



Co-funded by  
the European Union



# HANDBOOK FOR NGO WORKERS



Co-funded by  
the European Union



# CONTENTS

[General information about the project](#)

[How to write a successful Erasmus+ proposal?](#)

[What is Erasmus?](#)

[How to prepare for negotiations?](#)

[Negotiations](#)

[Erasmus+: Your Passport to a Unique Experience in Europe and Beyond](#)

[Corporate Social Responsibility \(CSR\)](#)

[The Role of Crowdfunding in NGO Financing](#)

[The most popular international grants and info on how to apply for them](#)

[The most interesting financing methods](#)

[How to prepare a financing plan](#)

[The most popular difficulties related to financing an NGO and how to conquer them](#)

[The Most Popular Mistakes When Applying for Financing \(for NGOs\) and How to Avoid Them](#)

[How to build a great public image?](#)

[What is important when preparing a workshop plan](#)

[Where and how an NGO can receive funding for their initiatives?](#)

[How to create an inviting social media?](#)

[What is Identity in an NGO?](#)

*Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them.*



**Co-funded by  
the European Union**



ASSOCIAÇÃO  
**CHECK-IN**  
COOPERAÇÃO E DESENVOLVIMENTO



# Autors

Vera Pinto Almeida  
Soraya Alvarez  
Duarte Alves  
Maria Alvim  
Urszula Banaś  
Beatriz Colares  
Valentín Cáceres Martí  
Bruna Cunha  
Bruna Lopes Da Cunha  
Cecilia Fernández  
António Gomes  
Sofia Gil  
Irene Jimenez Carrion

Marta Jurewicz  
Michalina Kosakowska  
Urszula Leiss  
Agnieszka Lyznicka  
Lalita Varjangbhay Martinez  
Filipa Matias  
Joanna Weronika Mielcarek  
Inés Muñoz  
Ruth Martin Torres  
Bazyli Niestuchowski  
Jakub Weckowski  
Jakub Weckowski  
Kacper Ujejski

Yanira Ruiz Pérez  
Pablo Rodriguez Romero  
Clara Santos  
Sandra Silva  
Laura Pulgarín Suero  
Wiktor Sumińska  
Sofia Moura  
Emily Stefania Piguave Suárez  
Wiktor Żetudkowski  
Wiktor Żetudkowski  
Valeria Rodríguez Pineda  
Georgina Carlús Doblas  
Monica Reche Ojeda

# Editors

Zuzanna Palińska

Katarzyna Dębiec

*Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them.*



Co-funded by  
the European Union



# GENERAL INFO ABOUT THE PROJECT

The project is a small-scale strategic partnership in the youth sector between Poland, Spain and Portugal. The goal is to exchange practices and develop new working methods for NGOs, focusing on entrepreneurship and management. Key objectives are to increase knowledge of negotiation, build the organization's image, gain skills to create cooperation offers, and develop a business network.

Participants, youth leaders and organization staff, will gain knowledge that they will pass on to their local communities. The project also includes youth as audiences, teaching them negotiation, fundraising and civic activism. Cooperation with business is expected to increase the effectiveness of the organization's activities.



Co-funded by  
the European Union





# PARTNERS



Youth Human Impact

Youth Human Impact is a Polish NGO founded in 2015, dedicated to organizing national and international projects in social, educational, and civic fields. It promotes an inclusive, diverse, and active society by improving education quality, fostering skill development, and encouraging self-learning. YHI collaborates with Polish and international partners, using non-formal education to empower youth through exchanges, training, debates, and social campaigns. The organization stands out for its innovative approach, attention to detail, and determination. By inspiring young people to step out of their comfort zones, YHI helps them develop skills, influence their communities, and drive real social change through impactful and high-quality initiatives.



EuroMuévete is a Spanish NGO based in Málaga, founded in 2018. Run by young people, it provides youth with opportunities to develop skills and a global mindset in an intercultural setting. Using non-formal education based on European values, it fosters personal and professional growth through local workshops and Erasmus+ projects. Participants step out of their comfort zone, improving multilingual skills and networking. Driven by passion and determination, EuroMuévete strives for real social change within the local community.



Check-IN is a Portuguese non-profit organization founded in 2010, based in Beja, with a hub in Lisbon. It promotes lifelong learning, active citizenship, and social inclusion, focusing on youth with limited access to information. Working in urban areas and sensitive neighborhoods, it upholds European values such as human rights, democracy, gender equality, and ecological awareness. Check-IN develops local and international projects, including workshops, youth exchanges, training, and seminars.



Co-funded by  
the European Union



Youth Human Impact

# How to write a successful Erasmus+ proposal?

Writing a good project proposal is essential for the success of any initiative, regardless of its size or area of focus. The project proposal is the first step in turning an idea into reality, serving as the document that communicates the vision, objectives, and implementation strategy of a project. A well-crafted proposal is crucial because it demonstrates clear thinking and organisation, instilling confidence in those who read it, whether they are potential funders, partners, or team members.

Moreover, a well-written proposal is an opportunity to align expectations and ensure that everyone involved understands the objectives and the path to be taken. Effective communication from the outset can prevent misunderstandings and ensure that everyone is working towards the same goal. Therefore, investing time and care in preparing a project proposal is not just a formality; it is a critical step in increasing the chances of success and ensuring that the idea has the necessary support to move forward. Before learning a good proposal is important to understand Erasmus + priorities and actions:

The Erasmus+ programme aims to promote collaboration and learning at a European level, and its priorities reflect the emerging needs of today's society. These priorities are essential for preparing future generations to face global challenges, and ensuring inclusive and relevant education.

One of the core priorities of Erasmus+ is digital transformation in education. This involves adapting educational institutions to new technologies by integrating digital tools into the learning process. The digital transformation aims not only to modernise education but also to ensure that students develop essential digital skills for the current and future job market. This priority encourages the use of digital platforms, distance learning, and the development of innovative methodologies that harness the potential of technology to enhance learning.

Another crucial priority is environment and sustainable development. This area focuses on raising awareness of environmental issues and promoting sustainable practices both within and outside the educational environment. Erasmus+ supports projects that address topics such as climate change, biodiversity preservation, and the circular economy. By integrating education for sustainability, the programme seeks to develop conscious and responsible citizens capable of contributing to a greener and more balanced future.



**Co-funded by  
the European Union**



Communication, diversity, and inclusion is another major priority of Erasmus+ - this focus aims to ensure that all individuals, regardless of their background, gender, ethnicity, or ability, have access to quality educational opportunities. Erasmus+ promotes the inclusion of marginalised groups and the celebration of cultural, linguistic, and social diversity. This priority encourages intercultural dialogue, mutual understanding, and respect for differences, with the goal of building more cohesive and supportive societies.

Finally, the priority of education and social skills focuses on the holistic development of individuals. Beyond academic and professional skills, Erasmus+ values the development of social skills such as teamwork, conflict resolution, empathy, and effective communication. These skills are fundamental for personal and professional success, preparing young people to become active citizens capable of making a positive contribution to society.

In summary, the priorities of Erasmus+ are interconnected and complement each other, offering a comprehensive framework for education that prepares individuals to face the challenges of the present and the future. Erasmus+ actions: Erasmus+ is a European Union programme that supports education, training, youth, and sport across Europe. It offers various opportunities for students, staff, trainees, teachers, volunteers, and young people to study, train, gain experience, and volunteer abroad. The programme is structured into several key actions, each serving a distinct purpose. Here's an overview of the three main Key Actions:

**Key Action 1: Learning Mobility of Individuals** Key Action 1 focuses on mobility opportunities for individuals. This action enables students, trainees, staff, and young people to participate in exchanges and training abroad. The aim is to enhance their skills, employability, and cultural awareness. For students, this could mean studying at a partner university in another country or completing a work placement. For staff, it could involve teaching or professional development opportunities. Youth exchanges and volunteering projects also fall under this category, allowing participants to experience new cultures, develop their competencies, and engage in meaningful projects across Europe and beyond.

**Key Action 2: Cooperation Among Organisations and Institutions** Key Action 2 supports cooperation among organisations, institutions, and other stakeholders in the fields of education, training, youth, and sport.



Co-funded by  
the European Union



This action encourages partnerships that enable organisations to work together on shared projects, exchange best practices, and innovate. These projects can range from strategic partnerships focused on improving educational practices to large-scale cooperation among institutions, such as universities, vocational training centres, or NGOs. The goal is to foster collaboration that leads to high-quality teaching, training, learning, and youth work, ultimately contributing to systemic improvements in education and training.

