

# VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING PROGRAMME FOR THE OIC MEMBER COUNTRIES (OIC-VET)



Statistical, Economic and Social Research and Training Centre for  
Islamic Countries (SESRIC)

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## A. Introduction

This document presents the basic modalities of implementing an action programme for the Organisation of the Islamic Conference (OIC) Member Countries (MCs) to improve the quality of Vocational Education and Training (VET) in the public and private sectors with the aim of supporting and enhancing the opportunities for individuals in the MCs to develop their knowledge and skills and thus to contribute to the development and competitiveness of the economies of their countries.

The proposed programme supports and supplements the activities of the OIC MCs, while respecting the responsibility of the MCs for the content and implementation of vocational training. It aims at improving the competencies and skills of the people according to the needs and priorities of labour markets through intra-OIC partnerships at institutional level. The Programme focuses on increasing accessibility and raising the quality of VET, and provides an opportunity for organizations involved in VET to build OIC partnerships, exchange best practices, increase the expertise of their staff and develop the skills and competencies of the participants. The Programme covers the training areas included in the national training programmes in the MCs by introducing a transnational perspective in conformity with national priorities of the MCs.

The Programme includes different types of activities with a strong focus on:

- Improving the quality and capacity of vocational training systems and arrangements including developing linguistic competencies and knowledge in the MCs;
- Networking of the initiatives in the MCs in the field of vocational training, particularly for vocational guidance and promotion and use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) in vocational training;
- Enhancing innovative vocational training approaches.

### A.1 Background

- The OIC Strategy and Plan of Action to Strengthen Economic and Commercial Cooperation among the OIC MCs, which was adopted by the Seventh Islamic Summit Conference in 1994, identified “Technical Cooperation and Human Resource Development” as one of its ten areas of cooperation.
- The OIC Ten-year Programme of Action to Meet the Challenges Facing the Muslim Ummah in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, which was adopted by the Third Extraordinary Session of the Islamic Summit Conference in December 2005, indicates that there is an urgent need for the OIC MCs to cooperate decisively in order to face with grave political, socio-economic, cultural and scientific challenges and to take necessary initiatives to overcome them.
- The OIC Ten-year Programme of Action stresses the profound importance of economic and social cooperation in strengthening solidarity among the Islamic countries, maximizing the advantages and averting the pitfalls of globalization, considering the eradication of illiteracy, diseases and epidemics, and the fight to alleviate poverty in the Islamic World as urgent, strategic objectives which necessitate mobilising all necessary resources. It also emphasizes

the need to make optimal use of the human, natural and economic resources of the Muslim world in order to promote existing cooperation.

- The 33<sup>rd</sup> Session of the Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers (ICFM), held in Baku, Azerbaijan in June 2006, noted the need to evolve sound approaches for the education and training of Muslim youth for the attainment of optimal cooperation and coordination among the Islamic Countries with a view to achieving the best levels of an all-embracing and just progress for all the youth of the Islamic Ummah.
- The 23<sup>rd</sup> Session of the COMCEC held in Istanbul on 14-17 November 2007 welcomed the proposal of SESRIC of initiating a Vocational Education and Training Programme for the OIC Member Countries (**OIC-VET** Programme) and mandated the Centre to form a consultative group as mentioned in the proposal to work on the modalities for launching and financing
- The 24<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Follow-Up Committee of the COMCEC held in Antalya on 13-15 May 2008 requested SESRIC to prepare a comprehensive report on the proposal and submit it to the 24<sup>th</sup> Session of the COMCEC for consideration by the Member Countries.

## **A.2 Objectives of the OIC-VET Programme**

While respecting the particular institutional and legislative arrangements in the OIC MCs, the Programme will be based on a common framework of objectives aimed at supporting and supplementing the MCs' initiatives in the field of vocational training. Main objectives for implementing the **OIC-VET** Programme in MCs are:

- to provide the exchange of people involved in VET throughout OIC Member Countries, so as to increase placements in enterprises;
- to improve the innovation capacity of MCs' vocational training systems, and to facilitate the transfer of innovative practices from one participating country to others;
- to improve the quality and the volume of cooperation among training institutions, enterprises, social partners and other relevant bodies throughout OIC MCs;
- to advance the transparency and recognition of qualifications and competencies, including those acquired through formal and informal learning among MCs;
- to support the development of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) based content, services, pedagogies and practice for lifelong learning.

These general objectives shall be achieved through different types of VET projects taking into consideration the permanent priorities that will be identified through the decisions of the Monitoring and Advisory Committee (MAC).

