Executive Summary:
Erasmus is one of the EU’s flagship funding programmes that provides university students with the possibility of studying, working or volunteering abroad. It has been announced that for the 2018 call for applications, the UK’s budget has increased significantly. This information note provides information on this budget uplift and the opportunities this presents to UK institutions.
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Erasmus is one of the EU’s flagship funding programmes, established in 1987 to provide university students with the possibility of studying, working or volunteering abroad for between two and twelve months as part of their degree. Following its evolution to Erasmus+ in 2014, the budget has increased each year, allowing more people to benefit from the programme. This information note provides further information on the budget uplift for the 2018 Call for Proposals and the opportunities this affords to UK institutions.
INTRODUCTION

Erasmus+ was introduced on 1 January 2014 with a budget of €14.7 billion for the period 2014-2020. This is divided across three ‘key actions’ that aim to promote mobility, cooperation and policy change within the context of education, training and youth, and cut across the higher education, vocational educational training, schools, adult education, and youth sectors. Table 1 provides a breakdown of these key actions and how much of the total Erasmus+ budget is allocated to these actions, and which activities are managed by the National Agency (decentralised activities) and which are not (centralised). Outside of these key actions, there is also the Jean Monnet scheme, which promotes excellence in teaching and research in the field of EU studies, and Erasmus+ sport which tackles cross-border threats to the integrity of sport.

Table 1: Erasmus+ key actions and activities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key action</th>
<th>Details</th>
<th>% of budget allocated</th>
<th>Decentralised activities</th>
<th>Centralised activities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 - Mobility</td>
<td>Supports mobility in the education, training and youth sectors</td>
<td>63%+</td>
<td>Mobility for students, staff, young people and youth workers</td>
<td>Joint Master’s Degrees, Erasmus+ Master loan scheme, Large Scale European Voluntary Service Events</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 - Cooperation</td>
<td>Supports the sharing of best practice and innovation in education, training and youth</td>
<td>28%+</td>
<td>Strategic partnerships in education, training and youth sectors</td>
<td>Alliances in knowledge and sector skills, capacity building in higher education and the field of youth</td>
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<tr>
<td>3 - Policy</td>
<td>Supports innovative policy development and reform in education, training and youth</td>
<td>4.2%</td>
<td>Structured dialogue funding between young people and decision-makers</td>
<td>Knowledge in the fields of education, training and youth; initiatives for policy innovation; support to European policy tools</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
BUDGET UPLIFT FOR 2018

During 2014, €108 million was awarded to grants to UK applicants through the Erasmus+ UK National Agency. This increased in 2015 to just over €114 million, to €129 million in 2016 and stood at just under €137 in 2017, with one funding round still to be processed at the time of writing.¹

It has been announced that for the 2018 call for applications, the UK’s budget has increased significantly to almost €170 million. This budget increase is built into the programme lifecycle and 2017 was the most popular year for Erasmus+ in the UK so far.

Specifically, for higher education overall, the decentralised budget for 2018 will be €82.1 million. Broken down, that is €67.9 million for Key Action 1 mobility with programme countries, €9.5m for Key Action 1 International Credit Mobility with countries beyond Europe and €4.7 million for Key Action 2 Strategic Partnerships.² The first and last of those Key Action budgets have increased by more than 20% and universities are encouraged to take advantage of this budget uplift as much as possible.

It is also worth noting that in terms of centralised funding directly from the European Commission, there are millions more Euros available in funding for UK universities to apply for. This includes funding for projects such as capacity building, knowledge alliances and also for joint masters degrees with universities and other stakeholders across Europe and the world. These projects are incredibly important for building institutional capacity and international reputation and can assist in developing research networks across the world, which could ultimately lead to larger value projects in the long run.

KEY ACTION 107
INTERNATIONAL CREDIT MOBILITY

While intra-European mobility has received a large uplift, the UK’s Key Action 107 (KA107) budget has been slightly reduced. This is because in some regions the UK have shown a lower level of demand. The European Commission’s funding for international credit mobility is provided by the Director General for Development and Cooperation and therefore based on their priorities in the European neighbourhood regions.