**Key Action 3: Support for Policy Development and Cooperation** Key Action 3 is designed to support policy development and foster cooperation at the European level. This action aims to improve the quality and inclusiveness of education and training systems, strengthen the link between education and the labour market, and address societal challenges. It does this by supporting the development of policies and initiatives that encourage innovation, reform, and modernisation. Activities under this action include dialogue between stakeholders, support for evidence-based policymaking, and the promotion of best practices across member states. The ultimate objective is to ensure that education and training policies are better aligned with the needs of the society and economy. These three key actions collectively contribute to the overarching goals of the Erasmus+ programme: improving skills and employability, modernising education and training, and promoting sustainable development and social inclusion across Europe.

**Erasmus+ sectors:** Erasmus+ is a programme that touches many aspects of learning and personal growth across Europe, supporting various sectors that cater to different needs and stages of life. Here's a brief look at each sector:

**Youth:** This sector empowers young people through exchanges, volunteering, and non-formal learning. It helps them develop essential skills, gain new perspectives, and actively engage in society, shaping them into informed and active citizens.

**Adult Education:** Erasmus+ offers adults the chance to continue learning, whether to gain new skills, enhance employability, or simply to enrich their lives. It focuses especially on those who might not have had many opportunities before, promoting lifelong learning and inclusion.

**Vocational Education and Training (VET):** VET supports practical, career-oriented learning. It enables learners and trainers to gain experience abroad, ensuring that vocational training aligns with real-world job needs. This sector also encourages collaboration between schools and businesses to keep training relevant and effective.



**Co-funded by  
the European Union**



**School Education:** This sector is all about improving the quality of education in schools. It offers teachers opportunities for professional development abroad and fosters partnerships between schools to share best practices and develop innovative teaching methods, making learning more effective and inclusive for all students.

**Higher Education :**Erasmus+ enriches the higher education experience by offering students and staff opportunities to study, teach, or train abroad. It promotes international collaboration, helping universities to innovate and connect globally, ultimately enhancing the quality of education and research.

**Sport:**The Sport sector uses the power of sport to promote social inclusion, health, and teamwork. It supports projects that address social challenges and encourages cooperation between sports organisations and communities, spreading the positive values of sport across Europe.

Each sector of Erasmus+ works towards creating a more connected, skilled, and inclusive Europe, offering opportunities for everyone, from young people to lifelong learners. After we identify the Erasmus + objectives, read the Erasmus Guide and select the proper action we will explain step by step how to draft a proposal. To draft a cohesive proposal and make your life easier we will explain each element to help you craft a strong proposal.

The proposal should include:

1. **Topic and Summary:** Create a compelling project title and concise summary. This will be the time to present the issue that you want to change. Ask yourself why is important. Do you have previous research to back you up (hard data )? Does it make sense with your line of work or the organization you work with? The more information you have about the topic, the easier it will be for your reader.
2. **Context and Objectives:** Provide background information from previous research. This will be where you showcase your goals and objectives. While writing your goals make it simple and ensure they are Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-Bound (SMART).
3. **Target Group:** Identify your target group and differentiate between the primary and secondary target groups. The primary target group are the beneficiaries of your project. This could be students, teachers or youth workers. These are the indirect beneficiaries who will be impacted by the project outcomes. This could be their classmates, parents or friends they share about the project they participated in. This is the “multiplier effect” where your project will have a broader impact beyond its immediate activities and participants.



**Co-funded by  
the European Union**



4. Budget: When preparing your proposal, it's essential to carefully compare your project's budget with the available grant to ensure feasibility, sustainability and cost-effectiveness. Erasmus + grants are typically organized by specific categories such as travel, organizational support, individual support(subsistence), course fees, special needs support and exceptional costs. Be aware while distributing your funds since Erasmus + has maximum amounts for each category where this information is provided in the Guide mentioned previously. Always round the amounts to leave you with backup 10-20% is feasible In some cases, your project requires extra funding, meaning the grant doesn't cover 100% of your project costs and the need to collaborate with businesses or corporations will be necessary.

5. Activities: When planning the activities for your Erasmus + project it's essential to design them in a way that directly contributes to your project objectives, engages your target groups and aligns with the Erasmus + program priorities. While preparing your activities it must be clear the connection between the project objectives and the activities.

6.Results: The results should be directly linked to the projects objectives and activities and they must be SMART results. There 3 different types of results: Immediate, short-term and long term-results. Immediate results are the direct outputs of the project activities, such as the number. of participants trained, the creation of educational materials and the development of new curriculum. For the short-term results they reflect the initial impact on the target group, such as improved skills, increased knowledge.Finally long-term results represent the broader, lasting impact of the project, such as enhanced employability, improved educational outcomes and activities that the participants would do in their respective countries.

Accepting a well-planned Erasmus+ project proposal will enhance your credibility and professionalism by showcasing your competence in managing complex international initiatives. The success of the project will strengthen your reputation as a reliable leader and open doors to future opportunities. Additionally, the experience gained will contribute to your personal and professional growth, highlighting your ability to overcome challenges and make a positive impact on the community.



Co-funded by  
the European Union



# What is Erasmus?

Have you ever dreamed of embarking on an international adventure, meeting people from different cultures, and expanding your horizons? Then, Erasmus+ is something you should definitely consider. But what exactly is Erasmus+? Simply put, it's a European Union (EU) program designed to promote mobility, cooperation, and learning among young people, students, professionals, and organizations across Europe and beyond. It's like a passport to new experiences, skills, and opportunities that could change your life in ways you never imagined.

At the end, Erasmus+ is the evolution of the old Erasmus program, but with a much broader focus. It's not just aimed at university students wanting to spend a semester abroad; it also includes a variety of educational and training activities for people of all ages. From youth exchanges and training courses to volunteering projects, Erasmus+ is designed to help you grow both personally and professionally. And the best part? You don't need to be a university student to take part. The program covers various areas such as education, training, youth, and sport, offering something for almost everyone.

## Participating Countries: A World of Possibilities

Erasmus+ isn't just for EU countries. Although the program is run by the EU, it involves countries all over Europe and beyond. Participating countries are divided into two categories: programme countries and partner countries.

1. The programme countries include all EU countries, as well as some others like Norway, Iceland, Liechtenstein, North Macedonia, Serbia, and Turkey. Citizens of these countries have full access to all Erasmus+ opportunities.
2. As for the partner countries, while they have more limited access, countries from nearly every corner of the world can participate in certain parts of the program. This opens the door to collaborations and experiences that extend beyond European borders.

## Who Can Participate?

Erasmus+ is an incredibly inclusive program that focus on diversity as well. Those who can benefit from it include:

- University students who want to study abroad for a semester or a year.
- Vocational students who want to do internships abroad.
- Young people aged 13 to 30 interested in participating in youth exchanges.



Co-funded by  
the European Union





- Volunteers of all ages who want to get involved in the European Voluntary Service (EVS), now part of the European Solidarity Corps (ESC).
- Educators, teachers, trainers, and staff from educational institutions looking to enhance their skills and knowledge through training and the exchange of best practices.

## **Program Modalities: What Can You Do with Erasmus+?**

Erasmus+ is highly versatile, and there are several ways you can participate depending on your interests and circumstances. Here's a breakdown of some of the main modalities:

1. **Youth Exchange:** These exchanges allow young people from different countries to come together, live, and work on common projects for periods ranging from 5 to 21 days. No prior experience is necessary—just a willingness to learn and share with others. The themes can be very diverse, from arts and culture to social inclusion or environmental issues. It's an opportunity to meet people from all over Europe and learn about their cultures while developing skills like teamwork and communication.
2. **Training Course:** If you're interested in developing specific skills or learning more about a particular topic, training courses under Erasmus+ can be an excellent option. These courses are short, usually a week long, and are aimed at young people, youth workers, and educators. They focus on a variety of topics, from project management to social inclusion, leadership, and group facilitation, and tend to be more specific and professional than youth exchanges. The courses are held in different countries and allow you to learn from experts and other international participants.
3. **ESC (European Solidarity Corps):** This is the volunteering branch of Erasmus+. You can work on solidarity projects in your own country or abroad, lasting anywhere from 2 months to a year. The projects cover a wide range of topics, such as social inclusion, the environment, culture, or helping disadvantaged communities. It's an incredible way to contribute to a cause you're passionate about while gaining valuable experience and forming bonds with people from across the continent.

## **Why is Erasmus+ Important?**

Erasmus+ isn't just about traveling and meeting new people (although that's a big part of it). It's a program that truly changes lives. It allows you to gain skills and experiences that will make you more competitive in the job market. Moreover, it promotes inclusion and diversity, helping you understand and respect different cultures and viewpoints.

The benefits are immense: improving language skills, developing soft skills like communication and teamwork, building an international network of contacts, and, of course, having a personal adventure.