## **A.3 Structure of the OIC-VET Programme**

Project proposals to be submitted under the **OIC-VET** Programme must be designed and implemented in line with the Programme objectives and with the involvement of partners from several participating OIC MCs. In order to achieve its objectives, the **OIC-VET** Programme foresees three operational actions:

## **Action 1 – OIC Transnational Exchange Projects (OIC-TEPs)**

The term “Exchange” covers the transfer of competencies and/or of innovative methods and practices in the field of VET among the MCs. Exchanges shall give the beneficiaries an opportunity to improve and share their knowledge and experience in a different country and organizational context. This action targets a strong cooperation between training institutions; including universities, and enterprises in different countries, as OIC transnational partnership is an essential component of the OIC-TEPs.

There will be three different types of training activities under the OIC-TEPs:

### **1.1 OIC-TEP for Professionals (OICTEP-P)**

OICTEP-P will support transnational exchange projects between enterprises and public/private training organizations and/or universities, with the focus on the preparation of transnational training programs. Beneficiaries of the OICTEP-P will be professionals with diverse responsibilities for decision making / guiding / mentoring / teaching / training in all forms of VET including language competencies.

Duration of the OICTEP-P will normally be between 1-2 weeks.

### **1.2 OIC-TEP for Young Workers (OICTEP-YW)**

OICTEP-YW includes vocational training and/or work experience undertaken by a beneficiary in another country organized through intra-OIC partnerships. Beneficiaries of the OICTEP-YW will be young employed workers, job seekers and recent graduates entering into the labour market in accordance with national legislation and/or practices. OICTEP-YW aims to promote improvement and diversification of the VET available in OIC MCs, encourage greater adaptability of such training to economic, technological and social change, and give a common OIC dimension to vocational qualifications.

OICTEP-YW is intended to complement MCs’ activities in the following main areas:

- strengthening links between vocational education, training and guidance systems and all sectors of the economy, including organizations for youth;
- improving awareness of labour market trends and changes in working conditions, particularly those affecting health and safety;
- promoting equal opportunities for girls and young women;
- special help for the disadvantaged young people; and
- encouraging creativity and initiative taking among young people.

Duration of the OICTEP-YW will be between 3-26 weeks in firms and/or training institutions.

### **1.3 OIC-TEP for University Students (OICTEP-US)**

OICTEP-US includes work experience activities undertaken by a beneficiary in another country organized through multilateral partnerships. Beneficiaries of the OICTEP-US will be university

students including both graduate and postgraduate levels. OICTEP-US is intended to complement MC' activities in the following main areas:

- improving the quality and increasing the volume of cooperation between higher education institutions and enterprises through apprenticeship;
- facilitating the development of innovative practices in education and training at university level, and their transfer among MCs;
- supporting the development of innovative ICT-based content, services and practice for lifelong learning.

Duration of the OICTEP-US will be for long periods, from 6 to 26 weeks, and only in enterprises.

### **Action 2 – OIC Transnational Innovation Projects (OIC-TIPs)**

OIC-TIPs aim to provide support for an enhanced quality and innovation capacity of MCs' VET systems and arrangements at local, national or regional level. OIC-TIPs focus on stimulating the process of innovation and enhancing the quality of training and vocational guidance. These projects also facilitate development of concrete products on educational materials (new training modules, simulators, curricula etc.) adapted to the specific needs of each vocational area or economic sector and self-teaching methods for foreign languages, using new Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) where appropriate. Innovative practices in terms of methods, contents or products in the field of vocational training and guidance are expected to be integral parts of these projects.

### **Action 3 – OIC Training Networking (OIC-NETWORKS)**

**OIC-NETWORKS** aim at establishing of training networks among various actors involved in VET to improve the quality, transnationality and accessibility of activities in the field of VET in the OIC MCs. These actors include research and vocational training centres (including universities), local authorities, chambers of commerce, trade organizations for employers and employees, and enterprises. These networks will undertake four functions:

- facilitating the construction and sharing of the OIC expertise and innovative approaches in VET areas;
- improving the analysis of occupational skills requirements;
- supporting the development of intra-OIC open and distance vocational training networks through the use of ICT (multimedia products, web sites, etc.);
- disseminating the networks outputs and project results throughout the OIC MCs.

## **B. Implementation of the OIC-VET Programme**

### **B.1 Governance of the OIC-VET Programme**

It is envisaged that the OIC-VET programme will be implemented through the following governance structure:

#### **B.1.1 Monitoring and Advisory Committee (MAC)**

**The Monitoring and Advisory Committee (MAC)** will be responsible for drafting and adopting the rules and regulations, and for monitoring the overall implementation of the Programme. Its work will begin before the actual implementation of the Programme. The MAC membership will comprise representatives from MCs, OIC institutions and leading experts in the field of vocational education and training in the OIC MCs. Additional parties may be invited to join the MAC on either a temporary or longer-term basis at the MAC's discretion. The MAC will meet regularly, preferably once a year, or when it is needed.

