

GUIDELINES

Call for Applications for Applied Science Small Grant Scheme

1. GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT THE PROJECT AND OVERALL OBJECTIVE

The project Higher Education Research and Applied Science Plus (HERAS+) aims at a more competitive and diversified public higher education and research sector in Kosovo in line with the European Higher Education Area (EHEA), European Research Area (ERA) and Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) 4 and 9 related to quality assurance, economy and labour market relevance, international cooperation and the Social Dimension of higher education. It contributes to a higher education and research system in Kosovo that is better governed, more international, coherent, effective and efficient, fostering students' employability and the third mission of universities.

The three-year project "HERAS+ – Higher Education, Research and Applied Science Plus" is being implemented from June 2020 – May 2023. The project is funded by the Austrian Development Agency (ADA), and co-financed by the Ministry of Education, Science, Technology and Innovation of Kosovo (MESTI). HERAS Plus is implemented by a highly experienced Austrian consortium represented by World University Service Austria (WUS Austria, lead partner), the Center for Social Innovation (ZSI) and the Austrian Agency for International Mobility and Cooperation in Education, Science and Research (OeAD).

2. APPLIED STUDY PROGRAMMES IN KOSOVO

Education has always been considered one of the cornerstones of international development. Building human capacities has proven a useful tool in mitigating global inequalities. The HERAS Plus project supports the modernization of the educational sector by developing and improving education policies, systems and institutions in Kosovo, to help to improve the educational landscape. Building the capacities of Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) and human capacities provides students with an education that is more aligned to the needs of the labour market and society. It better prepares them

to tackle the challenges of the modern world.

Applied approaches in education and training focus on the development of personal skills and qualities so that people of all ages gain knowledge and understanding of the way in which the economy works and reacts to market forces. This involves approaches to the development of creativity, problem solving, team working, taking calculated risks, communication skills, leadership, decision taking, time management, taking responsibility and other individual skills which can lead to improved employment prospects. Applied study programmes also identify the role of the entrepreneur in society and the various requirements of self-employment.

In the framework of the HERAS Plus Project efforts are made to motivate the public higher education institutions (HEIs), students and civil society organizations (CSOs), to increase the use of applied science approaches in higher education in Kosovo. In this context, the project will provide seed funding in the form of small grants with the aim to promoting the applied study programme approaches. The Applied Science Small Grant Scheme is designed based on the successful practice of the previous project HERAS.

With this call HERAS Plus project plans to finance up to 10 small projects to foster the implementation or promotion of applied study programme approaches. Selected project will be granted 1,500 Euro.

2.1. THEMATIC AREAS OF THIS CALL

This grant scheme aims to foster the implementation or promotion of applied study programme approaches in the frame of existing curricula, revision of existing or development of new curricula with an applied approach, development of professional skills, and improvement of communication between academics and entrepreneurs, and at institutional level between Higher Education Institutions and enterprises.

The types of activities for fostering the implementation, or promotion, of applied study programme approaches, which may be funded under this call for proposals, include (**list is non-exhaustive**):

- Carrying out needs analyses, studies, surveys, publications, etc. on issues related to the implementation or promotion of applied study programme approaches;
- Carrying out activities that aim to raise awareness on matters such as labour market relevance of curricula at the institution/faculty/department, employability of graduates, career paths etc.;
- Organizing conferences, trainings, seminars, round tables, regional meetings, information campaigns, on the topics related to promotion, and/or implementation of applied study programme approaches for relevant stakeholders;
- Setting up networks to connect public universities in Kosovo, entrepreneurs and students;

- Carrying out activities that lead to development and exchange of good practices;
- Supporting individual or joint applied master theses, seminar papers, etc.;
- Organizing events such as job fairs and innovation competitions;
- Supporting the engagement of advanced students as junior consultants in the business sector;
- Carrying out activities with students in the frame of current study programmes to foster linking study programmes with working environments (excursions/field trips e.g., to potential workplaces, joint projects with enterprises, research for bachelor/master thesis that is related to a real case at a company, exhibition of project work, etc.);
- Developing business projects between students and entrepreneurs;
- Integrating internships or work placements into study programmes (e.g., with mentorship);
- Developing new curricula in partnership with industry, expanding the role of stakeholders in curriculum;
- Developing training courses and training packages for teaching staff on the topic of the implementation or promotion of applied study programme approaches;
- Capacity development activities to support, mobilize and engage stakeholders;
- Promoting interdisciplinary courses, involving external partners as (guest) lecturers;
- Other activities related to the implementation or promotion of applied study programme approaches.