In short, Erasmus+ is more than just a mobility program; it's an open door to a world full of opportunities. So, if you have the chance, don't hesitate! Taking part in Erasmus+ could be one of the best decisions of your life.



**Co-funded by  
the European Union**





# How to prepare for negotiations?

Effective negotiation preparation is vital for NGOs, they often engage with a diverse array of stakeholders, including governments, donors, local communities, and other organizations. These negotiations can be critical for securing funding, forming partnerships, advocating for policy changes, and ensuring the successful implementation of projects.

Thorough preparation allows NGOs to clarify their objectives, understand the interests and motivations of other parties, and develop strategies to achieve mutually beneficial outcomes. This preparation not only enhances the NGO's credibility and influence but also increases the likelihood of achieving long-term, sustainable results. Given the resource constraints and high stakes often faced by NGOs, effective negotiation preparation is essential for maximizing impact and advancing their mission.

## 5 main steps involved in negotiation preparation

1. Define your preferences
2. Defining your reservation point
3. Define your BATNA (Best Alternative to No Agreement)
4. Explore potential linkages
5. Organize resources

## Define your preferences

Preferences tell us about how actors rank the possible outcomes of an interaction. Actors want to attain their highest-ranked outcome. As an NGO, the ranking criteria is usually based on the social focus of the organization and the impact they aim to achieve in the community.

Organizing your preferences allows the organization to allocate resources according to its values, design the negotiation strategy, and accomplish the main goals of the organizations.

Some other questions you can ask yourself:

- What are my primary goals in this negotiation, and which outcomes am I willing to compromise on?
- How does my objective for the negotiation aligns with my organization's values?
- Am I fulfilling my objectives by getting myself into the negotiation process?
- What is the best solution for me and what comes after?



Co-funded by  
the European Union



## Reservation points

A reservation point in negotiation refers to the minimum or maximum threshold at which a party is willing to agree to a deal. It represents the least favourable outcome that a party is prepared to accept before walking away from the negotiation.

The area between the two reservation points is referred to as the "zone of agreement." This zone encompasses all potential outcomes that lie within the range defined by the two reservation points.

Knowing your reservation point is crucial in negotiation, as it helps you avoid agreeing to terms that don't meet your minimum requirements or go beyond your maximum capacity.

One example of the reservation point will be the:

Imagine you're buying a car. After doing your research, you decide that the maximum amount you're willing to pay is 15,000€. This is your **\*\*reservation point\*\***—the highest price you're willing to accept. If the seller insists on a price above 15,000€, you would rather walk away from the deal than agree to the higher price.

On the seller's side, their reservation point might be 13,000€, the lowest price they are willing to accept. If an offer comes in below 13,000€, the seller would rather not sell the car at all.

In this scenario, the zone of possible agreement (ZOPA) would be between 13,000€ and 15,000€.



Co-funded by  
the European Union



## Define your BATNA

BATNA stands for Best Alternative to a Negotiated Agreement. It represents the most favorable course of action a party can take if negotiations fail and no agreement is reached. Essentially, it is the fallback option or plan B. Understanding your BATNA is crucial in negotiations because it provides a benchmark against which any potential agreement can be measured. If the proposed deal is better than your BATNA, you might consider accepting it; if it's worse, you might decide to walk away from the negotiation.

Defining your BATNA before entering the negotiation is key to not giving more than what we want.

## Explore potential linkages

In negotiation, linkages refer to the strategy of connecting issues, deals, or discussions across different contexts, parties, or negotiations. By creating linkages, a negotiator can leverage one area of discussion to influence another, potentially leading to more favorable outcomes.

For example, if two parties are negotiating over a contract, and one party also has ongoing or future negotiations with the same counterpart on another matter, they might link the two negotiations. The party could offer concessions in one area in exchange for gains in another, thereby creating a more comprehensive and mutually beneficial agreement.

Linkages can be particularly useful in complex negotiations where multiple issues or interests are at play, allowing for creative trade-offs and broader agreements.

# Negotiations

## Understanding the Basis of Negotiations in NGOs

Negotiation is a critical aspect of the operations of non-governmental organizations (NGOs), given their important role in advocating for social causes, mediating in conflict zones, and working with a wide range of realities, from governments and corporations to local communities. The basis of negotiations within NGOs is shaped by several key factors, including their mission and values, the nature of their stakeholders, the complex environments in which they operate, and the need for reliable outcomes. This article explores these foundations and how they influence the negotiation processes within NGOs.

### 1. Mission and Values as the Core of Negotiations

The mission and values of an NGO are central to its identity and guide all its activities, including negotiations. Unlike profit organizations, which are primarily driven by financial objectives, NGOs are mission-driven. Their negotiations are often centered around advancing social, environmental, or humanitarian goals. For instance, when an NGO negotiates with a government on environmental regulations, it is not merely seeking a compromise but rather aiming to achieve an outcome that aligns with its environmental conservation objectives.

This central focus on mission regarding negotiation means that NGOs often enter negotiations with a clear set of non-negotiables that are related to their core values. These non-negotiables may include human rights, environmental sustainability, or the protection of marginalized communities. For example, an NGO working on human rights may refuse to endorse any agreement that compromises the rights of vulnerable groups, regardless of the potential benefits such a compromise might bring in other areas. This adherence to core values can make negotiations challenging but is essential for maintaining the NGO's integrity and public trust.

### 2. Stakeholder Complexity and Power Dynamics

NGOs operate in a complex ecosystem involving multiple stakeholders, each with different interests, priorities, and levels of influence. These stakeholders include governments, international organizations, private sector entities, local communities, and other NGOs. The power among these stakeholders can significantly impact the negotiation process. goals of social justice, environmental protection, and community empowerment.



Co-funded by  
the European Union



One key aspect of NGO negotiations is the need to balance the interests of these diverse groups. For example, in negotiations involving a development project, an NGO may need to mediate between the local community's needs, government policies, and the interests of private companies funding the project. The NGO must navigate these often conflicting interests while ensuring that the outcomes are just and equitable.

Moreover, NGOs often operate in environments where power asymmetries are stark. They may find themselves negotiating with more powerful entities, such as governments or multinational corporations, which can influence the terms of negotiation heavily. In such scenarios, NGOs rely on their ability to mobilize public opinion, leverage media, or build coalitions with other organizations to strengthen their bargaining position.

### **3. Navigating Complex and Uncertain Environments**

NGOs frequently operate in complex and volatile environments, including conflict zones, areas affected by natural disasters, or regions with unstable political situations. These environments add layers of complexity to negotiations. In such settings, negotiations are not just about reaching an agreement but also about managing risks, ensuring the safety of personnel, and maintaining operational flexibility.

For instance, in conflict zones, NGOs may need to negotiate access to affected populations with multiple armed groups, each with different demands and interests. The unpredictable nature of such environments requires NGOs to be adaptable and prepared to renegotiate terms as situations evolve. Additionally, NGOs must be skilled in conflict resolution and peacebuilding to facilitate negotiations that can contribute to broader stability and peace in the region.

### **4. The importance of Sustainable Outcomes**

Sustainability is a crucial consideration in NGO negotiations. NGOs are often involved in projects that have long-term impacts on communities and the environment. Therefore, the outcomes of their negotiations must be sustainable and aligned with the broader goals of social justice, environmental protection, and community empowerment.

Sustainable outcomes also require NGOs to consider the long-term capacity of communities to manage and sustain the benefits of the negotiated agreements. This may involve negotiating for the inclusion of capacity-building initiatives, the transfer of knowledge, and the establishment of local governance structures that can uphold the agreements in the future.



**Co-funded by  
the European Union**



## Conclusion

The basis of negotiations in NGOs clearly depends on their mission and values, the complex and diverse nature of their stakeholders, the challenging environments in which they operate, and the imperative for sustainable outcomes. Negotiation in the NGO context is not just about reaching an agreement but about advancing causes that have profound social, environmental, and humanitarian significance. As such, NGOs must approach negotiations with a strategic mindset, a deep understanding of the issues at stake, and a commitment to the principles that define their work. By doing so, they can effectively approach the complexities of negotiation and achieve outcomes that contribute to their mission and the greater good.