##### ***The MAC will:***

- identify the project aims, objectives, and the roles and responsibilities of the Executing OIC Organ (EO), the National Authorities and National Focal Points (NFPs) and beneficiaries;
- formalize macro and meso regulations related to the programme management and set up the contractual arrangements between the EO and NFPs;
- assist the EO by drafting and adopting the proper implementation mechanism of the OIC-VET Programme;
- follow-up the process of developing and implementing the initial applications;
- review and approve the Programme work plan, timeline and new activities, and ensure that the aims and objectives can be successfully delivered;
- specify priorities, targets, criteria for the Programme and the selection procedure of the projects;
- clarify all the necessary technical, administrative and financial aspects (including administrative and financial handbooks and operational guides for the EO, NFPs, Applicants and Programme beneficiaries) of the Programme in accordance with the needs and capacities of the OIC MCs;
- note the regular progress reports submitted by the EO, and take any corrective actions required to keep the Programme on track;
- make decisions through a consensus of the MAC, and by a vote where a consensus is not possible.

#### **B.1.2 Executing OIC Organ (EO)**

**The Executing OIC Organ (EO)** will have the lead responsibility for the proper implementation and management of the Programme in conformity with the decisions taken by the MAC. The EO



will supervise the delivery of the work plan, track progress against Programme timelines and objectives, oversee budget allocations and contractual relationships, and identify any risks or issues that may affect the successful completion of the Programme.

The EO will also bear overall responsibility for the supervision and coordination of the NFPs, which are agencies that have been designated and set up by the national authorities in charge of VET affairs in each Programme Country. The EO will cooperate closely with the NFPs and oversee their activities.

***The EO will:***

- take lead responsibility for the successful delivery of the Programme and submit regular progress reports to the MAC;
- supervise the delivery of the work plan including priorities, and track progress against project timelines and objectives;
- oversee budget allocations, the distribution of funds among Programme activities, and contractual relationships with the NFPs;
- ensure internal consistency within the OIC-VET Programmes;
- prepare the arrangements for monitoring and evaluating the Programme and the actions and for the dissemination and transfer of results;
- identify any risks or issues that may affect the successful completion of the Programme and report these to the MAC;
- coordinate and minute all the meetings of the MAC.

In addition, it will provide support to help the achievement of high quality standards in the project management and provide technical support to all actors involved in projects. It will undertake the following support activities:

- providing assistance to project promoters, organisations and participants on their request;
- supporting visa issuing and best practice dissemination tools to help VET promoters to overcome obstacles related to transnational mobility;
- providing help through crisis management;
- providing resources, information and training and job-shadowing for the NFPs;
- giving an overview of OIC training activities that are open for professionals and young workers;
- providing a database of trainers and resource persons in the field of VET.

### **B.1.3 National Focal Points (NFPs)**

Implementation of the **OIC-VET** Programme will be mainly decentralised, the aim being to work as closely as possible with the beneficiaries and to adapt to the diversity of national systems and situations in the field of VET. Each participating MC will identify a NFP through which all the communication and correspondences between the MC and the EO will be carried out; preferably

affiliated to either Ministries of Education or the State Planning Institutes. These NFPs will promote and implement the Programme and act as the link between the EO, project promoters and the beneficiaries themselves.

Project proposals submitted by applicants (national organizations and/or institutions which have a national legal status in OIC Member Countries) for financial assistance under the **OIC-VET** Programme will be forwarded/directed to the appropriate NFPs in each MC. The NFPs will be responsible for carrying out the following relevant activities in cooperation with the EO:

- collect and provide information on the **OIC-VET** Programme;
- administer a transparent and equitable selection process for project applications to be funded at decentralised level;
- provide effective and efficient administrative processes;
- seek cooperation with external structures in order to help to implement the Programme;
- evaluate and monitor the implementation of the Programme;
- provide support to project applicants and promoters throughout the project life cycle;
- form with all National Focal Points and the EO a good functioning network;
- improve the visibility of the Programme;
- promote the dissemination and valorisation of results of the Programme at national level.

In addition, NFPs will play an important role as intermediate structure for the development of competence and skills through;

- creating opportunities to share experiences;
- providing training and non-formal learning experiences;
- promoting values like social inclusion and cultural diversity;
- fostering recognition of non-formal learning through appropriate measures.

Finally, the **NFPs** will provide training and information on training possibilities for the preparation and implementation of projects. Each NFP will;

- offer a set of national and international trainings, seminars and workshops to people being interested or already involved in OIC-VET projects;
- give advice, information and assistance to participants, project coordinators, actual or potential partners and beneficiaries throughout the process of planning and carrying out projects;
- help building, developing and consolidating transnational partnerships between the various players in the Programme;
- deliver a set of information about the Programme, its rules and practice;

- organise conferences, meetings, seminars and other events to inform target audiences about the Programme, to improve its management and presentation, to disseminate results and good practice.