2.2. ELIGIBILITY

The following institutions and persons are eligible for applications under this call:

- **Staff (administrative, academic or management staff**, holding a permanent or temporary contract with the respective higher education institution is considered a member of staff) **at public university**
- **Students registered at a public university in Kosovo**
- **Civil Society Organizations**

2.3. BUDGET / FINANCED COST AND PROJECT DURATION

The requested small grant should **not exceed the amount of 1,500 Euro**, accounting for a project period of **6 months**.

The following costs are eligible:

- Staff costs (based on fee invoices)
- Travel costs
- Costs for printing and publications
- Costs for events (e.g., food/drinks, rent etc.)
- Other costs (e.g., translations, office supplies, communication costs)

Please note that only costs documented by invoices can be considered eligible.

Information on reporting requirements, funding modalities and visibility guidelines for dissemination will be shared with grantees once the selection process is finalized.

3. EVALUATION CRITERIA AND SUBMISSION OF APPLICATIONS

3.1 EVALUATION CRITERIA

Applications will be assessed based on the following criteria: (1) project design and substantive quality, (2) project management, (3) dissemination and sustainability, and (4) cost efficiency. The evaluation criteria listed below should assist both, the applicants writing the project proposals and the selection committee as an evaluation guideline.

Thematic and/or organizational dimensions	Specification / Description Evaluation grid
1. Project design and substantive quality (problem-oriented, relevant)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Are the objectives clear? – Are the proposed activities chosen and designed in a way that enables reaching these objectives? – Is applied approach integrated in the project design?
2. Project management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Is the application, including time plan and budget, realistic and well elaborated?
3. Dissemination and sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – What is planned to disseminate information about the project? – What will be done to ensure sustainability of the project?
4. Cost-efficiency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Is the budget cost-efficient?

3.2. SUBMISSION OF APPLICATIONS

All documents required for submission have to be in English and have to be submitted via E-mail to donjeta.ibra@wus-austria.org until 01 May 2022

Required documents
Signed application form*
Short CVs of contact person and further team members
For CSOs only: Certificate of registration Certificate of fiscal number

* For applications by institutions, the application form needs to be signed by the legal representative. For applications by a group of students, the application needs to be signed by the designated contact person.

Do not send any other documents apart from those required. Any additional material will not be considered.

Deadline for submission of applications: 01 May 2022

3.3 TIMETABLE

Activity	Deadline
Call for proposals	28 March 2022
Deadline for submissions	01 May 2022 (<i>extended for two weeks from initial deadline, now being 15 May 2022</i>)
Pre-screening of applications against formal criteria	May 2022
Selection Committee Meeting	June 2022
Information and contracting	June-July 2022
Start of small projects	September 2022
Mid-term report (including financial report) by grantees	Two weeks after the first half of project implementation
Final project report (including financial report) by beneficiaries	Two weeks after the end of the implementation of the project.

The Grant Scheme for seed funding will be announced on the HERAS Plus project website, and the website of WUS Austria.

There will be an information session to further disseminate the content about this call. Interested groups of students as well as institutions will be invited to attend. Details will be communicated.

4. SELECTION PROCEDURE

1) WUS Austria will check the formal eligibility of the applications:

- complete and correct applications and documents
- eligibility criteria
- timeframe and budget

2) Final decision by the Selection Committee (based on the result of the score)

The Selection Committee will aim at reaching a balanced portfolio of grants, taking into account the objectives of the call and the quality of the applications.

The Selection Committee will formally approve the decisions and advice WUS Austria to start the contracting process.

During the implementation period, the selected applicants will be also expected to participate in the following event:

- Initial workshop for grantees (introduction of projects to all grantees, guidance on reporting & project implementation)

Aspects that may be decisive when a choice between equally scored applications needs to be made:

- Extent to which the project aims to support (groups of) persons that are particularly vulnerable (belonging to more than one of these categories - e.g., women from minority communities, persons with disabilities from lower socio-economic backgrounds etc.).