decreased exceptionally with an amendment signed by the NA alone. The beneficiary will have 30 days to submit comments, to which the NA must provide a prompt reply.
 - Recovered funds may be used in the same way as other unspent funds, including their redistribution to those beneficiaries that are able to absorb more funds than initially awarded.
 - The NA shall specify the objective criteria on the basis of which any available funds will be distributed to the beneficiaries concerned. These criteria shall respect the principles of equality of treatment, non-discrimination and transparency.
 - In the case of Mobility projects supported by external policy funds (KA171), the NA can redistribute funds between beneficiaries for cooperation with regions and countries that have passed the quality threshold, including regions and countries not funded during allocation stage due to lack of funds or geographical balance.
4. In case the redistribution of funds results in the increase of the initially awarded grant amount, the NA shall issue a grant award decision preceded by a formal consultation of the evaluation committee (except for amendments made exclusively to provide additional exceptional costs and inclusion support for participants and for organisations, as detailed in Section 5.2 (5) of the Guide for NAs). The complementary grant support shall be made available following an amendment to the grant agreement and signed by both parties.

7.1.3.4 Support to Erasmus+ Training and Cooperation Activities (TCA) and European Solidarity Corps' Networking Activities (NET)

1. Under Erasmus+, specific support for TCA is allocated to the NA under Key Action 3, with a separate budget for the fields of Education and Training and for Youth.
2. Under the European Solidarity Corps, NET are implemented as a distinct programme action, under which specific support is allocated to the NA.

7.1.3.5 Support to European Solidarity Corps Training and Evaluation Cycles

The NA shall use the funds allocated for 'specific training and evaluation for cross-border activities' in order to carry out the sessions of the training and evaluation cycle for participants and organisations in accordance with the requirements set out in Sections 10.2 and 10.3 of the Guide for NAs.

7.1.3.6 Support to the DiscoverEU Learning Cycle

The NA shall use the funds allocated to the DiscoverEU Learning Cycle to carry out the pre-departure information meetings and Meet-ups for the DiscoverEU participants as

well as the coordination meetings with multipliers in accordance with the requirements set out in Section 10.4 of the Guide for NAs.

7.1.3.7 Pre-financing payment requests for EU contribution for grant support

1. The Contribution Agreement sets out the payment arrangements for the EU contribution.
2. The first pre-financing payment will be made by the Commission without a request from the NA, following the signature of the Contribution Agreement, unless requested differently by the NA in its negative interest avoidance strategy annexed to the Contribution Agreement.
3. NA requests for further pre-financing shall be submitted in Lifecard³⁷.

7.1.3.8 Interest on EU pre-financing

1. Any interest generated by the EU financial contribution shall be used for the implementation of the entrusted tasks as set out below.
2. The NA shall use the interest earned on EU pre-financing payments in the year N for grant support to projects under the relevant Programme under the calls of the year N+1 in accordance with the Calendar for the use of funds annexed to the Contribution Agreement.
3. The NA is strongly recommended to set up a strategy to avoid negative interests. Such a negative interest avoidance strategy should be a combination of reducing the unused cash balances in the accounts, by minimising unnecessary pre-financing and accelerating implementation and, where appropriate, active treasury management aiming to counterbalance the possible negative interests with returns from investments. Such strategy shall be submitted within the NA Work Programme and no later than at the signature of the Contribution Agreement.
4. Negative interests where unavoidable, may only be paid from the EU contribution for grant support, as an eligible cost (under the Contribution Agreement of year N), if the NA has such a negative interest avoidance strategy approved by the Commission, annexed to the Contribution Agreement and if the NA has implemented the provisions in the approved strategy.
5. If there is no negative interest avoidance strategy annexed to the Contribution Agreement, the NA shall pay negative interests where unavoidable from the EU contribution to management costs or other sources.
6. When the NA has a negative interest avoidance strategy approved by the Commission, annexed to the Delegation Agreement 2020, the NA may deduct the negative interests generated on the bank accounts of the previous Erasmus+ (2014-2020) and European Solidarity Corps (2018-2020) Programmes from the Delegation Agreement 2020.

³⁷ In NA Module (NAM), when available.

7. In case the NA manages both Heading 2 and Heading 6 funds of the EU budget, interest earned/negative interests on EU pre-financing, if above 20 000 EUR, shall be used/paid proportionally to the EU pre-financing for actions funded from respectively Headings 2 and 6 of the EU budget.
8. In case the NA manages Erasmus+ actions in the field of both Education and Training, and Youth, interest earned/negative interests on EU pre-financing, if above 20 000 EUR, shall be used/paid proportionally to the EU pre-financing for actions funded from respectively Erasmus+ Education and Training, and Youth.
9. Interests earned/negative interests under Heading 2 do not necessarily need to be split proportionally within the Erasmus+ Education and Training fields.

7.2 National co-funding to the EU contribution for grant support

1. National co-funding is defined as national funds that are made available by an EU Member State or third country associated to the Programme, in addition to the EU contribution for grant support, for the implementation of a Programme action.
2. National co-funding for Erasmus+ and the European Solidarity Corps shall be distinguishable per Programme and it shall be managed and reported on separately.
3. National co-funding, if made available shall be used either a) to support a higher number of activities or grants under the Programmes and/or b) to increase the grant amount awarded to individual activities selected under the Programmes within the limits set in the applicable Programme Guides.
4. National co-funding shall be managed applying one of the two following approaches:
 - a. National co-funding is managed by the NA together with the EU funding. As such, national co-funding and the EU funding form the total grant awarded to projects selected under the Programmes. In this case, the total grant given to each beneficiary and mobility participant has to respect the EU rules, including the minimum and maximum range for individual support for subsistence under Erasmus+ Key Action 1 – Learning Mobility of Individuals for the education and training fields.

The use of national co-funding may have the effect of making additional funds available and as such the NA will be able to award more grants to beneficiaries. The use of co-funding may also have the effect of decreasing the proportion of the EU funding in the total grant per beneficiary. In this case, the NA may either transfer the remaining EU funds to other actions within the limits set by the Contribution Agreement or return them to the Commission under the recovery procedure if they remain unused at the closure of the Contribution Agreement.

- b. National co-funding is managed by the NA separately from the EU budget. As such, only national co-funding forms the total grant awarded to projects selected under the Programmes. In such case, the level of the national grant for the activities under Erasmus+ Key Action 1 and the European Solidarity Corps is not limited. The funds provided to mobility participants from national co-funding is not subject to the amounts and minimum and maximum ranges set by the Commission. However, if national co-funding supports Partnerships for Cooperation under Erasmus+ Key Action 2, the grant rates set by the Commission

shall be respected in full. This approach is applicable also for projects entirely funded through a funding source other than Erasmus+.

The use of national co-funding only for a given grant may have the effect of decreasing the proportion of the EU funding in the total amount allocated per action. In this case, the NA may either transfer the remaining EU funds to other actions within the limits set by the Contribution Agreement or return them to the Commission under the recovery procedure if they remain unused at the closure of the contribution agreement.

5. The NA shall manage national co-funding in respect of national and European legislation. The rules established for the management of Programme actions in the Erasmus+ Programme Guide and European Solidarity Corps Guide, respective Calls for Proposals, Guide for NAs and other reference documents, thus apply to the actions supported.
6. The NA shall manage all applications received under a given Call for proposals in an identical way and in respect of the applicable rules, in order to ensure equal treatment of applicants regardless of the source of funding. For projects exclusively funded by resources other than Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps Programme funds, for transparency reasons, the funding source (for example, ESF funds, national resources, etc.) has to be indicated both in the grant award decision and in the result notifications.
7. The NA shall use the applicable grant agreement templates provided by the Commission in Annexes II and III of the Guide for NAs, for all actions supported under the Programmes regardless of the source of funding. If the National Authority authorises the NA to use EU and national co-funding as a single budget for the implementation of the Programme action(s) concerned, the NA does not need to distinguish between EU funding and national co-funding in the grant agreements signed with beneficiaries. If national co-funding is managed separately from the EU funding, the NA has to issue two separate agreements to the beneficiary organisations and the latter shall issue two separate grant agreements to the mobility participant. For all projects exclusively funded with resources other than Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps Programme funds, the NA has to specify the funding source in the grant agreement.
8. The NA shall request the beneficiary to report on the use of the grant in compliance with EU rules and using the EU forms.
9. The NA shall record the report data in the Programmes' management tool in the same way for all grant agreements managed regardless of their source of funding.
10. The NA shall report on the use of the relevant national funds per Programme in the NA Yearly Report. The reporting on the Programmes' actions benefitting from national co-funding will be identical to that on actions supported exclusively by EU funds.
11. The NA shall undertake the minimum number and percentage of checks of grant beneficiaries based on the whole population of grant agreements managed under each Programme regardless of their source of funding.