## **B.2 Participation in the OIC-VET Programme**

The **OIC-VET** Programme will address people who are legally resident in one of the **Programme Countries** (OIC Member Countries).

The **main target group** of the Programme will be **professionals, young workers and university students**.

Participants from Programme Countries will be able to participate in all Projects of the **OIC-VET** Programme. The Programme will be open to all eligible people independently of their level of education or social and cultural background.

Most types of projects financed under the **OIC-VET** Programme will require a partnership to be established between two or more partners.

### **General selection procedures**

Project promoters and people interested in setting up a project will complete the relevant application forms and follow the application procedures which are described briefly below.

Compliance with formal and quality criteria and with the objectives, as well as the priorities of the **OIC-VET** Programme and its Projects, will be the basis for each grant award decision.

Specific application procedures, eligibility, selection and award criteria, the type of financing, and contractual obligation would vary according to different types of projects that would be identified in the initial stage of the Programme through the meetings of the MAC.

The applications will be processed by the NFPs. Projects will be selected by national selection panels, which will be composed of people familiar with the VET field and VET activities, for example members of National Vocational Education and Training Organisations. Selections will be made in accordance with the EO's guidelines.

### **Application deadlines**

There will be several application deadlines during a year for projects that will be selected by the NFPs.

### **Eligibility criteria**

To be eligible, a grant application will be submitted on the relevant form by the relevant deadline, by a legal person.

The application will respect the eligibility criteria relating to the Action concerned:

- eligibility criteria described in this section;

- specific eligibility criteria which would be discussed and further approved by the MAC relating to the relevant Programme (for example, nature of the activity foreseen, number of participants).

### **Selection criteria**

An application satisfying the eligibility criteria must also be checked against the following selection criteria:

- the applicant must have stable and sufficient sources of funding to maintain the activity throughout its duration or the year for which the grant is awarded, and to participate in its funding;
- the applicant must have sufficient and appropriate capacities and motivation to complete the proposed activity.

### **Award criteria**

The applications having satisfied the selection criteria will then be assessed against the award criteria, with a view to determine the projects or bodies which aim to maximise the overall effectiveness of the Programme, in addition to complying with the objectives and priorities of the Programme, guaranteeing the visibility of the financing by the MC and proposing appropriate activities to ensure results are exploited as widely as possible.

## **B.3 Financing of the OIC-VET Programme**

Financing of the **OIC-VET** Programme will be through a decentralised approach, wherein OIC MCs will cover the expenses of their own applicants/beneficiaries instead of being constrained to periodical mandatory financial contributions. In addition to that, some OIC financial institutions, such as the IDB may provide finance for some OIC Member Countries, particularly LDCs.

Financing of the **OIC-VET** projects will be as following:

### **General financial rules**

Financial contributions awarded under the **OIC-VET** Programme will be subject to the rules of the concerned MC.

### **Type of grants**

The NFPs will provide grants for the selected projects through a contract signed between the NFPs and beneficiaries. The **OIC-VET** Programme supports two types of grants:

- grants for projects (for example, to support a project of Transnational Exchange under OICTEP-P);
- grants for the operating budget of a body active in the field of VET (for example, to support a Transnational Innovative Project under OIC-TIPs).

### **No double-financing**

Each individual beneficiary will be entitled to receive one, and only one, grant from the budget for the same project. Projects which plan to obtain or have already received another grant will be deemed ineligible.

A beneficiary may be awarded only one operating grant per financial year.

### **Grant amount**

The amount granted by the contract will be paid in instalments and considered as a maximum which cannot be increased under any circumstances.

However, the final amount will only be granted after analysis of the final report, which will be provided by the beneficiary at the end of the project, and can be reduced on inspection of the actual implementation of the project (for example, the final grants based on fixed amounts will be calculated on the basis of the actual number of participants and not on the foreseen number of participants).

### **No-profit**

Grants awarded must not have the purpose or the effect of producing a profit for the beneficiary. In practical terms this means that:

- if the total income of a project is higher than the final total costs of the project, the grant will be reduced accordingly after the analysis of the final report. Contributions of a flat-rate amount and scales of unit costs will not be affected by this rule;
- organisations receiving an operating grant are not allowed to have a surplus balance on the operating budget.

Existence of a profit may bring about recovery of amounts previously paid.

### **Co-financing**

The grant may not finance the entire costs of the project. Promoters must show their commitment to the project by finding financing sources other than the grant. This can be done, for example, by running fund-raising activities, by adding own resources, or by requesting grants from other organisations (e.g. municipalities or other local or regional authorities). Proof of co-financing must be included in the final report.