<https://www.fao.org/4/a0032e/a0032e0a.htm>

<https://www.fundacionseres.org/lists/informes/attachments/1118/stakeholder%20engagement.pdf>

[https://brill.com/view/journals/iner/4/3/article-p371\\_1.xml](https://brill.com/view/journals/iner/4/3/article-p371_1.xml)

<https://www.cambridge.org/core/books/abs/negotiating-the-power-of-ngos/negotiating-the-power-of-ngos/B81C5EFB3F6B8E03DEDC4E130FF78228>



Co-funded by  
the European Union



# Erasmus+: Your Passport to a Unique Experience in Europe and Beyond

Have you ever dreamed of embarking on an international adventure, meeting people from different cultures, and expanding your horizons? Then, Erasmus+ is something you should definitely consider. But what exactly is Erasmus+? Simply put, it's a European Union (EU) program designed to promote mobility, cooperation, and learning among young people, students, professionals, and organizations across Europe and beyond. It's like a passport to new experiences, skills, and opportunities that could change your life in ways you never imagined.

At the end, Erasmus+ is the evolution of the old Erasmus program, but with a much broader focus. It's not just aimed at university students wanting to spend a semester abroad; it also includes a variety of educational and training activities for people of all ages. From youth exchanges and training courses to volunteering projects, Erasmus+ is designed to help you grow both personally and professionally. And the best part? You don't need to be a university student to take part. The program covers various areas such as education, training, youth, and sport, offering something for almost everyone.

## Participating Countries: A World of Possibilities

Erasmus+ isn't just for EU countries. Although the program is run by the EU, it involves countries all over Europe and beyond. Participating countries are divided into two categories: programme countries and partner countries.

1. The programme countries include all EU countries, as well as some others like Norway, Iceland, Liechtenstein, North Macedonia, Serbia, and Turkey. Citizens of these countries have full access to all Erasmus+ opportunities.
2. As for the partner countries, while they have more limited access, countries from nearly every corner of the world can participate in certain parts of the program. This opens the door to collaborations and experiences that extend beyond European borders.



Co-funded by  
the European Union



## Who Can Participate?

Erasmus+ is an incredibly inclusive program that focus on diversity as well. Those who can benefit from it include:

- University students who want to study abroad for a semester or a year.
- Vocational students who want to do internships abroad.
- Young people aged 13 to 30 interested in participating in youth exchanges.
- Volunteers of all ages who want to get involved in the European Voluntary Service (EVS), now part of the European Solidarity Corps (ESC).
- Educators, teachers, trainers, and staff from educational institutions looking to enhance their skills and knowledge through training and the exchange of best practices.

## Program Modalities: What Can You Do with Erasmus+?

Erasmus+ is highly versatile, and there are several ways you can participate depending on your interests and circumstances. Here's a breakdown of some of the main modalities:

1. **Youth Exchange:** These exchanges allow young people from different countries to come together, live, and work on common projects for periods ranging from 5 to 21 days. No prior experience is necessary—just a willingness to learn and share with others. The themes can be very diverse, from arts and culture to social inclusion or environmental issues. It's an opportunity to meet people from all over Europe and learn about their cultures while developing skills like teamwork and communication.
2. **Training Course:** If you're interested in developing specific skills or learning more about a particular topic, training courses under Erasmus+ can be an excellent option. These courses are short, usually a week long, and are aimed at young people, youth workers, and educators. They focus on a variety of topics, from project management to social inclusion, leadership, and group facilitation, and tend to be more specific and professional than youth exchanges. The courses are held in different countries and allow you to learn from experts and other international participants.
3. **ESC (European Solidarity Corps):** This is the volunteering branch of Erasmus+. You can work on solidarity projects in your own country or abroad, lasting anywhere from 2 months to a year. The projects cover a wide range of topics, such as social inclusion, the environment, culture, or helping disadvantaged communities. It's an incredible way to contribute to a cause you're passionate about while gaining valuable experience and forming bonds with people from across the continent.



Co-funded by  
the European Union





## Why is Erasmus+ Important?

Erasmus+ isn't just about traveling and meeting new people (although that's a big part of it). It's a program that truly changes lives. It allows you to gain skills and experiences that will make you more competitive in the job market. Moreover, it promotes inclusion and diversity, helping you understand and respect different cultures and viewpoints.

The benefits are immense: improving language skills, developing soft skills like communication and teamwork, building an international network of contacts, and, of course, having a personal adventure.

In short, Erasmus+ is more than just a mobility program; it's an open door to a world full of opportunities. So, if you have the chance, don't hesitate! Taking part in Erasmus+ could be one of the best decisions of your life.



Co-funded by  
the European Union



# Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)

Corporate Social Responsibility can be described as a self-regulating business model that contributes to shaping a company's image, promoting its social acceptance among itself, its stakeholders and its target audience. As a management concept it describes how a company contributes to the well-being of communities and society through environmental and social measures. To be perceived as genuine, the company's practices need to be integrated into its culture and business operations, in order to understand which initiatives best align with the business's goals and values.

Nowadays, more than ever, CSR's role has been increasing not only as a strategic need, but also due to its several key factors, such as consumer expectations (ethical consumption, brand loyalty); employee engagement (employee satisfaction); risk management (operational risk); regulatory pressure (compliance, sustainability goals) and globalization and social responsibility (global influence, corporate citizenship).

## Historical Background

The concept of Corporate Social Responsibility has undergone significant evolution since its formation in the beginning of the 20th century. It was initially rooted in philanthropy and it began with industrialists such as Andrew Carnegie and John D. Rockefeller, who used their wealth to support social causes.

By the 1950s and 1960s, CSR started gaining theoretical ground with the publication of Howard Bowen's "Social Responsibilities of the Businessman" in 1953, marking a shift towards the idea that businesses have obligations beyond profit.

The 1970s saw CSR expanding to include environmental and labor concerns and, during the following 20 years, CSR became more formalized, beginning to be viewed as a necessary element of business strategy rather than just an optional activity. Today, it is an integral part of how businesses operate, reflecting a broader commitment to ethical practices, sustainability, and social impact.



Co-funded by  
the European Union



## Theories and models

CSR can be perceived through a variety of theories and models that offer different perspectives on how and why businesses should engage in socially responsible activities. Some of the key CSR theories and models are:

**Carroll's Pyramid of CSR:** Carroll's CSR Pyramid refers to a structured framework for businesses to approach CSR across four different levels: Economic Responsibilities (the foundation of the pyramid, this level asserts that a business's primary responsibility is to be profitable and economically sustainable); Legal Responsibilities (businesses must obey the law and adhere to regulations); Ethical Responsibilities (businesses are expected to do what is right, just, and fair); Philanthropic Responsibilities (companies are encouraged to be good corporate citizens by contributing resources to the community and improving the life quality).

**Stakeholder Theory:** suggests that companies have a responsibility to balance the interests of all stakeholders in their decision-making processes, ensuring that no single group's needs are prioritized at the expense of others.

**Triple Bottom Line (TBL):** according to this thesis, companies should focus on three key performance areas: Profit (economic sustainability); People (social responsibility); Planet (environmental stewardship). This way, instead of measuring success solely by financial performance, businesses should assess their impact on society and the environment as well.

### Key areas of CSR

The key areas of CSR include environmental responsibility, social responsibility, economic responsibility, and ethical labor practices.

Environmental responsibility involves actions to reduce a company's environmental impact, such as conserving resources, and adopting sustainable practices throughout operation, while social responsibility focuses on contributing to community well-being, including charitable activities, and supporting local development projects.

By contrast, economic responsibility ensures that business practices positively contribute to the economic development of the areas where they operate, through fair trade practices, and supporting small businesses. Ethical labor practices involve treating employees fairly by providing safe working conditions, fair wages, respecting workers rights, and promoting diversity and inclusion within the workplace.



Co-funded by  
the European Union



## What are the benefits of having a CSR Business Program?

Some of the advantages of implementing a CSR Business Program are:

- **Enhanced Brand Reputation and Image:** by demonstrating a commitment to ethical and socially responsible practices.
- **Increased Customer Loyalty and Engagement:** When consumers see a business as socially responsible, they're highly likely to remain loyal to the brand and even advocate for its products and services.
- **Improved Employee Morale and Productivity:** CSR initiatives provide employees with opportunities to participate in meaningful activities outside their regular work duties and responsibilities, in order to create a sense of purpose .
- **Cost Savings Through Efficiency and Innovation:** investing in energy-efficiency technologies reduces environmental impact and lowers energy consumption costs.
- **Reduce Risk and Enhanced Resilience:** Proactively addressing social and environmental issues through CSR efforts enables companies to mitigate risks related to regulatory compliance, reputation damage, and supply chain distributions.

## Ethical Considerations and Challenges in CSR

Nowadays, companies have ethical responsibilities that go beyond mere profit-making. However, balancing these ethical responsibilities with the pursuit of profit can be a challenge. Investing in sustainable technologies, ensuring fair labor practices, or engaging in community development, for example, are practices that will be associated with costs that may reduce short-term profitability, creating tension between financial goals and ethical obligations.