12. The limits for budget transfers apply only to the EU contribution as defined in the Contribution Agreement and its annexes.
13. In order to determine the final amount of EU contribution for grant support per Programme, the Commission will apply the following approach:
 - The Commission will verify the consumption of each of the maximum amounts (budget transfers included) per Key Action (Erasmus+) or Action (ESC) as indicated in the Contribution agreement and budgetary annex;
 - If the NA has paid to beneficiaries an eligible amount that equals all the maximum amounts per action (budget transfers included) as indicated in the Contribution Agreement and budgetary annex, the maximum EU contribution for grant support is acquired and no EU funds are recovered by the Commission;
 - If the NA has paid to beneficiaries an eligible amount that is less than each separate maximum amount per action (budget transfers included) as indicated in the Contribution Agreement and the budgetary annex, the difference between each maximum amount and the amount paid to beneficiaries will be recovered by the Commission.
14. In so far as access to the NA accounting and treasury management information is needed to establish proper use of EU funds, the Commission, the European Court of Auditors, OLAF, EPPO and anybody charged by them to carry out checks on their behalf have access to the NA accounting records and relevant bank accounts (e.g. to check that the same action/expense is not double funded by EU and national funds respectively, to check on potential fraud cases, etc.).
15. EU funds and national funds have to be managed on separate bank accounts and are not fungible. EU rules for treasury management (see Section 7.3.2 of the Guide for NAs) apply only to the bank account to/from which the EU funds are transferred. The NA has to declare only interest earned on EU pre-financing (per Programme).
16. The NA shall apply analytical accounting in such a way that the use of EU funds and national co-funding and any other type of funding can be followed individually and per Programme in the NA accounting system.
17. Within the relevant Commission IT system and under the same Programme, however, the NA does not have to distinguish between funding from EU and national sources at individual project level if the National Authority authorises the NA to use EU and national co-funding as one single budget for the action(s) concerned. In case of projects funded exclusively through resources other than Erasmus+ funds, the NA shall ensure separation of budget at project level.

7.3 Financial management

7.3.1. Accounting

1. For the management of the EU funds for grant support, the NA shall use a computerised accounting system that allows for accurate and detailed identification of all grants awarded to beneficiaries of the actions of the Programmes covered by the Contribution Agreement and of all individual transactions in relation to these grants.

2. The following transactions shall be registered and identifiable in the NA accounts per each Programme separately:
 - pre-financing of EU funds for grant support received from the Commission;
 - payments made to grant beneficiaries distinguishing between pre-financing and balance payments;
 - reimbursements received from grant beneficiaries, distinguishing between types of reimbursement (reimbursement of unspent grant support, interest on late payments, financial corrections or penalties);
 - interest received on EU pre-financing.
3. In addition to the above, the NA shall record the following information in PMM per each Programme separately:
 - budgetary commitments (i.e. maximum grant amounts resulting from grant agreements signed between the NA and the beneficiary);
 - payment orders issued, distinguishing between pre-financing and interim/final payments (i.e. amounts of payment to be transferred to grant beneficiaries upon approval by the Authorising Officer of the NA);
 - requests for grant payments (i.e. grant amounts requested by the beneficiaries in their interim/final reports);
 - recovery orders issued (i.e. requests for reimbursement of EU pre-financing issued to grant beneficiaries).
4. For projects for which the NA is responsible for continuing and winding up the management of the funds for grant support under the previous Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps Programmes, the NA must ensure that the relevant project data are included in relevant IT tools in accordance with the instructions provided thereon in the relevant Delegation Agreement and related technical guidelines.
5. The NA accounting of the EU funds for grant support shall be held in Euro. All financial information in PMM shall also be registered in Euro.
6. The NA accounting system shall allow to distinguish between:
 - EU funds for grant support to Programme actions including the split between Erasmus+ and the European Solidarity Corps, and
 - any other activity that the NA or its hosting organisation may perform, including those for which they may be awarded support by the Commission (such as network functions or other EU funds).
7. If the NA has been awarded an EU Contribution for networks (e.g. SALTO resource centres, Eurodesk, National VET teams or European Solidarity Corps resource centre), the NA accounting system shall distinguish also between the EU Contribution to management costs and each of these network functions for which a separate contribution is provided as indicated in the Contribution Agreement.
8. The NA shall reconcile all data related to EU funds for grant support held in its accounting and the data registered in relevant Commission IT tools at least each quarter. These reconciliations shall be reviewed and approved by the NA

management. The NA shall keep a proper audit trail of these quarterly reconciliations.

9. In the case that payments of EU grants to beneficiaries of Programme actions are made in national currency, the conversion into Euro for reporting purposes shall be made in accordance with the rules for conversion set in the Contribution Agreement.

7.3.2. Bank accounts and treasury management

1. In line with the provisions of the Contribution Agreement, the NA shall receive the EU contribution for grant support, the contribution to management costs and the contribution to networks to one bank account per each Programme separately³⁸. Both in the case of Erasmus+ and the European Solidarity Corps, the NA shall work internally with separate bank accounts (e.g. sub-accounts), to be kept duly separated per each Programme, distinguishing between the EU funds for grant support, EU contribution to management costs and to networks in order to ensure transparency of funds management.
2. The NA or the hosting organisation shall be the account holder.
3. Where for legal reasons the above requirements regarding one single bank account per each Programme cannot be met, the NA shall obtain a prior formal exemption authorisation from the Commission, in which case the NA shall be able to receive the pre-financing on two bank accounts per each Programme, one for receiving the EU funds for grant support, and another one for the EU contribution to managements costs and the EU contribution to networks. In the case of an NA managing both Programmes, where for legal reasons it is not possible to establish a separate bank exclusively dedicated to the European Solidarity Corps, the NA shall obtain a prior formal exemption authorisation from the Commission, in which case the NA shall clarify the treasury measures taken to ensure transparency in the management of the EU funds per each Programme.
4. The single bank account per each Programme shall be used to pay the respective beneficiaries of indirect management action grants and to receive any reimbursements by beneficiaries to the NA for the respective Programme only. The single bank account of each Programme shall be called in Euro.
5. For winding down the management of the EU funds for grant support under the previous Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps Programmes, the NA shall hold – in addition to the single bank accounts for EU funds for grant support under Erasmus+ and the European Solidarity Corps – a separate bank account for the indirect management actions funded under each of both predecessor Programmes. These bank accounts shall be closed as soon as the last Delegation Agreement under these Programmes is wound down. Any balance remaining after the closure of the last Delegation Agreement shall be recovered by the Commission.

³⁸ The NAs entrusted with both Erasmus+ and the European Solidarity Corps have to establish a separate bank account exclusively dedicated to the European Solidarity Corps. The new bank account has to be distinct and separate from the one used for the Erasmus+ Programme or for any other programme managed by the NA.