### **Eligibility period**

The **project dates** will cover the whole period from initial preparation to final evaluation. The **activity dates** refer to the period during which the actual activity take place (e.g. the day the participant arrives in the host country until the day he/she leaves, the first and the last day of a Transnational Exchange, etc.). Selected projects will start in a specific period determined by the EO.

### **Non retroactivity**

No grant may be awarded retrospectively for projects already completed. A grant may be awarded for a project which has already begun only where the applicant can demonstrate the need to start the

project before the agreement has been signed. In such cases, expenditure eligible for financing may not have been incurred prior to the date of submission of the grant application.

### **Cancellation**

If participants are prevented from taking part in the project (for example owing to illness), they must inform their country's NFP as soon as possible and, where the withdrawal is at short notice, also inform the NFP in the host country. Since only NFPs may nominate participants, participants withdrawing from the project must allow their NFP to find a replacement. Under no circumstances may a candidate nominate another person to take his or her place.

Participants who are unable to take part in the planned project are expected to repay any financial contribution received from the NFP. Under no circumstances may the grant be transferred to a third party, even if that person is likely to take the original participant's place.

### **Withdrawal**

Participants must be present from the beginning of the visit until it ends. Payment of the grant places participants under an obligation to take part throughout the period of the project. If participants drop out of the visit before it is completed, they will be required to repay the whole of the financial contribution to the NFP.

Nevertheless, if participants have to cut the study visit short due to circumstances beyond their control they will not be required to repay the financial contribution in its entirety. In this case they will be required to furnish supporting evidence (for example, a medical certificate) and refund, for each day's absence from the visit, the corresponding portion of the allocated contribution towards their per diem costs.

### **Interpretation**

The membership of each group is arranged in such a way as to ensure that it has a common working language. If that language is not the language of the host country, the NFP will take the necessary steps to allow communication between the group and the resource people it meets.

## **B.4 The OIC Support**

The support of **OIC-VET** Programme will consist of guiding users of the Programme through all phases, from the first contact with the Programme through the application process to the realisation of the project and the final evaluation. The OIC Support of the **OIC-VET** Programme will be coordinated by the EO and aim to contribute to develop quality of support systems for VET activities and the capabilities of organisations in the field of VET and will be the core element of a coherent quality approach of the Programme, which may include communication measures, recognition of non-formal learning activities, cooperation of all actors and applied educational and training research activities.

The OIC Support of **OIC-VET** Programme will be the main instrument of the Programme for sustainable capacity building of professionals and youth workers and other key actors. The training strategy will provide support for the key actors to deal with needed attitudes and competences.

Indeed this principle should not be in contradiction with fair and transparent selection procedures. However, in order to guarantee equal opportunity to everybody, it is necessary to give more assistance to some groups of people through advising, counselling, monitoring, and coaching systems.

## **C. The Pilot Application: Action 1.1 OIC-TEP for Professionals (OICTEP-P)**

SESRIC proposes Action 1.1 OICTEP-P under the title of OIC Transnational Exchange Projects (OIC-TEPs) to be implemented as the Pilot Application of OIC-VET Programme for two years following the participation of minimum number of Programme Countries to the Programme. In case of successful implementation of the Pilot Application and approval of the results by the MAC the Programme can be implemented fully for the benefits of the OIC MCs.

Pilot Application of the Programme will start following the MoU to be signed between the EO and the OIC Member Countries.

### **What is OIC-Transnational Exchange?**

The objective of OIC-Transnational Exchange is to transfer competencies and/or innovative methods and practices in the field of VET among the MCs. Exchanges will allow project beneficiaries to share and improve their knowledge and experience in a different country and organisational context, and target a strong co-operation between training institutions; including universities and enterprises in different member countries.

OIC-Transnational Exchange for Professionals (OICTEP-P) will support transnational exchange projects between enterprises and public/private training organizations and/or universities, with the focus on the preparation of transnational training programmes. This will allow one or more groups of professionals to host or to be hosted by a group from another country in order to participate together in a joint programme of activities.

These activities, based on a transnational partnership, involve the active participation of professionals and are designed to allow them to discover and learn from each other, so that they can explore similarities and differences between their methods of learning and as well as others' competencies.

This Action also supports preparation and follow-up activities, with the aim of reinforcing professionals' active participation in the exchange, in particular those activities intended to help on a linguistic and intercultural level.

### **Management of the Pilot Application**

The EO will be responsible for the general management and promotion of the Programme on behalf of the OIC during the Pilot Application phase. The EO will send an invitation letter to NFPs to inform about the Programme priorities of the actual year with the attachment of a template and a guide for template to complete in consultation with national authorities and send back to the EO.

A NFP will be responsible for running and promoting the Programme in each participating Programme Country. The NFP may be designated by the National Authority from appropriate public body who is involved in VET, such as Ministry of State Planning or Ministry of Education.