As a result, companies must strive to integrate CSR into their core strategies in a way that aligns with financial objectives while fulfilling their ethical responsibilities. Achieving this balance is difficult, as it requires ongoing commitment and innovation from business leaders to demonstrate that ethical practices and social contributions can enhance long-term business success.

## Conclusion

On the whole, CSR is a dynamic and evolving field, constantly adapting to shifting societal expectations and environmental challenges. As businesses navigate these changes, it's crucial for them to integrate CSR deeply into their core strategies rather than treating it as a mere add-on. By prioritizing ethical practices, sustainability, and social impact, companies can not only meet the growing demands of stakeholders but also drive long-term success and positive changes.



Co-funded by  
the European Union



# The Role of Crowdfunding in NGO Financing

Crowdfunding is a fundraising strategy that enables individuals or organizations to gather small amounts of money from a large number of people, typically through online platforms. Its practice has increased in the last twenty years, as a result of the huge demand for new ways to finance NGOs, but also community projects, and start-up companies, among others.

Non-governmental organisations (NGOs) often face ongoing challenges in securing consistent and sustainable funding. Traditional sources such as government grants, institutional donations, and corporate sponsorships have become increasingly competitive and are vulnerable to fluctuations driven by economic and political climates.

As a result, NGOs have been exploring alternative models that provide great flexibility and autonomy, crowdfunding being a key example. This funding option diverges from traditional fundraising since it happens mainly online. It also includes a lot of advantages in terms of using it for nonprofit NGOs, since it consists of an opportunity to collect social validation and to reinforce the NGOS image, through press coverage and media exposure.

According to their focus and structure, it is possible to find different crowdfunding platforms. Some of the most popular ones include Kickstarter, for creative projects like design and technology; Indiegogo, known for its flexible funding options; GoFundMe, dedicated to personal causes and emergencies; and Patreon, which focuses on ongoing support for creators through subscriptions. One of the standout benefits of crowdfunding is its global reach. Digital platforms enable NGOs to connect with supporters around the world, allowing them to tap into a larger donor base than ever before.

Moreover, crowdfunding also fosters community engagement. Campaigns often encourage donors to share their support through social media, creating a sense of involvement and connection to the cause. This not only increases awareness but also turns supporters into advocates, as they feel personally invested in the success of the projects they fund.



Co-funded by  
the European Union



Additionally, crowdfunding offers speed and flexibility, enabling NGOs to quickly raise funds for urgent needs or specific projects.

By engaging a broad audience, NGOs can attract small donations from numerous individuals, creating a more sustainable financial base. This diversity not only stabilizes funding but also empowers NGOs to pursue innovative projects that may not fit within conventional funding frameworks.

A great example of crowdfunding's effectiveness in NGO funding is Charity: Water's September Campaign. Launched in 2008, it raised over \$11 million to provide clean drinking water to more than 500,000 people. Engaging visuals and regular updates kept donors informed, while collaborations with influencers demonstrated the potential of effective communication tools to mobilize support and drive fundraising success.



The main challenge in crowdfunding an NGO has to do with the intense competition for attention and funding. Different organizations compete for the support of the same potential donors and sponsors, which increases the difficulty of standing out and maintaining long-term partnerships.

On the other hand, managing expectations is another crucial condition while establishing the crowdfunding main goals, as overestimation can lead to failure and disappointment, such as maintaining interest and engagement throughout the campaign.

In conclusion, crowdfunding has emerged as a transformative and innovative funding model for NGOs, offering a viable alternative to traditional financing through its online nature, that allows NGOs to reach a global audience.

---

#### References

Charity: water | Clean Drinking Water and Sanitation Projects. (n.d.). Charity: water. <https://www.charitywater.org/our-work>

Crowd Funding: Key Challenges and How to Overcome Them - fundsforNGOs - Grants and Resources for Sustainability. (s.d.). fundsforNGOs - Grants and Resources for Sustainability. <https://www.fundsforngos.org/proposals/crowd-funding-key-challenges-and-how-to-overcome-them/#:~:text=Crowdfunding%20can%20be%20a%20challenge,switch%20their%20support%20over%20time>

Smith, T. (2012, 25 de abril). Crowdfunding: What It Is, How It Works, and Popular Websites. Investopedia. <https://www.investopedia.com/terms/c/crowdfunding.asp>

Tamplin, T. (2024, September 12). Not All Startups Need VC. Here Are 6 Other Viable Funding Sources. Forbes. <https://www.forbes.com/sites/truetamplin/2024/09/12/not-all-startups-need-vc-funding-here-are-6-other-sources/>



**Co-funded by  
the European Union**



# Most popular international grants and info how to apply for them

- **Erasmus+**

The Erasmus+ is the most popular programme in the field of education, training, sports and youth. The programme is managed and funded by European Commission, working in the EU countries and associated states. The newest (2021-2027) budget of Erasmus+ is €26.2 billion. This edition lays the pressure on social inclusion, the green and digital transitions, and promoting young people's participation in democratic life. Erasmus+ implements the EU Youth Strategy and supports the European Pillar of Social Rights.

## **How to apply?**

In order to apply, the organisation should look for the action, which matches their needs and objectives. Depending on what part of the programme you are applying for, you will need to fill out a specific application form. Most common tool for applying is Erasmus+ and ESC page (portal), where the applicant can find and fill the Application Form. The organisation applies to the National Agency of the country of their origin. The applications are evaluated on the basis of the criteria described in the Programme Guide. Before applying, make sure that the organisation is registered in the portal!

- **European Social Funds Plus**

For investing in people and supporting the implementation of the European Pillar of Social Rights, the European Union offers an European Social Funds Plus instrument. It supports the employment, social, education and skills policies in the European Union. Also, the mission of the programme is to support economic, territorial and social cohesion in the EU – reducing disparities between Member States and regions. The budget of this programme is €142.7 billion for the 2021-2027 years.

## **How to apply?**

Institutions, organisations and companies can apply for ESF+ funding by applying to a current call for projects (Call). For example, in Poland the NGO should look for the ESF+ funds on the “European Funds” website (Fundusze Europejskie, <https://www.funduszeuropejskie.gov.pl/wyszukiwarka>), as ESF+ is a part of it. Currently (17.10.2024), there are 443 different opportunities open, from where NGO can gain the funds. The criterias and profile of the organisation differ depends on the opportunity. This procedure applies for every EU country and associated states.



**Co-funded by  
the European Union**



- **CERV**

The CERV (Citizens, Equal Rights and Equalities) is programme which goal is to promote the values of UE and protect the rights of it. This is achieved through the promotions of equal rights mainly for people with disabilities, woman and minorities. It aims to combat violence and discrimination particular those that affect children and woman. Another important thing is involvement and participation in a democratic life of the EU by citizens which are supported by CERV through exchanges between citizens of the member countries and spreading the knowledge about European history.

### **How to apply?**

In order to apply, you need to go to EU Funding and Tenders website and log in. Next step is to select the call topic for which you will submit your proposal. Then, choose funding opportunity (Calls, Topics, Types of Actions). Next important thing is to select your participants (most calls require consortium). You can find information about it on Funding & Tenders Portal. Finally you need to register all organisations in the Participant Register and obtain a Participant Identification Code (PIC). If you want additional information about it, you can find it in Register an organisation.



**Co-funded by  
the European Union**





# Most interesting financing methods

## How to finance your NGO?

NGOs (non-governmental organizations) work on improving a wide range of social, economic, and environmental issues often involving young people and education. This aligns with counties because it improves development and well being. And for that reason, most of the countries in the world assign monetary resources to finance this kind of activity.

Financing diversity is key to the survival of an NGO in the long run and ensuring its stability. The best combination of these methods will depend greatly on the NGO's goals, size, and the community they serve.

## PUBLIC FUNDINGS

### 1. National Field

NGOs can receive funding from local, national, or international government agencies and are usually tied to specific projects. Every country might differ, but in the Spanish case there are three layers of administration in charge of assigning money to NGOS and social participation:

- City Councils: Focused on social issues, rural areas development and youth participation in local communities.
- Regional Administrations: More focused in cultural support, rural areas development and gender violence eradication.
- National: More focused in education, culture promotion beyond frontiers.



Co-funded by  
the European Union



## 2. European Union

- **European Commission**

The European Commission should help NGOs to develop certain projects when established on behalf of the 2030 Agenda and EU's values. NGOs may easily be founded if their plans are related with topics that we can find in the European Commission website portal:

- Social inclusion, gender equality and equal opportunities.
- Culture and communication
- Citizenship and civic participation.
- Investigation and innovation
- Development and humanitarian aid.
- Transport, energy and ICTs.

