

Erasmus Policy Statement (Overall Strategy)

Please describe your institution's international (EU and non-EU) strategy. In your description, please explain a) how you choose your partners, b) in which geographical area(s) and c) the most important objectives and target groups of your mobility activities (with regard to staff and students in first, second and third cycles, including study and training, and short cycles). If applicable, also explain how your institution participates in the development of double/multiple/joint degrees.

The mission statement of STING ACADEMY underlines its devotion to the pursuit and application of knowledge for the economic, scientific and technological development of society through achievements in teaching, research and community service at the highest international standards. The development strategy of STING ACADEMY includes the goal of internationalisation of academic life by facilitating and nurturing cooperation with academic, scientific, and economic structures, both nationally and internationally. The academy's primary mission is to become an integral part of the global community of higher educational institutions. We believe in the importance of effective research and the role of educational networks in sharing experiences with other European institutions committed to the same challenging mission. Therefore, with the specific goal of creating opportunities for exchange and collaboration in European contexts, STING ACADEMY intends to participate in many European organizations and programmes. Many of its academics have already submitted a number of initial project ideas, have been involved in research proposals, attended various national and international meetings for these programmes, and established international connections with partners in Slovakia, Poland, Ukraine, Russia, Latvia, the United Kingdom and Italy.

Erasmus partnerships will be based on already working relationships with the reliability, in terms of both formal accreditation and reputation, and determination to carry out cooperative projects under the programme. Special attention is paid to the quality of teaching and research, especially the effect of research and cooperation on training offers and the subjects taught as part of them. With regards to the choice of partners' main geographical areas, no priority will be given to particular countries or continents. Instead, the primary concern will be the above-listed issues and characteristics. STING ACADEMY finds it extremely important and valuable to cooperate closely with academic institutions across Europe, particularly those located in neighbouring countries. STING ACADEMY would like to see greater participation in international mobility, because the overall aim of the academy's Internationalisation Strategy is to prepare its students for life in a multicultural and informational society, thus enhancing their employment prospects.

We would like to offer all of our students the opportunity to gain international experience, regardless of their cycle and field of study. Cooperation with certain HEIs across Europe will be mutually beneficial. We also encourage teaching staff mobility, especially those academics who have not yet had the opportunity to lecture at partner universities and exchange ideas and good practices. We strongly believe that cooperating with institutions from both EU and non-EU countries will open up new opportunities for both studies and traineeships in enterprises. However, it is nonetheless important to cultivate our existing relationships with our already proven partners.

Our main goals for 2014–2020 period are threefold: i) to increase the number of incoming and outgoing students, ii) to increase the number of partner universities, and iii) to increase and improve the partnerships between STING ACADEMY and enterprises, thus enabling students to gain work experience during their studies. We encourage our 1st and 2nd cycle students to spend part of their study period abroad to further their international involvement. Academic staff mobility initiatives are a strategic goal, as these support research connections and contribute toward the international sharing of knowledge and expertise. Furthermore, we invite visiting lecturers to teach at STING ACADEMY, because this enables students who choose not to study abroad to still become familiar with the international dimension of the curriculum.

If applicable, please describe your institution's strategy for the organisation and implementation of international (EU and non-EU) cooperation projects within the framework of the Erasmus+ Programme

STING ACADEMY attaches great importance to research and innovation in line with the Europe 2020 goals for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth in a knowledge-based economy. We believe that building strategic partnerships and knowledge alliances enable sustained collaborations with universities and innovative enterprises, both within Europe and outside Europe, and this is the best way to increase the number of international cooperation projects that will bring mutual benefits to both project partners in terms of modernization and internationalization. We have developed a process to ensure that international cooperation projects in teaching and research will receive financial, administrative and technical support at the development and implementation stages. The International Relations Office (IRO) plays a crucial role in following and evaluating the implementation of this action plan. The IRO is dedicated to offering—in cooperation with other departments, especially the PR department—the following information and services to both students and staff:

- Organising application procedures and planning, implementing and developing international activities;
- Disseminating information about EU programmes and cultural exchange agreements and compiling/publishing informational booklets on studies abroad;
- Allocating funds for instruction given in foreign languages;
- Allocating grants for studies abroad;
- Coordinating the ECTS implementation and providing information concerning credits;
- Planning activities, in cooperation with the Student Club, to facilitate the integration of international students and staff; and
- Cooperating with conference organisers.

Please explain the expected impact of your participation in the Erasmus+ Programme on the modernisation of your institution. Please refer to each of the 5 priorities of the Modernisation Agenda 2 and explain which are the policy objectives you intend to pursue.

Priority 1) Increasing attainment levels to provide the graduates and researchers Europe needs

The effects of participating in the programme on the modernisation of STING ACADEMY are expected to be felt in the areas of innovation and research, which play a key role in the personal development and growth of students and teaching staff. Students and teachers will be offered the opportunity to take part in bilateral and EU projects with other students and staff in both EU and non-EU partner institutions. The participation will result in research skills that are tested in an international environment, which could then be implemented in businesses and other organizations within the EU.

Priority 2) Improving the quality and relevance of higher education

Through mobility, new teaching approaches and methods will be developed. Partner HEIs will be able to put together more attractive courses, and many students will acquire more relevant, better quality degree and they will also benefit from increased research and innovation. Our graduates will be better equipped with the knowledge and basic transferable competences they will need to be successful in highly skilled occupations.

Priority 3) Strengthening quality through mobility and cross-border cooperation

Quality will be improved due to the international cooperation and sharing of best practices and procedures within partnerships. All partners will learn from each other and introduce new procedures that will enhance quality as a result of the partnership.

Priority 4) Linking higher education, research and business for excellence and regional development

Strategic partnerships in multiple fields allow us to link our initiatives and generate improvement ideas for organisations in other fields, as well as enabling links to be formed with employers and industry through Erasmus+. The impact of this is to provide new progression routes for our students, and these could then be followed up in-country using a similar mechanism to that developed by the project. The ultimate impact will be a higher rate of positive destinations for our students and enhanced skills for our staff.

Priority 5) Improving governance and funding

The transfer of knowledge and interactive relationships with the economic subjects, in line with sustainable development through the implementation of modern technology in higher education, requires the development and strengthening of financial resources. These will be provided by the projects realized through cooperation with the business sector and European programmes for mobility, as well as by scientific and professional European projects formed by cooperating with existing and future bilateral partners, both European and non-European.