

"A Partnership for Youth" Network: Yearly Statutory Meeting

Format: Roundtable

Topic: Inclusive funding instruments for youth organisations

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Minutes

What is inclusive in existing funding instruments of the Erasmus+ programme?

- Several trainings and info-days at local, national and EU level
- Detailed feedback for project applications (although not a universal practice)
- A lot of openly accessible resources for supporting project writing
- Accessibility of funds to new organisations without a prerequisite as to their size or to years of experience.
- Very helpful when national agencies give counselling to proposals (as it is the case in Malta and in Serbia, for certain actions)
- High level of transparency about the people working in the NA and their roles
- Much appreciated when National Agencies members take initiative to support organisations (e.g. help the to meet deadlines by speeding up the accreditation process)
- SALTO trainings important source of tools and skills.
- Regional offices of NAs was a particularly helpful practice whenever it was applied.
- Efforts to "de-complex" questions are helpful and need to be repeated

What is not inclusive in existing funding instruments of the Erasmus+ programme?

- Complicated forms that give the feeling that the same question are repeated or that questions are not formulated clear enough, so applicants can see the difference
- It is surprising that so many resources are invested in trainings where the item is just questions and answers.
- New programme (2022) excludes CSOs from the policy field to a very large extend
- Centrally managed application forms are more complex, thus, less inclusive.
- Success is mostly related to resilience and persistence of organisations to work on an application, not ideas or energy
- Structure of the applications should be characterised by continuity (in style, length, structure)
- Not enough feedback in most cases
- Projects of similar rationale are recycled. Why not have operational funding instead of recycling resources in different projects?
- Rural areas do not have access to project management culture/professional support. For certain areas, the project management concept is unknown.

- Efforts of newcomers are not fostered and they are not encouraged to retry so they often give up.
- Innovation is not a panacea. Many times it does not support inclusion as it does not guarantee that practices are absorbed by the bulk of youngsters before moving on.
- Truly radical and innovative thinking usually does not fare well in evaluations.
- Innovative results are not utilised or supported. Just buried in a website forever.
- Terminology is not inclusive: managerial jargon is preferred to social sciences terms.

How could we influence the funding allocation?

- Explain better about operational funding and its advantages to other organisations.
- Operational grants are too high in some respects. Small funds for small organisations could support the development of the sector.
- Spread the word about available funds to newer organisations and informal groups. That could be a benefit for all organisations.
- Are there official structures within the institutions where youth organisations can be involved the EC decision every year's Erasmus+ annual work plans? Do we know who the experts are and how we could contact them? Can we consult them?
- Stronger if coming together to advocacy actions. Connect with other youth organisations. Discuss their struggles. Not necessarily advocacy or campaigns. Find out what motivates people in the organisations. Emphasise the change potential, not the money reallocation.
- You should know names! (not institutions necessarily). They might be lower in hierarchy but be effective in influencing aspects of the programmes.
- We should consider what policy makers will make of a change. Our asks should be smart. Why do they care? Find the politicians who will support. They care for being re-elected. Showcase our work and why it is important and relevant to "their political priorities".
- Connect with organisations advocating already (e.g. the Good Lobby).
- Connect across sectors of Erasmus+ funding (education, training, sports)
- Trainings to potential activists. A set of tools available for them.
- Check who will be committed and in which way. Create some accountability mechanism among partners/allies/network members

How do inclusive funding instruments could look like? In terms of values and structures/institutions?

- Example of the Polish-German agency way that does not reject application but discusses ways to improve them with the applicants.
- Small OG for smaller organisation. Tier system. Every higher tier could connect with a smaller organisation promoting cooperation rather than competition.
- Renew financing without a new application (similar to FPA model).
- Resources relocation from countries that do not use their full budget. First step to establish what exactly happens with these funds.
- Accreditation in KA1 is a way for simplifying the way of funding and support medium and larger organisation. Proper compensation should be provided for newcomers. Otherwise, the accreditation would be disconnected with youth work in the field that is consisted mostly by small-size actors.
- The public sphere where CSOs operate are not only for fulfilling needs but for broadening space and for creating/imagining new ways to coexist.