At the same time, the European Commission can help with other programmes, as the European Service for Foreign Policy instrument. In its website, an NGO may find some programmes to do a partnership with. The main topics here are: peace and security, human rights or economic development.

Another program that is offered in this field is LIFE: European Climate, Infrastructure and Environment Executive Agency. As we can tell, it is the main funding instrument for the environment and climate action.

- **Other EU Organs**

The European Parliament offers grants to NGOs through various programs and initiatives. These grants focus on areas such as democracy promotion, human rights, and civic engagement.

**The European Social Fund (ESF+)** is also one of the main found instruments when talking about social purposes, such as gender equality or equal opportunities.

**Horizon Europe** is often used for the financial support of several programmes and projects when its main aim is to do research about something.



Co-funded by  
the European Union



## PRIVATE FUNDINGS

### 3.Private entities

Private funding is vital for NGOs, offering diverse resources to enhance their impact. Key sources include:

- **Private Entities:** Individual donors can provide direct financial support.
- **Companies:** Through corporate social responsibility initiatives, businesses contribute funds, in-kind donations, and expertise.
- **Branding Partnerships:** Collaborations with companies can generate funding and raise awareness.
- **Foundations:** Private and family foundations offer substantial grants for specific projects or operational support.
- **Banks:** They provide tailored financial products, including low-interest loans and impact investments.

These funding avenues help NGOs diversify income and amplify their missions effectively.



Co-funded by  
the European Union



#### 4. Population

Not all the incoming funds of NGOs need to come from official entities.

- **Individual Donations:** NGOs often request contributions from people who support their projects. This can be one-time donations for specific purposes through special fund raising campaigns or through events.
- **Fundraising events:** Charity Events like Galas, auctions, dinners, and benefit concerts are common ways to raise funds while also increasing visibility for the NGO's cause. Walkathons or marathons have also become very popular to be organized by NGOs and sponsored by companies where participants raise money through pledges.
- **Membership Fees:** NGOs can generate funds by charging annual or monthly membership fees for supporters who want to stay involved in their activities. This is common in advocacy and professional organizations
- **Online Crowdfunding:** Crowdfunding platforms (e.g., GoFundMe, Verkami, GlobalGiving) to reach a wide audience and collect small contributions from many individuals.

#### 5. Others

Finally NGO can raise some money through income-Generating Activities:

- **Social Enterprises:** Some NGOs run business ventures where profits are reinvested into their mission. This could be selling fair-trade products, offering training programs, or operating a service-oriented business.
- **Selling Merchandise:** NGOs often sell branded merchandise (e.g., t-shirts, bags) to raise awareness and generate funds.
- **Loans :** As any business, NGOs can take loans from banks or from socially-conscious investors with low-interest rates to support their cause.



Co-funded by  
the European Union



# How to prepare a financing plan

Preparing a financing plan is an essential step in ensuring that a business or project is well-funded and financially sustainable. It outlines the financial requirements, sources of funds, and the strategy to manage both short-term and long-term needs.

## Key Components of a Financing Plan

- **Executive Summary:** A brief overview of the project or business and its financial goals.
- **Financial Needs:** Detailed listing of what funds are needed and why.
- **Revenue and Cash Flow Projections:** Forecasts of earnings and cash inflows/outflows.
- **Sources of Financing:** Where the funds will come from (equity, debt, etc.).
- **Debt Repayment Plan:** How any borrowed funds will be repaid.
- **Risk Management:** How financial risks will be managed.
- **Financial Statements:** Projections of income, expenses, assets, liabilities, and cash flows.



By following these steps, you can create a well-rounded financing plan that helps attract investors, secure loans, and guide your financial decisions. Here's a step-by-step detailed guide to preparing a financing plan:

## 1. Define the Purpose and Scope

Clearly state what the financial plan is for. Identify if it's for short-term (less than a year), medium-term (1-5 years), or long-term (over 5 years) needs.

## 2. Determine Financial Needs

**Initial Costs:** Estimate all startup or initial costs, such as equipment, inventory, marketing, legal fees, or premises. Consider operating costs, one-time costs, and add a margin for unforeseen expenses (typically 5–10% of the total budget).



Co-funded by  
the European Union



### 3. Identify the Funding Gap

Once costs are estimated, calculate the difference between the available resources and the total financial needs. This is known as the funding gap. Identifying when and how much additional funding is required is vital. Do you need the funds upfront or at specific milestones? Having clarity on the timing of funding needs helps streamline financing efforts and reduces the risk of cash flow issues down the road.

### 4. Explore Financing Sources

Consider equity (investors, savings) and debt (loans, credit lines), or alternative options (grants, crowdfunding). Exploring financing sources for non-governmental organizations (NGOs) include grants from government agencies and foundations, individual and corporate donations through fundraising campaigns, and membership fees. NGOs can also seek sponsorships and partnerships with businesses, while government funding supports specific projects. Crowdfunding and in-kind contributions, such as goods and volunteer services, further enhance funding options.

### 5. Prepare Financial Statements

Develop and include key financial documents that reflect the current and projected financial health of your business or project. These documents typically include:

**Income Statement:** A summary of revenues and expenses, indicating whether the business is profitable.

**Balance Sheet:** A snapshot of assets, liabilities, and owner's equity at a given point in time.

**Cash Flow Statement:** A detailed account of all cash inflows and outflows, highlighting liquidity.

**Budget:** A comprehensive budget that outlines all projected income and planned expenditures, offering a roadmap for financial management. These documents not only provide transparency but also serve as tools for tracking progress and making informed adjustments as needed.



Co-funded by  
the European Union





## 6. Risk Analysis and Mitigation

Identify financial risks and outline strategies to mitigate them. Consider insurance, diversification, or setting aside contingency reserves.

## 7. Create a Timeline and Milestones

Develop a timeline showing when funds will be needed, when revenues will begin, and when debt needs to be repaid. Set key financial and operational milestones.

## 8. Review and Adjust Regularly

A financial plan is not a static document. Regularly reviewing and adjusting it ensures that it remains aligned with the evolving needs of the business or project. This includes revisiting financial projections, monitoring cash flow, and re-evaluating risk factors. By consistently updating your financial plan, you can respond proactively to challenges, take advantage of new opportunities, and ensure long-term financial sustainability.

# Most popular difficulties related to financing an NGO and how to conquer them

The youth association that organizes international courses, training courses or even educational projects that are financed by Erasmus+, play a crucial role in the personal and professional development of youth. Through these kinds of activities, they promote non-formal intercultural knowledge, while offering youth key competences for their future.

However, these associations face important financial challenges such as the dependence on public grants and the necessity of covering administrative costs. This paper analyzes the main financial difficulties faced by youth associations.

## 1. Excessive bureaucracy

The administrative processes to ask for grants are usually complex and they require a huge amount of paperwork, from the initial application to the final justification of the expenses. Moreover, the rules and procedures vary for each country or even each region inside a single country, which makes more difficult the management. Youth associations are usually managed by volunteers or small teams, so they find themselves involved in bureaucratic tasks and issues that are highly time-consuming and resources.

## 2. Limitations for grants combinations (incompatibility)

Some grants cover just a small percentage of the total project cost. This situation leaves the associations in a situation where they need to look for other type or ways of fundraising. Nevertheless, there is an incompatibility of grants in most of the cases. This restricts the possibility of completing the financing process. All of this causes a clear uncertainty which makes the associations to take unnecessary risks or decreases the quality of the activities.



Co-funded by  
the European Union





### **3. Excessive dependence on public aids**

Youth NGOs usually depend mostly on public funds to develop their activities. This dependency increases their vulnerability to changes on fundraising policies and budget fluctuations. The lack of diversity in fundraising can cause long term financial instability. Furthermore, the competence for these grants is extremely high, so it leads a huge number of associations in a precarious situation if they do not get an alternative financial option.

### **4. Strict deadlines and late reimbursements**

Financial reimbursements usually take place after the end of the project and once all the justifications have been delivered. This leaves the associations in a weak position during the project since they have to prepay part of it or depend on limited resources. Lack of liquidity during project's development can affect their quality or even risk the association's viability if they cannot cover the expenses in a short period of time.

Financial problems that youth associations and NGOs face are numerous and complex, and they create a difficult environment composed of an efficient management where quality and sustainability of the projects are compromised. The excessive administrative load diverts essential human resources from the main activities, while the incompatibility between grants and the high dependency on the public administration weakens financial stability in a long-term.

We propose some actions that can change this situation from simplifying administrative processes, increase the flexibility in the grants combinations, promote diversification in fundraising and improve pay and reimbursements systems.