6. Payments of EU funds to beneficiaries of the Programmes' indirect management actions shall be made exclusively by bank transfer.
7. An effective and safe treasury management is required, based on the most advantageous market conditions. To that end one or more savings or term deposit accounts that yield a more advantageous interest than the above mentioned single bank accounts shall be opened. These savings or deposit accounts shall be called in Euro. EU funds for grant support that are not transferred immediately to beneficiaries shall be deposited upon receipt on the single bank account of the respective Programme on these more advantageous accounts. Amounts deposited shall be transferred back to the single bank account of the respective Programme just in time for payment to beneficiaries. After the end of the deposit the principal sum together with the interest earned can be transferred back only to the single bank account of the respective Programme.
8. Depending on the national context, it may be necessary for the NA to open in addition a transit account per each Programme to allow for the transfer of EU funds to savings or term deposit accounts or for the payment of grants to beneficiaries in the national currency. In such case, the transit account of each Programme shall be used exclusively for that purpose. The amounts passing through the transit accounts have to be transferred further to the savings or term deposit accounts or to the grant beneficiaries on the same day, thus resulting in a zero balance on the transit accounts at the end of each day.
9. The NA shall investigate the possibility to open bank accounts either with the National Banks or with national ministries in order to minimise the amount of EU funds to be spent on negative interests.
10. Any NA bank accounts held in another country than that of the NA can be held only in a Member State of the European Union.
11. The NA shall disclose the references of all the bank accounts (current, savings or term deposit accounts and transit account if applicable) it uses for the EU funds for grant support. These accounts will further be called the "NA bank accounts". The Commission shall keep the ownership of all funds on the "NA bank accounts", both for the current and predecessor Programmes.
12. The NA shall reconcile the bank balances in the bank statements of the "NA bank accounts" with the bank balances in its accounting at least each quarter. These reconciliations shall be reviewed and approved by the NA management. The supporting documents for the reconciliation and approval by NA management shall be kept for audit trail purposes.
13. Any costs and charges for the bank accounts as well as taxes on interest earned shall be covered by the NA operating expenses and cannot be deducted from the EU funds for grant support or from the amount of interest earned thereon.
14. The NA shall record all required information on its treasury and interest on EU pre-financing payments in PMM in order to ensure accurate and timely reporting to the Commission.

7.4 Request for amendments to the Contribution Agreement

1. Any amendment request shall comply with the relevant provisions of the Contribution Agreement.
2. The NA shall submit requests for amendments to the Contribution Agreement in NA Module (NAM).
3. In line with Article II.11.6 of the General Conditions of the Contribution Agreement, changes of the legal representative or director of the NA, of the name, address or of the bank accounts of the NA shall be notified in writing to the European Commission.
4. Any request for change of the name or address of the NA shall be accompanied by an update of the following documents, using the templates provided in Annex I of the Guide for NAs:
 - Overview of NA contract and bank details;
 - Financial Identification sheets for all bank accounts referred to in the Contribution Agreement, accompanied by supporting bank abstracts;
 - The Legal Entity form, accompanied by supporting official documents. In the case of a change of the legal representative of the NA, a copy of the formal nomination act shall be provided in addition.
5. Any request for change of the legal representative or director of the NA, shall be introduced by the National Authority of the relevant country, using the template provided in Annex I of the Guide for NAs.

In the case of a change of the legal representative of the NA, the request shall be accompanied by a copy of the formal nomination act.

If the change of the legal representative or director of the NA results in the modification of the financial data, the request shall be accompanied by the update of all forms indicated in Section 7.4 of the Guide for NAs.

6. Any request for change of bank accounts of the NA (e.g. following a change of bank) shall be accompanied by an update of the following documents, using the templates provided in Annex I of the Guide for NAs:
 - Overview of NA contract and bank details;
 - The related Financial Identification sheet(s) and supporting bank abstracts.

7.5 Request for waiving a recovery order

1. The NA shall request prior formal authorisation to the Commission in view of waiving any recovery order exceeding EUR 200.
2. In such case, the NA should submit to the Commission the relevant form and supporting documents (see Annex I.5 of the Guide for NAs) in Lifecard³⁹ in electronic format only. The request shall be accompanied by a full description and

³⁹ In NA Module (NAM), when available

evidence of the measures already taken to recover the funds and an explanation of the reason why the amount is either unrecoverable or why the effort and expenses involved cannot be justified. The request shall contain a summary of the file translated into English. In case the submitted file is incomplete, the Commission will return the file to the NA for completion.

3. The NA shall ensure that waiver requests concerning the same beneficiary are presented to the Commission at the same time.
4. In case the debtor is not a public body, the Commission may authorise the waiver of a recovery order above EUR 200 only in a limited number of cases, as indicated Annex I.6.
5. Requests for waiving a recovery where the beneficiary is a public body will be refused by the Commission.
6. In case of acceptance of the waiver request, the Commission shall give its explicit authorisation in writing for a total or partial waiver of the amount concerned. In the absence of a formal authorisation from the Commission, the NA is not allowed to waive the claim.
7. If the Commission does not authorise the waiver of the claim by the NA, the NA is obliged to pursue the recovery with all available means. In such case, the amount due by the beneficiary to the NA will be considered ineligible by the Commission when closing the related Contribution Agreement and will be recovered accordingly from the NA.

8. PROCUREMENT

1. The NA shall have a well-defined and transparent legal and regulatory framework for procurement that clearly establishes appropriate policies, procedures, accountability and controls.
2. The NA has to ensure compliance with the requirements of the EU public procurement law, as laid down in Directive 2014/24/EU, with the applicable national law on public procurement and in particular with the general procurement principles as described above for all their public procurement contracts under the Contribution Agreement. Compliance with the best value for money and no conflict of interest requirements constitutes a cost eligibility requirement. Failure to adopt a comprehensive procurement policy may lead to a reduction of the EU contribution.
3. The NA shall have formal and appropriate procurement rules and procedures which:
 - (a) comply with the principle of broad competition of tenderers to obtain the best value for money and negotiated procedures are limited to the cases indicated in the Procurement Directive;
 - (b) ensure transparency with adequate ex ante publication, in particular of calls for tenders, and adequate ex post publication of contractors;
 - (c) ensure equal treatment, proportionality and non-discrimination;
 - (d) prevent conflicts of interest throughout the entire procurement procedure;

- (e) apply appropriate review procedures, rules for recovering funds unduly paid and rules for excluding from access to funding.
4. The rules and procedures for procurement shall include (a) the application and organisation of invitations to tender, (b) the selection and evaluation procedures and award of contracts and (c) a complaints system.
5. Procurement contracts shall be awarded to the tender offering best value for money, that is to say to the tender offering the best price-quality ratio, in compliance with the principles of transparency, public access to procurement information, proportionality, equal treatment, use of competitive tendering procedures, best value for money and prevention of conflicts of interest.
6. Except in the case of services involving no delegation of budget implementation, the NA shall not contract any of its tasks related to the implementation of Contribution Agreements to a third party without the prior written agreement from the Commission or unless expressly provided for in the ex-ante Compliance Assessment issued by the National Authority and accepted by the Commission.
7. The NA shall have a clear legal and regulatory framework for publication of recipients of funds in the procurement process.

9. IT SYSTEMS

9.1 General principles

1. The NA shall use the IT systems made available by the Commission in view of the award and management of EU funds and for communication with the Commission and the network of NAs. To that effect, the NA shall make available or acquire the necessary hardware and software and ensure adequate maintenance services.
2. The NA shall ensure that data in all IT systems are kept up-to-date on a continuous basis and are subject to formal checks and reconciliation with NA accounting and bank accounts at least each quarter to ensure reliable data for monitoring and checks by the Commission.
3. The NA shall use the IT systems provided by the Commission in accordance with the principles defined hereafter in the Guide for NAs and the technical guidelines provided by the Commission for each system.
4. The NA shall provide guidance and help to applicants and beneficiaries on how to use IT systems.

9.2 IT systems provided by the Commission

9.2.1 Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps platform

1. The Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps platform is the single entry point to all IT systems provided by the Commission to the NA, applicants, beneficiaries and other actors active in the Programmes.

2. The platform and all IT systems are available at <https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/erasmus-esc>.
3. The NA shall translate the single entry point screens and documentation in the national language(s), if needed.

9.2.2 Project Management Module (PMM)

1. The NA shall use PMM for the management of the project lifecycle of indirect management actions of both Erasmus+ and the European Solidarity Corps, including the checks of grant beneficiaries, in accordance with the requirements set out in the PMM User Guide.
2. The NA shall keep the data in PMM up to date on a continuous basis, applying at least quarterly reconciliations (see Section 7.3.1 of the Guide for NAs).
3. Within one month from the grant award decision the NA shall ensure that selection data for all projects is up to date in PMM. The Commission shall draw from PMM the selection data for the verification purposes.
4. EPlusLink will continue to be used for management of the previous Programmes.

9.2.3 Organisation Registration for Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps

1. The Organisation Registration system is a register of organisations participating in the actions managed by the NAs. The Organisation Registration system is accessible through the Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps platform.
2. The NA shall translate the Organisation Registration system screens and documentation in the national language(s), if needed.

9.2.4 Application Forms

1. The application forms provided by the Commission shall be used for applications from organisations for accreditation, Quality Label and EU grant for all Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps Actions, which the NA shall make available to potential applicants.
2. The NA shall translate the application forms in the national language(s) if needed.