In cooperation with the EO, NFPs will prepare Call for Proposals and an online catalogue for the beneficiaries to apply for a grant. The NFP will then collect and evaluate the applications and select the beneficiaries in conformity with the Programme Guide.

### **The eligibility criteria**

Please refer to the general eligibility criteria above.

### **Partner groups**

Each Exchange has one host partner group and one (bilateral exchange) or more (trilateral or multilateral exchange) sending partner groups. Any exchange must involve at least two different Programme Countries.

A partner must be an organisation or association legally established in one of the Programme Countries or a local, regional or national public body involved in VET.

Each partner group has a representative. The representatives of the host and sending groups will be jointly responsible for carrying out and monitoring the project properly and for ensuring the active involvement of all participants.

### **Participants**

Beneficiaries of the OICTEP-P will be professionals with diverse responsibilities for decision making / guiding / mentoring / teaching / training in all forms of VET including language competencies.

Beneficiaries that are resident in a Programme Country can participate in an OICTEP-P.

### **Group leaders**

Each partner group must have one or several leaders accompanying the professionals participating in the exchange according to the size and characteristics of the target group in order to ensure the effective learning of the professionals. A group leader may act as a representative.

### **Duration**

The duration of an OICTEP-P project, including preparation, implementation, evaluation and follow-up activity may last up to 15 months.

The duration of the exchange activity will normally be between 1-2 weeks.

### **Place**

The exchange activity takes place in the country of the host partner group. An OICTEP-P can be itinerant, implying the movement of all professionals involved through two or more Programme Countries during the exchange activity.



## **Theme**

The OICTEP-P must have a thematic concept, which the partner groups wish to explore together because of its relevance to their everyday experience, and must have a clear OIC dimension. The chosen theme should be translated into the concrete daily activities of the exchange activity.

## **The selection criteria**

Please refer to the general selection criteria above.

## **The award criteria**

The quality of the proposals will be evaluated taking into account the following elements:

- quality of the programme and working methods proposed;
- OIC dimension of the project;
- expected impact of the project;
- measures envisaged for the visibility of the project;
- measures envisaged for the valorisation and follow up of the project.

Furthermore:

Grants for OICTEP-P will be awarded to the ones reflecting in the best way the general priorities of the Programme.

In addition, annual priorities may be fixed for the **OIC-VET** Programme by the MAC and communicated on the MAC and the EO's website and in the annex of the Programme Guide.

Professionals with fewer opportunities are a fundamental target group of this Action. Therefore, Exchanges involving or benefiting professionals with fewer opportunities will be given priority in the selection process.

Multilateral and trilateral Exchanges are given priority, since the OIC added value in such exchanges will be greater.

## **Programme and working methods**

When planning an OICTEP-P, it is essential to establish a clear and structured programme of daily activities which correspond to the theme and objective. The daily programme and working methods must actively involve all participants and trigger a learning process.

Working methods should enable the participants to explore different topics on an equal basis, regardless of their language abilities or other skills.

## **OIC Dimension**

The OIC dimension of a project could be reflected by the following characteristics:

- the project fosters professionals' sense of OIC ownership and helps them to understand their role as part of the present and future of OIC;
- the project reflects a common concern for OIC society, such as racism, xenophobia, drug abuse;
- the project's theme is of OIC interest, such as OIC institutions and OIC projects;
- the project activities promote OIC values, such as equal opportunities, human rights and respect for other cultures;
- the project provides professionals with an intercultural learning experience, i.e. co-operation of professionals from different cultural backgrounds.

### **Preparation/Advance planning visit**

The preparation phase of an exchange is of crucial importance for the success of the exchange activity. During this phase, the partner groups should agree on the theme of the OICTEP-P, the programme of activities, practicalities and working methods.

This visit should only take place once the application is approved and should last two days (travel days excluded). A maximum of two participants per sending group may participate in the advance planning visit.

The preparation phase should furthermore enhance the participants' involvement in the OICTEP-P and prepare them for encounters with other professionals from different backgrounds and cultures.

### **Impact**

The impact of an OICTEP-P should not just be limited to the participants in the activity, but also bring the concept of OIC to the local communities involved. The aim is to make optimal use of the projects' results and to achieve an impact in the long term.

### **Evaluation**

In order to make the projects and their results more sustainable, partner groups and participants will be called upon to lead an ongoing evaluation process. Possible follow-ups will be discussed at the evaluation sessions with participants before, during and after the exchange.

### **Valorisation/follow up activities**

The achievements and results of the exchanges should be disseminated and exploited in order to optimise their value, strengthen their impact and ensure that the largest possible number of young people and organisations benefit from them. This implies transferring outcomes towards the appropriate stakeholders and multiplying them on a larger scale.