**Co-funded by  
the European Union**



# Most Popular Mistakes When Applying for Financing (for NGOs) and How to Avoid Them

Securing financing is a critical aspect for Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), enabling them to implement their projects and achieve their goals. However, many NGOs make common mistakes during the funding application process that can jeopardize their chances of success. Therefore, we will try to point out the most common mistakes made and tips and tricks on how to avoid them.

Firstly, some proposals written by NGOs can be unclear or write vague project objectives, or poorly define the budget for the project. This means that stockholders might not be able to measure the outcome of the projects or understand its impact and what they can benefit from invest. This can be avoided by establishing SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-bound) objectives, that can help NGOs using concrete numbers, such as how many people you aim to impact, the timeline for achieving results, and the specific outcomes you expect. Regarding budgeting right, NGOs should detail and realistic budget that accounts for all project costs, including administrative expenses. Ensure the budget is transparent and easy to understand. Always justify each expense and explain why it is necessary for achieving the project's goals. Other problems are related with providing inconsistent or incomplete documentation, or applying for fundings that are not correctly aligned with your project. Be sure, when applying, that you have a checklist of needed documents and that your proposal clearly demonstrates how your project aligns with the investor's objectives and tailor your application to show how it addresses them.

Continuing, proposals also face some problem when it comes to inadequate monitoring and evaluation plan of the project, which is connected to fail to prove your organizational capacity to implement. NGOs often neglect to include a robust monitoring and evaluation plan, leaving donors uncertain about how project outcomes will be tracked and measured. Have in mind that they want to be confident that NGOs has the capacity to successfully implement the project. NGOs can avoid these mistakes by developing a plan that explicit demonstrates how to measure the success of project. Some good ideas include design timelines, how to collect data and how to do a good report: showing that you have a plan for ongoing assessment increases your credibility and transparency.



Co-funded by  
the European Union



It is also important to bare in mind that a project is a long-term compromise and require commitment, so failing to demonstrate sustainability is a common mistake. When applying for funding, always highlight the long run of the project, since investors and grants always appreciate to know how how the initiative will continue to benefit the community after the funding period ends, whether through local partnerships, income-generating activities, or additional funding streams.

With this in mind, submitting applications at the last minute often leads to mistakes, missing information, or a lack of thoughtful preparation, which is also a common mistake. We recommend you to start the application process early and give yourself enough time to gather the necessary information and documentation, and give some time to review your proposal properly.

By avoiding these common mistakes, NGOs not only increase their chances of securing financing but also build stronger, long-lasting relationships with donors. Careful planning, clarity, and professionalism will set you apart in a competitive field—start now, and position your NGO for success.



**Co-funded by  
the European Union**



# How to build a great public image?

Yani & Ursula

Public image refers to the way an individual, organisation, or brand is perceived by the general public. It encompasses the impressions, attitudes, and opinions that people have based on factors like behaviour, communication, actions, and media portrayal. Public image can be influenced by various elements such as reputation, media coverage, public relations efforts, and social media presence. For organisations or brands, it can involve how they are viewed in terms of trustworthiness, values, and overall impact. Managing and maintaining a positive public image is crucial, especially in a highly connected and opinion-driven world.

In the present, coherence as a value, is crucial for building trust, credibility, and a sense of reliability. People or organisations that are perceived as coherent are seen as authentic and dependable because their actions match their words, which fosters confidence and respect. Coherence also helps in decision-making and in maintaining a clear and consistent direction.

Our recommendation to build this value is to go into:

- Thoughtful actions
- Be consistent with our values
- Not working with partners who do not share our values
- Be transparent with our actions specially about finances
- Keeping our promises

Besides this, respect is another core value in an organisation. It aims to foster an environment of mutual respect. It is crucial for a harmonious and productive workplace. Respect for employees, customers or communities helps cultivate positive relationships and reinforces an image of an ethical, inclusive and caring organisation. To foster this value you can:

- Treat everyone with dignity, embrace diversity and inclusion
- Build an organisational culture where everyone feels valued.
- Show positive results from our efforts
- Show difficult actions that have overcome good failures
- Show real people and real stories
- Tell how our partners and sponsors benefit from working with us



Co-funded by  
the European Union



For the third core value we have empathy. It shows that an organisation understands and cares about the needs and emotions of its customers, employees and communities. It helps build stronger emotional connections.

To make this value stronger you can:

- Listen actively to feedback
- Show compassion in customer service
- Create policies that support work-life balance and employee wellbeing
- Looking for companies that have CSR programs
- Create a safe space for social dialogue base on needs and empathy
- Showing how our projects can help and change the communities and people participating
- Showing that our projects are local community supportive

To sum up, creating a great public image is crucial especially when you want to grow an integral NGOs and is a long-lasting and continuous learning process that you should develop.

Never stop it and never give up!



Co-funded by  
the European Union



ASSOCIAÇÃO  
**CHECK-IN**  
COOPERAÇÃO E DESENVOLVIMENTO



# What is important when preparing a workshop plan?

Workshops are an effective tool for promoting practical learning, sharing experiences, and developing skills. However, their success depends on careful planning that considers the campaign's objectives, target audience, and overall structure.

## 1. Defining objectives and purpose

Clearly defined objectives provide focus and direction, helping to structure both the content and logistics of the campaign. Moreover, the purpose of the workshop must meet the needs and expectations of the participants. For example, in a workshop designed to develop technical skills, adequate time should be allocated for practice and feedback.

It is also crucial to define the central idea of the workshop. This provides a guiding thread that connects all activities and discussions, resulting in a more consistent and effective experience for participants.

## 2. Defining the target audience

Tailoring content depends on a detailed analysis of the target audience. Factors such as age, knowledge level, area of interest, and expectations are key to adapting the language and delivery. Beginners may require more detailed explanations, while more experienced groups might benefit from deeper discussions.

## 3. Structuring the content

Planning an effective workshop requires clearly dividing it into three phases: introduction, development, and conclusion. The introduction should create a friendly atmosphere and introduce the workshop's main goal. Active activities can be used to encourage initial and intermediate interactions among participants.

The development phase is the most extensive and should be logically structured. To maintain interest and engagement, alternating theoretical explanations with practical exercises or discussions is recommended. Finally, the conclusion should summarize the key points, answer questions and encourage participants to reflect on how they can apply what they've learned to their personal context.



Co-funded by  
the European Union



ASSOCIAÇÃO  
**CHECK-IN**  
COOPERAÇÃO E DESENVOLVIMENTO



#### **4. The value of interactive activities**

Workshops are distinguished from other forms of training by their interactive nature. Practical activities, such as group exercises, discussions, or case studies, are key to consolidating learning as they allow participants to apply concepts to real-life situations.

#### **5. Logistics and resources**

Logistical organization is another important aspect of planning. This includes selecting a location, preparing materials, and ensuring that necessary equipment functions properly.

Participant engagement does not end after the event. A good plan includes follow-up strategies, such as organizing workshops for the local community. This post-event connection can enhance the experience and strengthen the relationship between organizers and attendees.

#### **6. Workshop debrief and next steps**

Planning is the foundation of a successful workshop. It ensures that the event is well-structured and enjoyable. Through clear objectives, interactive activities, and continuous evaluation, you can create an experience that not only informs participants but also inspires them to apply what they have learned to their lives and careers. Well-planned workshops can have a lasting impact, build valuable connections, and catalyze personal and professional transformation.



**Co-funded by  
the European Union**



# Where and how an NGO can receive funding for their initiatives?

Funding is crucial for any Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) to carry out its work and achieve its goals. Without enough money, it's difficult for NGOs to support their projects, help the communities they serve, and make a real impact.

We can distinguish several opportunities for funding for Non-Governmental-Organizations. In this article we will present for your NGO several opportunities that can be useful on your journey.

## Understanding European Union and its Funding Opportunities

The Erasmus+ Program offers several funding opportunities, and NGOs can apply for grants in the following key areas:

- **Youth Exchange:** Youth exchanges allow groups of young people from different countries to meet, live together and work on shared projects for short periods.

Youth exchanges take place outside the school environment. On a youth exchange, you can expect to participate in activities such as workshops, exercises, debates, role-plays, outdoor activities and more. Participants' learning experiences are recognised through a YouthPass. Youth exchanges last between 5 and 21 days excluding travel time.

- **Youth Worker Mobilities:** Under this Action organisations can receive support to carry out projects consisting of one or more learning activities for the professional development and capacity building of youth workers and their organisation.

This Action supports the professional development of youth workers and thereby the development of quality youth work at local, regional, national, European and international level, through non-formal and informal learning experiences in mobility activities. The Action contributes to the objectives of the EU Youth Strategy 2019-2027, particularly to the European Youth Work Agenda.