9.2.5 Assessment Module (AM)

1. The NA shall use Assessment Module for assigning applications and beneficiary reports to internal and external experts and for the assessment and recording of assessment results in Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps actions.
2. The NA shall translate the Assessment Module screens and documentation in the national language(s) if needed.
3. Online Expert Evaluation Tool (OEET) will continue to be used for the previous Programmes.

9.2.6 Beneficiary Module (BM)

1. The NA shall ensure the timely transfer of selected Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps projects from PMM to Beneficiary Module. Under the European Solidarity Corps, information from Beneficiary Module is used to enrol eligible participants to the insurance scheme. The NA shall ensure that this process is not delayed due to late transfer of projects to Beneficiary Module.
2. The NA shall use Beneficiary Module for managing and monitoring the project implementation during its lifecycle, and, where relevant, for validating the eligible activities and for the checks of grant beneficiaries.
3. The NA shall translate the Beneficiary Module interface in the national language(s) if needed.
4. Mobility Tool+ will continue to be used for the previous Programmes.

9.2.7 LifeCard

The NA shall use LifeCard to submit to the Commission payment and waiver requests, until these functions become available in NA Module (NAM).

9.2.8 NA Module (NAM)

1. The NA shall use NA Module (NAM) to produce and submit to the Commission the NA Work Programme, the NA Yearly Report, as well as to submit to the Commission requests for amendments to the Contribution Agreement.
2. The NA shall submit payment and waiver requests in NA Module (NAM) when those functions are available.

9.2.9 Erasmus+ Project Results Platform and the European Solidarity Corps Projects Platform

1. The NA shall use the Erasmus+ Project Results Platform provided by the Commission for the validation and publication of Erasmus+ project results under Key Action 1 and Key Action 2 (Partnerships for Cooperation).
2. For both Erasmus+ and the European Solidarity Corps, the quality check of project summaries displayed on the platforms shall be done in PMM.
3. The NA shall provide guidance and help to beneficiaries of indirect management actions on how to use the tool and to keep their data up to date in the projects kick-off meetings with beneficiaries and throughout the project lifecycle.

9.2.10 Data Exchange Application Programming Interface (API)

1. The NA shall use the Data Exchange application programming interface (API) provided by the Commission if it wishes to exchange data with the DG EAC's IT systems.

2. The NA must develop its own integration layer with the Data Exchange application programming interface (API) and in accordance with the technical specifications provided by the Commission.

9.2.11 User Management

1. The NA shall use User Management (UM) system to configure access to Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps IT systems for the staff of the NA and experts. The User Management system is accessible through the Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps platform.
2. The director of the NA shall appoint at least one NA IT administrator who will be given administrative privileges to manage users for his/her Agency. This user or users will be responsible for keeping the list of users and information about them up to date.

9.2.12 Internal Communication and Collaboration Tool

1. The NAconnECt platform shall be used for structured communication and collaboration between the European Commission and the NA, and between NAs. The platform is the source of information and documentation about the management and implementation of the Erasmus+ and the European Solidarity Corps Programmes.
2. The NAconnECt platform integrates different tools to serve different communication needs:
 - i. NAconnECt Wiki is the repository space for Commission documents and information addressed to NA, including events;
 - ii. 'NAconnECt IT Doc Wiki' is the space for IT systems User Guides and processes;
 - iii. NAconnECt Teams is a social network for exchanges of information, for discussion and for consultation between and among NAs and the European Commission. Teams allows users to engage in both public and private discussion groups (horizontal, field-specific, by topics or related to a specific working group). Teams also offers other networking functionalities, like the possibility to work on shared documents, to call other users, and to organise meetings;
 - iv. NAconnECt Plus Teams is a second Teams network with private groups including beneficiaries, National Authorities and external stakeholders;
 - v. NA Content Helpdesk (NACO) – IMT (Issue Management Tool) system is the channel for the official Programmes' content Question & Answer management between NAs and the European Commission in relation to the implementation of the Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps Programmes. The NA shall use this tool to submit Programme content-related questions.
 - vi. NA IT Helpdesk (NAIT) – IMT (Issue Management Tool) system is the channel for IT related issues. The NA shall use this tool to report issues or submit questions in relation to IT systems used in the Erasmus+ and European

Solidarity Corps Programmes, on its own behalf or on behalf of the external users, transferring the answers to the external users in a clear and quick way.

- vii. Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) – IMT (Issue Management Tool) system displays the Frequently Asked Questions related to the content of the Programme filtered by fields or horizontal.

9.2.13 NA electronic exchange systems

All exchanges with grant beneficiaries, including the conclusion of grant agreements and any amendments thereto, may be done through electronic exchange systems if these systems meet the following requirements:

- only authorised persons may have access to the system and to documents transmitted through it;
- only authorised persons may electronically sign or transmit a document through the system;
- authorised persons must be identified through the system by established means;
- the time and date of the electronic transaction must be determined precisely;
- the integrity of documents must be preserved;
- the availability of documents must be preserved;
- where appropriate, the confidentiality of documents must be preserved;
- the protection of personal data in accordance with the requirements of Regulation (EU) 2018/1725⁴⁰ must be ensured.

9.2.14 Online Language Support (OLS)

Under Erasmus+ and the European Solidarity Corps, the NA shall use the Online Language Support (OLS) service, when it is available⁴¹. The objective of the OLS is to provide linguistic support to mobility participants, including zero-grant participants, for the main language used abroad for study, training, volunteering or work. Participants who are already proficient in the main language of instruction, work or volunteering may choose to follow an OLS course in one or two other available languages.

9.2.15 European Youth Portal

1. The NA shall ensure that all valid volunteering accreditations under Erasmus+ as well as all valid European Solidarity Corps Quality Label organisations are visible on the European Youth Portal.

⁴⁰ Please see the relevant FAQ available at:

<https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/fpfis/wikis/pages/viewpage.action?pageId=298659416>

⁴¹ Further details will be provided, when available, in Annex IV.8 of the Guide for NAs.

2. The NA shall provide guidance and help to organisations who received the volunteering accreditation under Erasmus+ and the Quality Label under the European Solidarity Corps on how to keep their data up to date and how to use the tool (creating and posting opportunities, making offers to participants etc.).

9.2.16 The Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps Dashboards

1. The Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps Dashboards are developed by the Commission to view the Programmes' performance, analyse and extract information coming from the information systems such as Application Forms, PMM, and Beneficiary Module in a quick and easy way.
2. The NA shall use the Dashboards in order to find and analyse information about selection, participant reports and other information needed for the NA Yearly Report, the NA Work Programme preparation and to answer ad-hoc requests for information or statistics on the Programmes.
3. The Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps Dashboards are available through the Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps single entry point.

10. NA SUPPORT TO QUALITY AND IMPACT

10.1 Training and Cooperation Activities under Erasmus+ (TCA)/ Networking Activities under the European Solidarity Corps (NET)

10.1.1. Objectives of TCA and NET

1. The Training and Cooperation Activities (TCA) and Networking activities (NET) are support activities implemented by the NA aiming to improve the implementation of the Programmes in qualitative terms and to make them more strategic by building closer links with relevant elements of policy development.
2. Specific objectives:
 - Support to activities aiming at enhancing links to European policy cooperation in the fields of education, training and youth as well as to activities aiming at influencing national practices in the concerned fields, and vice-versa;
 - Support to activities aiming at increasing the quality of Programme implementation, notably the participation and accessibility of the Programmes, as well as community-building and networking between organisations.
3. When planning and implementing the TCA/NET, the NA has to take into account aims and measures for their implementation formulated in strategic documents, such as the Communication on the European Education Area, the Digital Education Action Plan 2021-2027 and the EU Youth Strategy, as well as the annual European Commission Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps Work Programmes.
4. The NA is encouraged to explore possible synergies between TCA and NET, while avoiding double funding (see Section 10.1.3.3 of the Guide for NAs), as well as ensuring compliance with the specific rules of each Programme. When planning and implementing activities that combine funding from the two funding Programmes, the

NA must also ensure that the objective and content of the activity are relevant to both Programmes.

