



HORIZONT PROCONSULT LTD



Funded by the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union

CALL FOR PARTNERS

“Stairway to quality in VET”

Erasmus+

CAPACITY BUILDING in the field of VET

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2022

THE PROPOSAL

1. The project rationale

Erasmus+ Program offers a range of opportunities for competences improvement of vocational students. Nevertheless, those opportunities seem to be underexplored in many countries and schools often pay consequent amounts of money for consultancies in order to develop Erasmus+ Mobility Projects.

Horizont ProConsult is an entity supporting excellence in education, specifically in the VET field, by the development of learning programs for work based learning practices for students from vocational schools. Together with other organizations actively involved in the VET sector, Horizont ProConsult prepares materials that help vocational schools to develop work based learning practices for their students abroad thanks to the opportunities offered by the Erasmus+ program.

Regardless of the already expertise offered several vocational institutes and educational institutions often request for guidelines and support in the development and implementation of international apprenticeships and work based learning practices for their students. However, the capacities of their actions remain limited because of lack of appropriate training of the human resources, limited time for preparation of proposals, as well difficulties in partner finding. Such professional guidance and counselling as well action plans are considered as highly necessary in different VET realities and a lack of such opportunities is declared.

According to the European Training foundation, current initiatives are targeting specific areas of interest for both the EU and the Western Balkans. These include strengthening the rule of law, reinforcing engagement on security and migration, enhancing support for socio-economic development, increasing transport and energy connectivity, initiatives for a digital agenda and supporting reconciliation and good neighbourly relations. The co-operation with Turkey continues, following the policy dialogue with the Commission.

Despite good economic recovery in the region, the labour market situation remains challenging, with a slow pace of job creation and joblessness remaining high, in particular among young people and women. Educational policy which responds to the demands of inclusive economies in the region remains an important priority, as does cooperation between vocational education and training and the private sector.

On the other hand, after observing the data of the stagnating youth unemployment tendency in Europe, as well given the COVID-19 situation, the project idea arises as urgent since a severe lack of vocational competences in accordance with the real needs of the labor market is being detected. Moreover, problems related to skills mismatch are also identified, therefore dual education and work based learning practices have to be urgently tackled as priorities in this project and generally in the European continent.

Therefore, the current partnership aims at offering expertise and innovation in terms of reinforcing the links between the VET system and labour market by providing a structured plan for capacity development of VET entities for operate quality work based learning practices. The project shall as well increase the capacities of VET providers especially in the fields of apprenticeship schemes management, quality assurance, innovation and internationalisation. Thus, it seeks to provoke a long term impact for securing a positive future for the young people living in the Western Balkan countries.

The project idea is to offer quality expertise in the field of VET for enabling educational entities and vocational schools to get regularly engaged their students in **apprenticeship schemes** and to be able to offer to **vocational learners the opportunity to undergo WBL practices at national level and abroad. The project will serve to bridge the** formal education and labor market sectors, contributing to the creation of long term multi-level cross-sectorial networking and cooperation.

The following project objectives have been specified in view of bringing positive solutions to the described situation:

- To build up competences of educational staff to develop and implement WBL practices nationally and internationally
- To create strategies that promote the work based learning activities for vocational learners as a complementary educational paths in order to boost employability of young people
- To foster cooperation exchange of knowledge and capacity development in the field of work based learning and international mobility in the VET field between the schools and private sector representatives in view of building up strategic settings for developing vocational education and work based learning
- To provide VET providers with guidance and tools for designing and implementing WBL schemes, so to stimulate learning other than formal educational means and especially through direct involvement in working practical assignments and activities
- To create conditions and support the development of cross-sectorial networking in the VET field between the different regions
- To encourage the development of a multilevel cross-sectorial system that concretely fosters learning
- To create links and reinforce synergies between formal and non formal educational sectors, as well as labour market, so as to set up a favouring environment for cross-sectorial cooperation in view of enhancing youth employability through Vocational education and training

The project will combine various activities including international exchange of expertise and best practices for staff members of VET schools as direct target groups. It will involve 8 partner institutions from 6 countries including representatives of Western Balkan area. By aggregating their expertise, knowledge and competencies, a powerful insight and constellation of resources will be procured, since the project will work on a trans-national issue, which needs to be addressed not only on national but also at PAN - European level.