Co-funded by  
the European Union





- **Capacity Building:** projects are international cooperation projects based on multilateral partnerships between organisations active in the field of youth. The action aims to raise the capacity of organisations working with young people outside formal learning, promote non-formal learning activities in non-EU countries not associated to the Programme, especially targeting young people with fewer opportunities, to improve the level of competences and encourage young people's participation in society, support youth work in non-EU countries not associated to the Programme, improving its quality and recognition support new non-formal learning mobility, close gaps with formal education systems and/or the labour market.

Who can Apply ?

- NGOs (including European Youth NGOs and national Youth Councils) working in the field of youth
- local, regional or national public authorities.

**Strategic Partnerships:** These provide opportunities for a wide variety of public, private, and non-governmental organisations to implement a broad range of activities.

Depending on the objectives of the project, the participating organisations involved, or the expected impact, all projects (Cooperation Partnerships and Small-scale Partnerships) should be proportionally aimed at:

- increasing quality in the work, activities and practices of organisations and institutions involved, opening up to new actors, not naturally included within one sector
- building capacity of organisations to work transnationally and across sectors
- addressing common needs and priorities in the fields of education, training, youth and sport
- enabling transformation and change (at individual, organisational or sectoral level), leading to improvements and new approaches, in proportion to the context of each organisation

### 1. Local Governments funds for your community

Local government is providing financial support to organizations that usually operate on social, environmental, or community development issues, and the funding helps the NGO carry out its projects, such as providing services, organizing events, or addressing local needs. This collaboration can be a way for the government to support causes it may not directly manage or to encourage civic engagement and development. We must add that funds from the local governments are usually smaller than from the Erasmus Plus programme and sometimes will not cover all of the costs.



Co-funded by  
the European Union



Here are a few funding opportunities provided by local governments:

**Community Health Programs:** A local government might fund an NGO that provides healthcare services in underserved areas. For example, the government could support an NGO that runs vaccination campaigns or offers maternal health care in rural communities.

- **Environmental projects:** Local governments might fund NGOs focused on environmental protection, like a group that works to clean up local rivers or plant trees in urban areas to combat pollution. Moreover Environmental projects play a significant role in the Polish recovery plan after pandemic Covid 19 especially for Investment in Renewable Energy (RE): Projects that focus on building wind farms, solar power installations, biogas plants, and other renewable energy technologies.
- **Energy Efficiency Improvements:** Modernization of public and private buildings to improve energy efficiency, supporting energy-saving measures, and thermal renovation projects.

**Youth Programs:** A government could partner with an NGO that runs after-school programs or offers job training for young people, helping them develop skills and avoid delinquency.

Small grants and subsidies for non-governmental organizations:

Small grants and subsidies for non-governmental organizations (NGOs) are financial resources provided by the city council to support the activities, projects, and programs of NGOs that aim to address social, environmental, or community issues. These grants are typically smaller in scale compared to larger funding sources, and they are often designed to support specific initiatives or operational needs.



Co-funded by  
the European Union



# How to create an inviting social media ?

Valeria Rodríguez Pineda  
Soraya Álvarez Chahin.

In today's digital world, social media is a powerful tool for NGOs to spread their message, connect with supporters, and promote meaningful change.

However, creating an engaging social media presence requires more than just posting updates. This includes **strategic planning**, **engaging content** and **building a sense of community**. Here's how NGOs can create an engaging social media strategy that resonates with their audience.

Your NGO's social media presence should be a **reflection of its mission and values**. To achieve this, start by defining the purpose of your accounts. Do you want to raise awareness, showcase what you do, or attract volunteers? A **clear goal** will guide your content and engagement strategy. It is equally important to know your audience, so identify their demographics and interests in order to tailor your message and choose the right platforms. For example, younger audiences may prefer platforms like Instagram or TikTok, while you might find older audiences more on Facebook.

**Visual consistency** is key to making your NGO recognizable and memorable. Use your organization's logo, brand colors, and typography across all posts. **High-quality visuals**, whether professional photos or well-designed graphics, make your content stand out. Tools like Canva can be invaluable for creating visually appealing content. Use **infographics** to present data about your cause, share eye-catching images of your projects, and create professional-looking videos to tell impactful stories. A visually cohesive feed builds trust and leaves a lasting impression.

**Storytelling** is at the heart of successful NGO communication. Share authentic, human-centered stories that highlight the impact of your work. For example, post **testimonials**, showcase project results, or share the journey of your volunteers. People connect with stories, not statistics. Rather than saying "We provided 1,000 meals," frame the narrative around the life of a single person whose life was changed thanks to the organization. This personal approach makes your cause relatable and stirs intrigue, compelling followers to engage.



Co-funded by  
the European Union



Keeping your **content fresh and varied** is essential for retaining your audience's interest. Mix up your posts with success stories by highlighting milestones and achievements; behind-the-scenes content, showing how your team works and what goes into your projects; educational posts, such as statistics, infographics, and facts about your cause; volunteer spotlights. Combine **multimedia formats** like short videos, live streams, and carousel posts to keep your audience engaged. Platforms like Instagram and TikTok favour short, creative videos, while LinkedIn is better suited for concise updates or professional discussions.

**Engagement** is the lifeblood of a thriving social media presence. Reply to comments, answer direct messages, and thank your supporters regularly. Use **interactive tools** like polls, quizzes, and question stickers to involve your audience and gather feedback. Celebrate your community's contributions by tagging participants, volunteers, and partners in your posts. Acknowledge and appreciate their efforts publicly to foster loyalty and encourage others to join your cause. Engagement is a two-way road though, so don't forget to engage with other accounts to stay consistent and well-known among entities of the same sector.

People are more likely to support organizations they trust and the best way to build said trust is by being transparent. Regularly update your followers on how funds are being used, the progress of your projects, and the real-world impact of their contributions. Share reports, success metrics, and candid behind-the-scenes moments. **Authenticity matters**, so avoid overly polished or generic content. **Let your passion and dedication shine** through in every post.

Most social media platforms offer tools specifically designed for nonprofits. Facebook and Instagram, for example, have **donation buttons** and **fundraiser tools**. Use these to make it easy for your followers to support your cause directly. Additionally, consider running targeted ad campaigns to expand your reach and attract new supporters. Collaborate with influencers or partner organizations to amplify your message. Engaging in viral trends or celebrating important dates, such as Human Rights Day, can help you tap into broader conversations and reach new audiences.

Social media is ever-evolving, so regularly review your performance. Use platform analytics to track metrics like follower growth, engagement rates, and content reach. Experiment with different types of posts to see what resonates most with your audience. Pay attention to **feedback** and **adapt your strategies accordingly**.

Social media success is a continuous process of learning and improvement.



Co-funded by  
the European Union



# What is Identity in an NGO?

The identity of a non-governmental organization (NGO) is the way they act and present to the world: Who are we, what do we do, and why do we do it? It's based on their clear purpose, values, and way of working. It's what makes people trust it, support it, and want to work with it.

The elements that create an identity are their why: their mission; their core values or ethical principles; their how: around the core values; the visual identity that makes them recognizable, their actions, communication style and context.

The mission is the core idea of the NGO. It's the way they contribute to the world centering on some purpose. They aim for a better world, for example in a greener future or a healthier world for everyone, more youth opportunities and helping in general causes that are more looked over by the government.

The values are really important for an NGO, as it is the way they work, and reflect their mission. That's the personal brand of the NGO. It's what sets them apart and makes them valuable.

Whereas the public image corresponds to the way they present: the logo, name or communication style. Every little detail about how they present to the world, from the colors they choose to the personal they employ to their presence on social media affects the outer and inner working of the organization, attracting some type of people.

The projects have to be cohesive to align also with the interest of the business that support the company, as actions and achievements will be both important for the image of both organizations. Clients and patrons, business and social politics get intertwined in the inner working of a NGO.



Co-funded by  
the European Union



The relationship with the communities should be close, participating in local commerce and cultural life. By collaborating with local business, they support their surroundings and build a recognizable identity, that is so important to make up trust, be recognizable and act as a force of their own. Without a solid personal brand, a public image or a good connection with the community the NGO will fade into the background. With the right assets the organization will turn into one company that is respected and recognizable, really trustworthy because it seems like it genuinely cares about its mission.

The identity of the organization it's what makes them get noticed and stand out from the others, becoming a referent and attracting people who want to help, building a net of volunteers, sponsors, or donors, and contributing to the community.



Co-funded by  
the European Union





Co-funded by  
the European Union



ASSOCIAÇÃO  
**CHECK-IN**  
COOPERAÇÃO E DESENVOLVIMENTO