10.1.2. Activities

10.1.2.1. Eligible TCA activities

1. The NA may organise the following eligible activities:
 - Training, support and contact seminars of potential Programme participants;
 - Thematic activities linked to the objectives, priority target groups and themes of the Programme;
 - Evaluation and analysis of Programme results;
 - Activities linked to European-level events (e.g. European Year of Youth, Erasmus 35th Anniversary, European Youth Week, EYE-European Youth Event, European Day of Languages, European Language Label, European Innovative Teaching Award, etc.).
2. TCA can have a transnational or national scope. TCA with a national scope are eligible provided that they offer clear European added value and are instrumental to improving the quality of the Programme and/or reaching its objectives.
3. Activities concerning the “Evaluation and analysis of Programme results” can only have a transnational scope.
4. The following activities are ineligible and cannot be funded from the budget for TCA:
 - DiscoverEU Learning Cycle;
 - NA activities planned in Part II of the NA Work Programme, which are supported through the EU contribution to the management cost of the NA.

10.1.2.2. Eligible NET activities

1. The NA may organise the following eligible activities:
 - Training, support and contact seminars of potential organisations and participants;
 - Thematic activities to raise awareness and exchange of practices linked to the objectives, priority target groups and themes of the Programme;
 - Evaluation and analysis of Programme results.
 - The establishment and implementation of community building networks, alumni networks and post-placement guidance and support;
2. Activities concerning the “Evaluation and analysis of Programme results” can only have a transnational scope.
3. The following activities are ineligible and cannot be funded from the budget for NET:
 - European Solidarity Corps Training and Evaluation Cycle for participants and organisations;
 - Quality label award;

- NA activities planned in Part II of the NA Work Programme, which are supported through the EU contribution to the management cost of the NA.

10.1.2.3. Format

1. Both TCA and NET activities can have the format of:
 - Long-term activities: recurrent or complex activities, which can intervene both supporting the Programme or the policy development and are carried out in accordance with paragraph 2;
 - Single activities: one-off activity without a long-term perspective.
2. Long-term activities shall present a strategic framework that can cover several years. They are carried out by several NAs who have agreed to cooperate to develop a series of activities linked to a policy area with the aim to produce an impact on the development of the Programme and of the policy area they are tackling. Within the agreed scheme, one NA takes the lead and manages the overall coordination of a long-term activity. The other NAs participating in the scheme can organise, on a rotational basis, specific activities and/or provide a financial contribution to functioning of the long-term activity during the period of duration of the long-term activity.

10.1.2.4. Venue

1. TCA must be carried out in the EU Member State or in the third country associated to the Programme of one of the NAs/SALTO involved in the activity. As concerns the youth field, TCA can take place in a third country not associated to the Programme (regions 1 to 4) provided that the funding support to these activities is not disproportionate compared to similar activities organised in an EU Member State or in a third country associated to the Programme and only if the relevant regional SALTO is duly informed or involved in the activity as co-organiser.
2. NET must be carried out in an EU Member State or in a third country associated to the Programme of one of the NAs/SALTO involved in the activity. They can also take place in a third country not associated to the Programme (region 1 to 4) provided that the funding support to these activities is not disproportionate compared to similar activities organised in an EU Member State or in a third country associated to the Programme and only if the relevant regional SALTO is duly informed or involved in the activity as co-organiser in the case of Transnational Networking Activities. National Networking Activities cannot take place in another country.

10.1.2.5. Participants

1. TCA

As regards training support/contact seminars and thematic activities, TCA activities shall address students and learners, trainees, volunteers, pupils, youngsters, teachers, professors, trainers, youth workers, professionals of organisations active in the fields of education, training and youth or other stakeholders acting as multipliers in the area of education, training and youth. Participants in TCA activities must be from an EU Member State or a third country associated to the Programme, or, as concerns youth,

from a third country not associated to the Programme (region 1 to 4), as far as the content of the activity is relevant.

2. NET

NET activities shall address young people (in particular those registered in the European Solidarity Corps database and participants carrying out/having carried out European Solidarity Corps activities), pupils, students, volunteers, trainees, educators, trainers, mentors, youth workers, organisations (public and private, social enterprises, NGOs and other) active in the fields of the European Solidarity Corps as well as stakeholders acting as multipliers in these areas. Participants must be from an EU Member State or from a third country associated to the Programme, or from a third country not associated to the Programme, as far as the content of the activity is relevant.

3. NA staff can participate in TCA/NET, either as support staff, or organising team members, or trainers/facilitators. As a rule, costs related to their participation (i.e. travel, accommodation) cannot be covered through the TCA/NET budget. As an exception, the NA organising, co-organising the activity or coordinating (in the case of long-term activities), can cover the travel and accommodation costs for one NA staff member provided that he/she participates in the activity as a trainer/facilitator.

10.1.2.6. Duration

1. Within the foreseen eligibility period for the use of EU funds (see Calendar for the use of funds), the duration of a specific TCA/NET shall be adequate to the objectives defined and expected outcomes.
2. Given their multi-annual character, long-term activities are not linked to the TCA/NET eligibility period as established in the Calendar for the use of funds of a given Call year. However, the funding of the specific activities, carried out in the frame of a long-term activity, as well as any financial contribution for their functioning, is subject to the period of eligibility established in the Calendar for the use of funds.

10.1.2.7. Role of NA

The NA may cover the following roles and responsibilities:

- Coordinator of a long-term activity
- Organiser of a single TCA/NET: the NA takes the lead (as sole organiser or main co-organiser) in the organisation of an activity at transnational or national level, is responsible for the preparation and follow up of the activity, covers organisational costs, selects and covers the costs for the participants from its own country⁴². This role is applicable also in the context of specific activities organised in the framework of a long-term activity.

⁴² Or the sector(s) it is responsible for in its own country.

- Co-organising NA - Providing financial contributions to the organisational cost of a single activity organised by another NA or to the functioning of a long-term activity coordinated by another NA⁴³
- Sending participants to activities organised by other NAs: the NA selects and covers the expenditure of participants from its country (or sectors covered by the NA).

10.1.2.8. Planning, change and cancellation of activities

1. Each year, the NA shall prepare the planning of TCA/NET to be realised in the following yearly period of 1 January N till 31 December N+1. The TCA/NET planning shall be drafted following the template and the Specifications for the NA Work Programme provided by the Commission for the given budget year.
2. The coordinating NA of a long-term activity shall include in its planning in particular, details on subjects and themes the long-term activity plans to tackle. The NA shall specify the links with the objectives of the TCA/NET strategy, including any applicable policy objective. Information on organisational functioning of the activity, types and estimated number of single activities planned under a long-term activity and information on monitoring and dissemination of results shall be also included. For policy-related activities the NA should moreover describe how the objectives of the activity and the NA's participation will contribute to the policy priorities of the Programmes.
3. Long-term complex activities are strategic and will have an impact on the development of the programme and of the policy area they want to tackle. NAs are therefore encouraged to involve and consult all relevant stakeholders in their conception and preparatory phase. The coordinating NA is invited to share the preliminary ideas with other stakeholders (fellow NAs, national authorities and other relevant stakeholders) in order to ensure transparency and a participatory approach, using the relevant EU platforms and stakeholders' fora. In the Youth field, the EU Youth Strategy stakeholders' platform already offers a suitable space to present long-term strategic activities.
4. Because of the strategic character of policy-related long-term activities, a prior consultation with the Commission's relevant service is also required before their submission in the NA's work programme. Furthermore, their approval can only take place in the context of the NA work programme.
5. Once the TCA/NET planned activities are approved by the Commission as part of the NA Work Programme, the NA shall undertake them as agreed with the other NAs participating in the TCA/NET concerned. The NA shall introduce the detailed activities planning in the Planning Board available on SALTO's website (www.salto-youth.net) for TCA activities in the youth field and NET, and on the SALTO E&T TCA's website (www.salto-et.net) for activities in education and training, where the matching of TCA/NET activities, based on the TCA/NET planning approved by the Commission will take place.

⁴³ Tasks and responsibilities can be agreed by the NAs as part of contractual agreement establishing the cooperation.