As a result, the project is expected to contribute to the development of a wider knowledge-based societies as it will develop opportunities for future work solutions, thanks to the opportunities to be proposed. It will stimulate the better integration of VET learners in the labour market by the engagement in sustainable learning paths, etc.

The project will operate a steady multi-stakeholder partnership and will deliver added value at international level at three performance areas:

- Network building
- Fostering mutual learning between Western Balkan and EU VET representatives and harmonisation of the mutual cooperation between them
- Pooling international resources to provide for greater scope and outreach of the results achieved

Partners consider that the project results on a long run will achieve strong and visible positive impact. Sharing the knowledge will allow partners to translate the results into new models and guidelines appropriate for their local realities. The project will encourage cross-sectorial partnership and cooperation at international level, by linking experienced VET providers with VET schools and educational institutions, in view of operating quality improvements in the fields of VET.

2. ACTIVITIES

The activities foreseen in the 24 -month's project are divided in the following phases:

ELEMENT	DATE	VENUE
Project launch and preparation period	01/10/2022	
Kick off meeting	November 2022	SOFIA, BULGARIA

Development and release of intellectual outputs (Handbook on Work based learning schemes implementation)	December 2022 – April 2023	All countries
Selection of participants	January - March 2023	All countries
Joint staff Training seminar regarding building up competences and expertise of teachers in terms of quality implementation of WBL schemes	April 2023	Bologna, Italy
Local work phase – specific meetings with VET trainers and specialists in the schools Raising awareness about WBL opportunities	May 2023 – June 2023	All countries
Local work phase – WBL schemes design and implementation	June 2023- May 2024	All countries
Mid-term evaluation meeting	December 2023	Zaragoza, Spain
Online platform development	December 2023 – April 2024	
Establishment of international network of VET professionals supporting WBL schemes implementation	December 2023 – April 2024	All countries
Dissemination activities	March 2024 – Sept 2024	All countries and online
Final evaluation meeting	Sept 2024	To be confirmed
Project closure	30/09/2024	

3. BENEFITS FOR YOUR ORGANIZATION

Participating in this project will allow your organization to:

- Increase its working capacity and quality of the actions thanks to new expertise which will be gained by staff members
- Better expertise and competency to support the development of VET sector thanks to exchange of best practices which will be operated
- Developing quality standard framework for involving youth in apprenticeship schemes through European project design and implementation
- Possibility to set up and run local VET schools consortiums and act as equal partners of relevant VET institutions by promoting learning opportunities at international level
- Become part of an international network, increasing its potential collaborators working for support the creation of empowering WBL environment

- Strengthened collaborations at EU level with organizations operating in various fields

4. HOW TO PARTICIPATE

To be a partner in this project you need to be an institution dealing with Vocational education and training **particularly from Western Balkans**, and to be able to involve staff members interested in working for the creation of opportunities for WBL in your community. Specifically, it is needed to be able to engage vocational schools as associated partners and stakeholders in this project, who could be interested to cooperate and operate educational activities for staff and teachers. You need to have a close cooperation with such entities promoting vocational education and be able to support and guide them in the establishment of consortiums, WBL and apprenticeship schemes design and working for the optimisation of the WBL opportunities across borders and within diverse pathways.

For the future success of this project is crucial that each partner will be able to support the local work of the involved staff members/teachers and invest efforts in supporting the process of the creation of favouring WBL environment for achieving the project aims.

The vocational schools involved shall be able to send 4 teachers/ members of educational staff in the educational mobilities of the project, in view of gaining expertise on how to design and implement EU projects.

All partners need to be registered in the URF portal and to have a PIC code. The steps to fulfil to be chosen as partners are the following:

All partners need to be **registered** in the **URF portal** and to have an **OID number**.

The steps to fulfil to be chosen as partners are the following:

№	ACTIVITY	DUE DATE
1	Confirm us via mail your interest to be partner by sending your <i>Partner Identification Form</i>	08/03/2022
2	We will contact you back with the rest of the documents to be signed	12/03/2022

5. CONTACT US

If you need further information do not hesitate to contact us at horizont.proconsult@gmail.com

We will welcome your requests regarding this project and will gladly provide you with the needed information

Our team is looking forward to hearing from you!