

Call for Proposals: “IT Akadeemia” Programme Development Projects

1. Enhancing the quality of curricula in ICT for higher education institutions

Purpose

To increase the international competitiveness of higher education in the field of ICT by enhancing the quality of instruction, supporting the implementation of innovative solutions and promoting cooperation between universities and industry in research, development and innovation activities (RDI).

Target group

Higher education institutions offering curricula in the field of ICT. For the list of curricula, see Annex 1. Projects relating to curricula funded by “IT Akadeemia” programme on the basis of a targeted financing agreement (for the list of such programmes, see Annex 2) are not eligible to apply for funding under this Call.

Terms and conditions

- The project must be sustainable and its broader aim must be to enhance the quality of ICT education at university level.
- The project period is the period of time during which the project is carried out, as indicated in the grant application. Eligible costs and activities include project-related costs and activities incurred or performed as from 1 January 2017. The final date of the project is the final date of the activities and costs required for carrying out the project, which cannot be later than 31 July 2018.
- The maximum rate of funding is 70% of the total costs of the project.
- The maximum amount of funding is EUR 75 000.
- In case of a project planned as a follow-up project, the links with previous projects need to be specified.
- Overhead rate maximum 20% of total costs of the project is eligible.
- Curriculum development projects must include activities related to the development of learning materials and making them available for students.
- If several proposals are submitted from a higher education institution, the institution must rank the proposals in order of priority.
- The funding will be paid to the successful applicants in two parts: 80% of the grant upfront after signing the targeted financing agreement and 20% after the final report of the project has been approved by HITSA.
- The project proposals are submitted through <https://konkursiveeb.hitsa.ee/>
- Funding decisions will be made within 1 month of the submission deadline.
- The Board of Experts may decide to award partial grants.
- If a recipient of the grant receives funding from other sources and wishes to use this funding instead of the “IT Akadeemia” programme grant, they must immediately inform HITSA thereof.
- Grant recipients must comply with reporting requirements.

Application procedure

The applicant should submit a project proposal including the project description and the budget. The project description and the budget should be signed digitally in one document container by the project owner and a person entitled to represent the higher education institution, who confirms the availability of own funds on behalf of the institution.

Requirements for the project description

The project description should include information about the following:

- the aim of the project;
- the project period (starting and final date), a detailed schedule;
- the curricula related to the project;
- a rationale for the implementation of the project and a description of the current state of teaching, including reference to related analyzes and strategies and to problems needed to be solved in the area;
- change brought about by the project and its sustainability; indicators of project performance, including the number of students benefiting from the project;
- impact on the quality of instruction;
- core activities during the project;
- members of the project team (name, profession, role in the project);
- partners (incl from abroad) and their contribution (in terms of funds, knowledge, activities, administration, etc) with the data of the partner's contact person.

Requirements for the project budget

- The budget should reflect the total project costs with own contribution indicated separately and co-funding if available.
- Funding from the EU Structural Funds and from other programmes/projects does not qualify as own contribution.
- The budget must be submitted as a separate document in a spreadsheet format (eg MS Excel, LibreOffice Calc).
- The budget must be as accurate as possible.
- The budget must show a breakdown by type of expenditure: staff costs, travel costs, equipment costs, cost of materials, software costs.
- Transfers between types of expenditure are permitted up to 20% of the types of expenditure. Expenditures exceeding the total grant amount will not be compensated.

Award criteria

- Preference will be given to projects creating long-term value and aimed at quality enhancement and modernisation of teaching and learning at undergraduate or postgraduate level or in professional higher education.
- Preference will be given to projects with a greater impact and with a clearly defined plan of action for ensuring the sustainability of the project.
- Preference will be given to projects involving cooperation between several higher education institutions (in Estonia or abroad) and targeting a wider group of students.
- Preference will be given to projects involving industry.

Accounting and reporting requirements

- Grant recipients are obliged to account for the project costs so that these costs are kept clearly separate from other expenditures, by maintaining a separate account for the project.
- A quarterly financial report on expenditures (on accrual basis) is submitted by the date set out in the targeted financing agreement, with the expenditures proven by an extract from the ledger.
- One or more interim reports and a final report on project activities will be submitted by dates set out in the targeted financing agreement.
- The interim report should include at least the following:
 - information showing that the project has been started;
 - information about the core activities implemented by the interim report deadline;
 - project costs, reflecting both the budgeted and actual costs.

- The final report will be submitted within 1 month of the scheduled final date of the project.
- The final report should include at least the following:
 - whether the project objectives have been achieved;
 - overview of project performance;
 - change achieved as a result of the project and its sustainability;
 - information about the core activities implemented during the project;
 - project costs, reflecting both the budgeted and actual costs.

Time schedule

Proposal submission deadline: 9 January 2017

Evaluation of proposals by the Board of Experts: within one month of submission.

Informing the applicants of funding decisions: within a week of the approval of the decision.

Signing agreements with grant recipients: within two weeks of the approval of the decision.

Implementation period: by the date indicated in the proposal but not later than 31 July 2018.