6. During the eligible implementation period specified in the Calendar for the use of funds, the NA may change or cancel the planned TCA/NET or plan new TCA/NET up to the maximum amount of EU contribution and within the strategy and objectives defined in the NA Work Programme.
7. Activities have to be implemented under a principle of cost-efficiency. In case of significant changes compared to the approved planning overview (e.g. major deviations in the number and/or themes of activities) and budget (e.g. significant increase of final costs), the NA has to provide explanations in the NA Yearly report following the end of TCA/NET period of eligibility specified in the Calendar for the use of funds.
8. Requests for modification to TCA/NET (resulting in an amendment to the Contribution Agreement if accepted by the Commission) shall be submitted to the Commission only if:
 - No planning overview of single activities organised by the NA, both in terms of budget and content under either Education and Training or Youth, is provided by the NA in its NA Work Programme;
 - The NA wishes to organise activities addressing new arising priorities, objectives or themes not fitting into the approved strategy and overview of activity planning.

Modification requests to add new long-term activities will not be accepted.

9. The NA shall update the information accordingly in the Planning board available on SALTO's website [www.salto-youth.net] for activities in the youth field and on the SALTO E&T TCA's website (www.salto-et.net) for activities in education and training, and introduce the relevant approved changes or new activities.

10.1.2.9. TCA/NET Officer

The NA shall appoint one or several TCA/NET Officer(s), who will be responsible for the planning, implementation and evaluation of the TCA/NET. TCA/NET Officers will also be the contact point for the other NAs, Programme structures, stakeholders and participants involved in the TCA/NET.

10.1.2.10. TCA/NET Officers meeting

1. At least once a year TCA/NET Officers shall meet, mainly with a view to:
 - develop competences for the creation of training strategies and for the development of quality in the TCA/NET;
 - develop common strategies and common projects;
 - share information relevant for the planning of the TCA/NET in the NA Work Programme for the following year;
 - share good practices and discuss difficulties faced
2. These TCA/NET officers' meetings are organised by the respective SALTOs:

- for the youth field under Erasmus+ and for the European Solidarity Corps by the SALTO Training and Cooperation Resource Centre and the European Solidarity Corps Resource Centre,
 - for Education and Training under Erasmus+ by the SALTO E&T TCA Resource Centre.
3. TCA/NET Officer(s) – or other NA staff acting on behalf of the NA - shall attend the yearly TCA/NET Officers meeting and present the demand and offer of their NA with regard to TCA/NET. Costs related to the TCA/NET seminar are to be covered from the NA's management fee.
 4. The Commission will take part in the TCA/NET Officers meeting in view of providing support on alignment of proposed TCA/NET with EU policy priorities

10.1.3 Funding Rules

10.1.3.1 Co-financing

1. **The EU contribution to TCA/NET must always be complemented with a co-financing from sources other than EU. The minimum co-financing from sources other than EU shall be 5% of the eligible costs incurred during the implementation of TCA/NET,** but the co-financing level may vary between individual TCA/NET depending on their nature, scope and target public. Co-financing may take form of participants' fee to a TCA/NET, national contribution to the staff costs of TCA/NET officer(s), partial reimbursement by the NA of the travel costs of the participant to the TCA/NET or further external sources other than EU funding. It is the responsibility of the NA participating in a TCA/NET to ensure that the costs that count towards the required 5% co-funding are indeed covered by non-EU funding (e.g. participants' fees).
2. The NA shall keep the evidence of the actual costs incurred, as well as of the level of co-financing in accordance with Section 2.8 of the Guide for NAs. For reporting purposes, the NA shall only encode the final realised budget in the relevant Commission IT system, and only the amount corresponding to the EU funding.

10.1.3.2 Eligible costs

1. In order to be eligible under TCA/NET, costs shall comply with the provisions in Article II.19 of the General Conditions of the Contribution Agreement.
2. Costs generated before or after the eligible period for TCA/NET specified in the Calendar for the use of funds which are necessary for the organisation of a TCA/NET activity (e.g. preparation, follow-up and evaluation of the event) shall be deemed eligible provided that:
 - they are directly linked and proportional to a TCA/NET taking place during the eligible period;
 - the costs have not been incurred prior to the date of the submission of the draft Work Programme including the related TCA/NET planning.
3. Eligible costs are the following:
 - Staff costs

- Fees for external experts involved in TCA/NET
- NA staff costs are ineligible under the contribution for grant support for TCA/NET as they are already covered by the EU Contribution to management costs. Travel and subsistence for national and international travel of:
 - Trainers, experts, and other resource persons external to the NA;
 - TCA/NET participants;
 - NA staff within the limits of their allowed participation specified in Section 10.1.2.3 of the Guide for NAs
- Production of materials essential for the TCA/NET (e.g. publications)
- Organisation of events (e.g. rental of rooms, interpretation, costs related to the organisation of online activities)
- Procurement contracts for external contractors. The NA may undertake TCA/NET directly or outsource part of them to external contractors. In this case, the NA shall comply with the contractual provisions on procurement specified in the Contribution Agreement and in the Guide for NAs.

The above costs are also eligible in duly justified cases for participation and contribution to TCA/NET activities covering both the Erasmus+ and the European Solidarity Corps Programmes.

4. National TCA/NET

The part of the budget for national TCA/NET activities should be proportional and balanced in relation to the objectives of the NA strategy for TCA/NET and the part of the budget for transnational TCA/NET activities. For TCA, indicatively, at least half of the implemented⁴⁴ activities should have a transnational scope.

National activities under TCA/NET must not overlap with activities supported through the management fees and indicated in Part II of the Work Programme.

10.1.3.3 Double funding

1. Participants involved in other Erasmus+ or European Solidarity Corps projects can take part in a TCA/NET, provided that costs linked to their participation are not double funded.
2. In case some of the TCA/NET activities would be covering both the Erasmus+ and the European Solidarity Corps Programmes, a clear audit trail for both funding sources should be ensured in order to provide coherent financial reporting per Programme and to avoid any double-funding.

⁴⁴ This refers to TCAs organised by the NA. It does not include the sending of participants and activities where the NA covers the role of co-organiser or financially contributes to its organisation.

10.1.4 Contractual arrangements between NAs

1. In case of co-organised activities, NAs, the European Solidarity Corps Resource Centre, SALTOs and other partners are free to decide on the modalities for sharing the costs of the activity. It is the responsibility of the structures involved to agree on these modalities in advance when planning a TCA/NET in order to avoid any double-funding and ensure transparency of cost allocation per programme. The structures are required to keep proof of the arrangements agreed and actual split of costs incurred for audit trail purposes.
2. In the case one NA ("the co-organising NA") intends to financially contribute to the costs (other costs than the sending cost of a participant) of a TCA/NET organised by another NA ("the organising NA") a written agreement shall be established between the two NAs prior to the beginning of the activity covering at least the following points:
 - Purpose;
 - Duration;
 - Financing (Budget of the TCA/NET with income and revenue);
 - Payment arrangements (schedule and accounts, calculation of the final financial contribution from the contributing NA);
 - Reporting;
 - Commitment of the coordinating NA to undertake the project in full respect of the Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps Programmes, in particular with respect to sound financial management, non-profit, procurement rules and specific rules for TCA/NET.

10.1.5 Selection of participants of TCA/NET

The pre-selection of participants by the sending NA and the final selection of participants by the organising NA shall be carried out in a transparent and non-discriminatory way, preferably on the basis of a public call published by the NA or a call announced on the webpages of the dedicated resource centres in the youth and education fields respectively.

10.2 Training and Evaluation Cycle (TEC) for the European Solidarity Corps participants⁴⁵

10.2.1. Types of training/evaluation

The following types of TEC activities - which all must include a strong European dimension, whether they concern in-country or cross-border activities - are to be organised for the European Solidarity Corps participants:

1. Pre-departure training

⁴⁵ TEC applies also to Erasmus+ volunteers funded by the previous Erasmus+ programme and start their activities in 2022.

Whereas the main responsibility of organising the pre-departure training lies with the beneficiary organisation, the NA may organise a one-day pre-departure information session to establish contact with outgoing participants and make sure they are prepared for their upcoming activities by the support organisations (it doesn't apply to Humanitarian Aid volunteers).

2. On-arrival training for all volunteers

The on-arrival training should take place within 4 weeks after the arrival of the participant and last on average 7 working days.

For volunteers taking part in activities in a third country not associated to the Programme, should the above provision result in a patent inefficiency in the use of resources, the on-arrival training organised by the SALTO² may be postponed, provided all the following conditions are met:

- The postponement is within three months after the arrival of the volunteer;
- The assigned SALTO shares with the volunteer a “country fiche” as soon as they arrive to the host country;
- The assigned SALTO offers the volunteer up to two hours of online support (through videoconference) within their first month in the country; and
- The assigned SALTO ensures the volunteer receives necessary information from their host organisation within their first month in the country.