The partner groups should pass on the experience gained to other groups as well as to their local communities, to local, national or OIC representatives, to the media, and to other multipliers. They are also encouraged to create websites. By doing this, they will give more visibility to the exchange and sustainability to its results.

Each beneficiary of a grant within OICTEP-P of the Programme may decide together with partners to go beyond the standard visibility measures, by valorising project's results further and promoting

best practices. A financial incentive may be provided. Applicants must complete the appropriate section in the application form and describe the planned activity in detail.

The planned valorisation/follow-up activity has to build on the project experience and aim to highlight, disseminate and promote the project results and to increase its impact.

### **Visibility**

OICTEP-P should highlight the OIC support (including the promotional use of OIC logos) and provide clear added value for the Programme and its results. Also the organisations and participants involved in the projects should be made aware of their participation in the **OIC-VET** Programme.

### **Application process**

An OICTEP-P will be initiated by any organisation or association established in one of the Programme Countries, or a local, regional or national public body involved in VET.

For a bilateral or trilateral exchange, the sending and host partner groups apply separately to their respective NFPs.

For a multilateral exchange, the host group applies, on behalf of all the partner groups, to its NFP; it will act as coordinating partner group.

If the multilateral exchange is itinerant, any of the partner groups can be the coordinating group and apply to its NFP on behalf of all the partner groups.

### **Project financing**

The projects under the Action will be financed by individual MCs. The VET grant will be based on the principle of co-financing, which means that the total costs cannot be covered through the NFPs alone. Therefore other public, private and/or own contributions in cash or in kind will be needed in order to make participants fully involved in exchange preparation. The partner in the host country will bear the costs of receiving the group(s) and organising the visits.

The VET grant is based on a combination of:

- actual costs
- flat rate amounts
- amounts based on scales of unit costs

The flat rate amounts and scales of unit costs represent the basic level of financing; this basic level can vary depending on the Programme Country in which the application is submitted.

Fixed amounts and flat rates represent a contribution to project activities; they are not directly linked to any specific costs; the costs they cover do not need to be accounted for or justified but results/achievements must be described in the final report.

This financing mechanism shall help applicants to calculate the expected grant amount and should facilitate realistic planning of the project.

#### **Breakdown of a VET grant for Action 1.1: OICTEP-P (see table below)**

- 70% of actual travel costs (the rest being covered by the organisation from its own or other sources) and per diem per person for subsistence;
- contribution to an advance planning visit (100% of travel costs + flat rate);
- fixed amount for the preparation of activities per country;
- actual exceptional costs covering visa, visa-related costs, vaccination costs or relating to people with fewer opportunities/special needs or to the special nature of activities (up to 100%);
- actual costs for the implementation of follow-up activities.

#### **Exceptional costs**

Exceptional costs cover visa and visa-related costs as well as vaccination costs. All other exceptional costs are related to people with fewer opportunities and/or with special needs. They may cover for example: medical attendance, health care, additional linguistic training/support, additional preparation, special premises or equipment, additional accompanying person, additional personal expenses in the case of an economic disadvantage, translation/ interpretation. Up to 100% of exceptional costs can be supported by the grant, provided they are clearly linked to the implementation of the project, necessary and justified in the application form. All exceptional costs must be actual costs, properly supported and justified.

#### **Valorisation of results/follow-up activities**

The additional amount possibly granted for the implementation of valorisation of results/follow-up activities must cover the preparation, implementation and evaluation of the activities. It is linked to the effective costs of the activities and shall not exceed 10% of the overall grant for the project.

#### **Grant agreement**

Once the OICTEP-P has been approved, beneficiaries (host and sending partner groups) will receive a grant agreement that will govern the use of the VET funds of their concerned NFPs. In the case of a multilateral exchange only the coordinating group receives a grant agreement. Beneficiaries undertake to fulfil their contractual obligations. It is the shared responsibility of all beneficiaries to implement the exchange as set out in the application and to ensure evaluation. Sending groups and coordinating groups are responsible for justifying travel costs.

On-site visits or audits may be carried out by the NFPs or the EO, or the Court of Auditors to check that all contractual obligations are being properly fulfilled. If, in the course of the exchange, unforeseen circumstances disrupt its implementation, the beneficiaries must immediately contact their NFP, to make appropriate arrangements. Failure to carry out the exchange as agreed can lead to the recovering of part of or the entire grant.