While UK higher education institutions showed strong demand for the budget envelopes in the African, Caribbean and Pacific countries; the Americas; Asia; Middle East; Russian Federation; South Africa; and the South Mediterranean, there was low take up for activities to the European Neighbourhood East (from Armenia to the Ukraine), where €1.7m was available in 2017 and the Western Balkans (from Albania to Serbia), where €2.3m was available. The UK National Agency is encouraging UK higher education institutions to apply for the latter two budget envelopes in particular, potentially by expanding on existing partnerships with institutions in those regions, as quality applications for these regions will have a good chance of being successful.

Note
¹ https://www.erasmusplus.org.uk/statistics-0
Both students and staff are eligible to use these grants, and they can also apply to incoming mobilities. In 2018 students will be able to undertake a traineeship through international credit mobility, bringing with it the additional opportunity for outgoing student traineeships in ‘digital skills’, and the ability to send students to Switzerland and the Faroe Islands.

In addition to the ability for staff to apply for grants to train and teach at higher education institutions overseas, the programme now allows for staff from enterprises to come teach at higher education institutions and staff from higher education institutions to train at enterprises.

Visit [https://www.erasmusplus.org.uk/apply-for-international-credit-mobility](https://www.erasmusplus.org.uk/apply-for-international-credit-mobility) for more information.

## BENEFITS OF ERASMUS+ AND UPTAKE OF BUDGET UPLIFT

Students who have studied, worked or volunteered abroad do better academically, are 32% less likely to be unemployed, more likely to be in a graduate-level job and on average receive a 5% higher starting salary than those without overseas experience. Erasmus students specifically have been found to have better employability prospects long-term, and be half as likely to experience unemployment five years after graduation than non-mobile graduates. Additionally, Erasmus students who complete work placements abroad are likely to be offered a job with their host company upon graduation (one in three). Mobility, regardless of programme, provides even more pronouncedly positive outcomes for black and minority ethnic (BME) students when compared to white students, and for students from more disadvantaged backgrounds compared to those from more advantaged backgrounds. Analysis of 2014/15 UK graduates showed that the percentage of non-mobile, black graduates who were unemployed was 7.8% compared to 4.6% of black mobile graduates, whilst 7.7% of Asian non-mobile graduates were unemployed, compared to 4.5% of their mobile peers. Students from more disadvantaged backgrounds with a period abroad earn 6.1% more than those without, while the same salary uplift among advantaged students is 3.4%.

Erasmus+ does not just benefit the students who themselves take advantage of such opportunities – on a larger scale, Erasmus+ is of benefit to universities in support of their efforts to develop international partnerships, to businesses, the wider economy and the UK skills base. The programme helps develop the ‘global’ skills employers require, it enhances the UK’s soft power, it helps internationalise our campuses as well as raising the international profile of UK universities and its strong branding and visibility is universally recognised by employers and organisations around the world.

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**Note**


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5 [http://www.universitiesuk.ac.uk/policy-and-analysis/reports/Pages/gone-international-mobility-works.aspx](http://www.universitiesuk.ac.uk/policy-and-analysis/reports/Pages/gone-international-mobility-works.aspx)
Not only will an increase in uptake on the Erasmus+ programme help our institutions, students and staff, but it could also help towards remaining on the programme post-Brexit. While UUK has been working to secure continued access to the Erasmus+ programme post-Brexit through the exit negotiations, a large increase in the uptake of Erasmus+ among the higher education sector would signal to the UK government, and the EU, the importance of UK participation. It would positively promote the programme as well as demonstrating to the UK government how committed the higher education sector are to the programme and to providing UK students and staff with international education and training opportunities.

GO INTERNATIONAL: STAND OUT CAMPAIGN

To promote the benefits of outward student mobility more widely, Universities UK International has launched the UK’s first national outward student mobility campaign. The Go International: Stand Out campaign aims to double the percentage of students who study, work or volunteer abroad as part of their degree by 2020 and was formally launched on the 2 November, 2017.

Currently, over 60 UK universities have signed up to the campaign, committing to undertake new or expanded activity to help increase the numbers of UK domiciled students studying, working or volunteering abroad from their institution. Go International: Stand Out partner universities are profiled on the campaign webpages.

If you would like more information regarding the campaign or how your institution could become involved, please contact Catriona Hanks.