3. Mid-term evaluation for participants in volunteering of at least 6 months

The mid-term evaluation should take place minimum 2 months after the on-arrival training and minimum 2 months before the end of the activity. It should last on average 2.5 working days.

For volunteers taking part in activities in a third country not associated to the Programme for which the on-arrival training organised by the SALTO was postponed, the mid-term evaluation should take place minimum 2 months after the on-arrival training and minimum one month before the end of the activity.

4. Annual European Solidarity Corps event

The annual event should take place once a year in each country although some NAs/SALTOs may decide to organise regional events and should last maximum 2 days. The annual event should gather volunteers. It is optional for participants in solidarity projects.

10.2.2. Organisation

1. The NA and SALTO organise on-arrival training and midterm evaluation for volunteers in long-term activities, as well as the annual event for all participants. The organisation of the pre-departure training and on-arrival training for short term individual and volunteering teams participants must be done by the organisations involved in the project.
2. All trainings/evaluations have to respect the minimum quality standards as defined in the European Solidarity Corps Guide.

3. Volunteers from projects granted through actions under direct management are also to be included in the sessions organised by the NA/SALTO.
4. The sessions organised by the SALTO (on-arrival training, mid-term evaluation and annual event) shall respect the maximum thresholds listed below. Costs will be paid by the NA with reimbursement to the SALTO based on invoices.
5. When possible, the NA/SALTO is recommended to have an overlap of one day between on-arrival training and mid-term evaluation to guarantee participants have an opportunity to exchange ideas and recommendations.
6. The NA/SALTO shall ensure that each outgoing volunteer receives the information kit prepared by the Commission.
7. The NA/SALTO shall ensure that each incoming volunteer receives an information package on eco-tips as stated by the Erasmus+ “green” strategy (to be provided by the Commission).
8. The NA (not SALTO) may organise a one-day pre-departure information session to establish contact with outgoing participants.
9. The NA/SALTO may contract the organisation of the training and evaluation sessions that are then organised by one or several organisations on behalf of the NA/SALTO. In all cases, the NA/SALTO should remain involved in the sessions as much as possible and keep regular contact with the trainers.
10. For any activity with a duration of less than 2 months, it is the responsibility of the host or supporting organisation to provide participants with on-arrival training suitable to the project and in line with the volunteer training standards and minimum guidelines provided by the Commission.

10.2.3. Funding

1. For all activities, the following ceilings apply⁴⁶:
 - On-arrival training: up to EUR 900 per volunteer taking part in the training as participant;
 - Mid-term evaluation: up to EUR 700 per volunteer taking part in the training as participant;
 - Annual event: up to EUR 400 per European Solidarity Corps participant taking part in the event as participant and has finished its activity during the past 12 months;
 - Pre-departure information session (organised by the NA): up to EUR 300 per volunteer taking part in the training as participant.

Costs exceeding the above ceilings shall be justified by the NA in its Yearly Report and will be accepted by the Commission only in exceptional cases.

⁴⁶ The maximum eligible costs are considered per participant up to the indicated ceilings. If justified, eligible costs for a certain participant may be higher than the indicated ceiling under the condition that the costs for another participant (or other participants) are proportionally lower.

2. Eligible costs

- Fees for trainers, facilitators, external experts or resource persons involved in training
- Travel, accommodation and subsistence costs of trainers, facilitators, external experts or resource persons involved in training
- Travel, accommodation and subsistence costs of participants
- Production and/or purchase of materials essential for training
- Organisation of events (e.g. rental of rooms, costs related to the organisation of online activities)
- Procurement contracts for external contractors

Costs related to participation of staff from the NA (i.e. travel, accommodation) cannot be covered through the TEC budget. As an exception, the travel and accommodation costs for one NA staff member provided that he/she participates in the activity as a trainer/facilitator can be covered through the TEC budget.

3. In the case of participants with fewer opportunities, the NA may allow funding for tailor made preparation and TEC activities under 'Exceptional costs'.

10.3 Training and Evaluation Cycle (TEC) for organisations

10.3.1. Types of training

The NA or the regional SALTO Resource Centres may organise the following types of TEC activities for organisations holding a Quality Label :

- Training for organisations having been awarded recently the Quality Label. The training should occur at least once or twice a year and last from one to two days.
- Annual national event for organisations holding a European Solidarity Corps Quality Label that should last 1 or 2 days. The annual event for organisations can be combined with the annual event for participants. In addition, the NA/SALTO may decide to organise regional events that should last maximum 2 days.

10.3.2. Organisation

1. The NA/SALTO organise the TEC. All trainings/evaluations have to respect the minimum quality standards as defined in the European Solidarity Corps Guide.
2. The NA/SALTO may contract the organisation of the training and evaluation sessions that are then organised by one or several organisations on behalf of the NA/SALTO.

10.3.3. Funding

1. The following ceilings apply:
 - Training for organisations having been awarded recently the Quality Label: 100% of eligible costs up to EUR 500 per organisation taking part in the activity.

- Annual event of Quality Label organisations: 100% of eligible costs up to EUR 300 per organisation taking part in the event.

Costs exceeding the above ceilings shall be justified by the NA in its Yearly Report and will be accepted by the Commission only in exceptional cases.

2. Eligible costs

- Fees for trainers, facilitators, external experts or resource persons involved in training
- Travel, accommodation and subsistence costs of trainers, facilitators, external experts or resource persons involved in training
- Travel, accommodation and subsistence costs of participants
- Production and/or purchase of materials essential for training
- Organisation of events (e.g. rental of rooms, costs related to the organisation of online activities)
- Procurement contracts for external contractors

Costs related to participation of staff from the NA (i.e. travel, accommodation) cannot be covered through the TEC budget. As an exception, the travel and accommodation costs for one NA staff member provided that he/she participates in the activity as a trainer/facilitator can be covered through the TEC budget.

10.4 DiscoverEU Learning Cycle for DiscoverEU participants

10.4.1. Type of activities

The NA shall organise the following types of activities for DiscoverEU participants prior and during their mobility experience:

- At least one pre-departure information meeting (online/physical, preferably one per application round) and/or production of a pre-departure info-kit to support DiscoverEU participants from the NA country
- At least one DiscoverEU Meet-up (online/physical) for participants across Europe
- At least one coordination meeting (online/physical) with multipliers, preferably one per application round

The NA may outsource the organisation of these activities partially or fully to external contractors, who would act on behalf of the NA. In all cases, the NA should remain involved and keep regular contact with the organisers.

10.4.2. Organisation

1. The NA is in charge of the organisation of the pre-departure information meetings and preparation of the info-kit. The meetings can be online or physical and should last between one hour minimum and one day maximum.

2. The NA is in charge of the organisation of the Meet-ups. The Meet-ups can be online or physical (although the preference should go to physical Meet-ups) and their duration may vary between one hour minimum and two days maximum. The NA can define a maximum number of participants for the Meet-up depending on the activity and location. Meet-ups are mainly for DiscoverEU participants travelling in the country where they are taking place. DiscoverEU ambassadors living in the country can also participate.

The organisation of the Meet-up should include a series of tasks such as the inception (selection of location, date, event and theme), promotion and engagement of participants from all countries, implementation of the activities and dissemination of results.

3. The NA is in charge of the organisation of coordination meetings with multipliers. The coordination meetings can be online or physical and should last between one hour minimum and one day maximum.
4. Current and former DiscoverEU participants may take part in the pre-departure meetings and the Meet-ups.