**Table: Overview of financing rules: Action 1.1 OICTEP-P**

<b><u>Type of expense</u></b>	<b><u>Basis for financing</u></b>	<b><u>Amount</u></b> <i>Please note that all amounts can be adapted by National Focal Points</i>	<b><u>Rule of allocation</u></b>	<b><u>Use of VET grant</u></b>	<b><u>Reporting obligations</u></b> <i>All documents to be kept for audit purposes for 5 years after completion of the project</i>
<b>Travel and accommodation costs</b>	Actual costs + flat rate	70% + per diem per person	Automatic	Travel costs from home to the venue of the project. Use of the cheapest means and fares.	Full justification of the costs incurred, copy of travel tickets/invoices.
<b>Advance Planning Visit</b>	Actual costs + flat rate (max 2 days)	100% of travel costs + per diem per person	Conditional: advance planning visit must be clearly outlined in the application form.	Travel costs from home to the venue of the project. Use of the cheapest means and fares. Additional flat rate to contribute to accommodation costs and other costs during the visit.	Copy of travel tickets + results/achievements to be described in final report.
<b>Preparation of activities and participants</b>	Fixed amount	A fixed amount per organisation	Conditional: preparation activities must be clearly outlined in the application form.	Any costs directly linked to the preparation of the project.	Results/achievements to be described in final report.
<b>Exceptional costs</b>	Actual costs	Up to 100%	Conditional: exceptional costs must be justified in the application form.	- Any costs directly related to people with fewer opportunities/special needs or warranted by the special nature of the activities. - Visa costs, visa-related costs and vaccination costs.	Full justification of the costs incurred, copies of invoices/receipts.
<b>Follow-up/valorisation activity costs</b>	Actual costs	Up to 10% of VET grant	Conditional: follow-up activity must be clearly outlined in the application form.	Dissemination and promotion of project results	Results/achievements to be described in final report.

## Annex I – Glossary for the OIC-VET

Term	Definition
Applicant	The organisation/institution submitting a grant application to the NFP.
Application form	Standardised form to be completed by a potential applicant in view of submitting a grant application. May be a form in electronic or paper format.
Evaluation	Evaluation of a grant application or a report from a beneficiary, based on standardised criteria and tools (guidelines, checklists etc.).
Assessor	Person called upon to assess a grant application, a report from a beneficiary etc.
Award criteria	Criteria that are used to assess the quality of a grant application in the light of the objectives and priorities set. Criteria used to compare the quality of grant applications in a selection round in view of their ranking in order of priority.
Beneficiary	The organisation/institution which signs the grant agreement issued by the NFP.
Call for proposals	Public document setting out the specific conditions for submitting a grant application under a given Action and specifying the criteria on the basis of which the grant award procedure will be undertaken. Complementary document to the Programme Guide.
Counselling	Provision of advice and guidance to potential applicants or to actual beneficiaries.
Eligibility criteria	Criteria referring to formal technical conditions of the grant award procedure (such as final date for submission, use of a specific application form, completion by an authorised person etc.) and of the Programme Action (such as belonging to the target group of the Action, proposing a fundable activity, etc.).
Evaluation committee	Group of at least 3 persons formally designated by the NFP whose mission is to propose a grant award decision to the NFP director with respect to (a) specific selection round(s).
Exclusion criteria	Criteria related to the specific situation in which an applicant may be and that result in an automatic exclusion of the grant application from the grant award process.
Final grant amount	Final amount of fund decided on the basis of the final report. Limited by the maximum grant amount set in the grant agreement.
Grant	Direct financial contribution to finance an activity or the functioning of a body. A grant cannot have the purpose or effect of producing profit for beneficiary.
Grant agreement	A grant agreement is the contractual document issued by the NFP to an organisation/institution that is the beneficiary of an OIC-VET grant following a grant award decision. The grant agreement lays down the contractual conditions in terms of rights and obligations of the beneficiary and the NFP.

Grant application	A formal request for fund support under a specific Action of the Programme on the basis of a Call for Proposals.
Grant award procedure	Process covering all stages for the treatment of grant applications from their submission to the grant award decision.
Pre-financing payment	Payment made by way of advance and as a percentage/portion of a maximum grant amount laid down in the grant agreement. A pre-financing payment can be triggered by the signature of the grant agreement or the approval of a report from the beneficiary, or on the basis of other specific payment arrangements.
Programme Guide	Public document providing a description of the Programme objectives and Actions, as well as conditions and procedures for requesting grant support. Normally accompanied by specific call(s) for proposals.
Promoter	Person or organisation supporting the NFP in disseminating information and publicity on the programme, counselling and providing advice to potential applicants and actual beneficiaries.
Programme Actions	General rules and conditions will apply to the NFPs for the management of the project life cycle as part of its respective responsibilities in the implementation of the OIC-VET Programme: Type of activity, the target public, the duration, the financial arrangements (level and type of grant, eligible expenses, maximum rates etc.), and award criteria.
Selection criteria	Criteria allowing to assessing the applicant's ability to complete the activity or work Programme proposed in the grant application. Includes conditions concerning financial and operational capacity of an applicant.
Valorisation	Dissemination and exploitation of results of supported activities.