10.4.3. Funding

1. NA staff can participate in the activities, as organising members or trainers/facilitators. As an exception, the NA organising the activity can cover travel and accommodation costs for one NA staff member provided that he/she participates in the activity as a trainer/facilitator.
2. The NA shall keep evidence of the actual costs incurred. For reporting purposes, the NA shall only encode the final realised budget in the relevant Commission IT system.
3. Costs generated before or after the eligible period for the DiscoverEU Learning Cycle which are necessary for the organisation of an activity (e.g. preparation, follow-up and evaluation of the event) shall be deemed eligible provided that:
 - they are directly linked and proportional to a DiscoverEU activity taking place during the eligible period;
 - the costs have not been incurred prior to the date of the submission of the NA Work Programme
4. Eligible costs are the following:
 - Staff costs
 - Fees for trainers, guides, facilitators and other resource persons involved

NA staff costs are ineligible under the contribution for grant support for DiscoverEU as they are already covered by the EU Contribution to management costs

- Travel and subsistence for national and international travel of:
 - Trainers, guides, facilitators and other resource persons external to the NA for participation in the activities;
 - Participants in the pre-departure meetings and Meet-ups;

- NA staff within the limits of their allowed participation
- Subsistence for DiscoverEU participants taking part in the Meet-ups and the pre-departure information sessions as well as for participants in coordination meetings with multipliers,
- Up to two nights' accommodation for DiscoverEU participants taking part in Meet-ups that last two days,
- Production of materials essential to the activity (e.g. publications),
- Organisation of events (e.g. rental of rooms, interpretation),
- Procurement contracts for external contractors. The NA may undertake the activity directly or outsource part or all of them to external contractors. In this case, the NA shall comply with the contractual provisions on procurement specified in the Contribution Agreement and in the Guide for NAs.

ANNEXES

I. Model documents for NAs

II. Erasmus+ model agreements with beneficiaries and participants

III. European Solidarity Corps model agreements with beneficiaries and participants

IV. Guidelines and instructions for NAs

All annexes listed hereafter are provided as separate files/documents on the NAconnECt platform.

Annex I

Model documents for NAs

The documents listed below can be found on the NAconnECt platform - Wiki – Programme Documentation – NA Guidance at:

[Annex I - Model documents for NAs 2022](#)

Title of document
I.1 – Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps Overview of NA contract and bank details
I.2 – Legal entity form: change of NA legal details Forms for EU contracts European Commission (europa.eu)
I.3 – Financial identification form: change of NA bank accounts Forms for EU contracts European Commission (europa.eu)
I.4 – Request for change of NA Legal Representative and/or Director
I.5 – Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps Ad hoc report on irregularities and frauds
I.6 – Request for waiver of recovery order for Erasmus+, European Solidarity Corps, LLP and YiA
I.7 – Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps: Declaration on the prevention and disclosure of conflicts of interest

Annex II

Erasmus+ model agreements with beneficiaries and participants

The documents listed below can be found on the NAconnECT platform - Wiki – Programme Documentation – NA Guidance at:

[Annex II - Erasmus+ Model for Mono-Beneficiary Agreements 2022](#)

[Annex II - Erasmus+ Model for Multi-Beneficiary Agreements 2022](#)

A - Agreements between NAs and beneficiaries	
Title of document	Action/field concerned
II.1 – Mono-beneficiary grant agreement: Special Conditions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KA1– AE • KA1 – HE • KA1 – SE • KA1 – VET • KA1 – YOUTH
II.1.1 – General Conditions - Annex I	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All actions and fields
II.1.2 – Description of the project, Estimated budget, participating organisations - Annex II	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KA1– AE • KA1 – HE • KA1 – SE • KA1 – VET • KA1 – YOUTH
II.1.3 – Financial and contractual rules - Annex III	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All actions and fields concerned
II.1.4 – Applicable rates- Annex IV	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KA1 VET • KA1 SE • KA1 AE • KA131 • KA171 • KA1 YOUTH
II.1.5 – Agreements with participants - Annex V	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only for KA1, see section agreements between beneficiaries and participants below
II.2 – Multi-beneficiary grant agreement: Special Conditions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KA1 – AE (mobility consortia) • KA1 – HE (mobility consortia) • KA1 – SE (mobility consortia) • KA1 – VET (mobility consortia)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KA1 – Youth • KA2 – All Partnerships for Cooperation
II.2.1 – General Conditions – Annex I	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All actions and fields
II.2.2 – Description of the project, Estimated budget, participating organisations – Annex II	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KA1– AE (mobility consortia) • KA1– HE (mobility consortia) • KA1 – HE international • KA1 – SE (mobility consortia) • KA1 – VET (mobility consortia) • KA1 – Youth • KA2 – All Partnerships for Cooperation
II.2.3 – Financial and contractual rules – Annex III	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All actions and fields concerned
II.2.4.-Applicable rates- Annex IV	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KA1 VET • KA1 SE • KA1 AE • KA131 • KA171 • KA1 YOUTH
II.2.5 – Mandates of co-beneficiaries - Annex V	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All actions and fields concerned
II.2.5 – Agreements with participants - Annex VI	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only for KA1, see section "C agreements between beneficiaries and participants" below

The documents listed below can be found on the NAConnECt platform - Wiki – Programme Documentation – NA Guidance at:

[Annex II - Erasmus+ Accreditation - Charters 2022](#)

B – Accreditation – Charters	
Title of document	Action/field concerned
II.3 – Erasmus+ Student Charter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HE transnational and international
II.4 – Erasmus Accreditation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adult education, School education, Vocational Education and Training
II.5 – Erasmus Accreditation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Youth

The documents listed below can be found on the NAconnECt platform - Wiki – Programme Documentation – NA Guidance at:

[Annex II - Erasmus+ Agreements between beneficiaries and participants 2022](#)

C - Agreements between beneficiaries and participants	
Title of document	Action/field concerned
II.6 – Learning agreement (learners)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Studies/HE • Traineeships/HE • Learners/VET • Learners/AE Learners/SE
II.7 – Mobility Agreement (Staff)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AE • Teaching/HE • Training/HE • SE • VET
II.8 – Grant Agreement (learners and staff)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Studies and traineeships/HE transnational • Studies/HE international • Traineeships/VET • Teaching and training/HE transnational, AE, SE, VET • Teaching and training/HE international
II.9 – Quality commitment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SE • VET

Annex III

European Solidarity Corps model agreements with beneficiaries and participants

The documents listed below can be found – once released - on the NAconnECt platform - Wiki – Programme Documentation – NA Guidance at:

[Annex III - European Solidarity Corps model agreements with beneficiaries and participants 2022](#)

A - Agreements between NAs and beneficiaries	
Title of document	Activity concerned
III.2 Mono-beneficiary grant agreement: Special Conditions	Volunteering Projects Solidarity Projects
III.2.1 - Annex I - General Conditions	
III.2.2 - Annex II - Description of the project	
III.2.3. Annex III - Financial and contractual rules	
III.2.4 - Annex IV – Applicable rates	

B - Agreements between beneficiaries and participants	
Title of document	Activity concerned
III.3. Volunteering Agreement	Volunteering Projects

Annex IV

Guidelines and instructions for NAs

The documents listed below can be found on the NAConnECt platform - Wiki – Programme Documentation – NA Guidance at:

[Annex IV - Guidelines and instructions for NAs 2022](#)

Guidelines for the selection process
IV.1a – Erasmus+ Guide for experts on quality assessment (public document) https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/resources/documents/applicants_en
IV.1b – European Solidarity Corps: Guide for experts on quality assessment (public document) https://europa.eu/youth/solidarity/organisations/reference-documents-resources_en
IV.2 – Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps: Guidelines for NAs on quality assessment
IV.3 – Erasmus accreditation in adult education, vocational education and training, and school education: guidelines for assessment
IV.4 – Erasmus accreditations in the field of youth: guidelines for assessment
IV.5 – Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps: Guidelines for financial capacity assessment
Other guidelines and instructions
IV.6 – Erasmus+: Guidelines for NAs on assessment of beneficiary final reports (KA2, KA1 higher education – KA131 and KA171)
IV.7 – Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps: Instructions for NAs on how to deal with irregularities and frauds
IV.8 – Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps: Online Language Support (OLS): guidelines for NAs
IV.9 – Erasmus+: European Language Label (ELL): guidelines for NAs
IV.10 – Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps: Guidelines for NAs on dissemination and exploitation of projects results and selection of good practice examples
IV.11 – Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps: Checks of grant beneficiaries: guidelines for NAs
IV.12 – Erasmus+ Management of changes in KA2 Partnerships: instructions for NAs
IV.13 – Erasmus+ ECHE monitoring guide for NAs
IV.14 – Implementation guidelines - Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps Inclusion and Diversity Strategy (public document) Implementation guidelines - Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps Inclusion and Diversity Strategy Erasmus+ (europa.eu)
IV.15 – European Innovative Teaching Award: selection guidelines for NAs