

## A. Background information

### 1. Project background

The current project – European Higher Education Fairs in Central Asia and Asia – is being implemented during 2014-16 by the SICI Dominus consortium on behalf of the European Commission's DG DEVCO. The project has two core objectives:

- To promote study opportunities in the European Union to students in Asia and Central Asia
- To promote and higher-education cooperation between the EU and the countries of Asia and Central Asia

### 2. Background to Call for Applications

- Participation of higher-education institutions in the Fairs organised by this EHEF project is provided free-of-charge, i.e. no fee is payable for the booths.
- The Call for Applications is used in order to select exhibitors on the basis of the quality of applications and the motivation of the applicant HEIs.
- A team of independent evaluators is contracted to conduct the assessment of applications.

### 3. Quota system

The project aims to achieve widespread representation of the higher-education sector of the European Union. A quota allocation of places is accordingly in place, under which:

- One place is allocated automatically to a national-level representation from each Member State
- The remaining available places at each Fair are distributed according to a quota, derived from the proportion of seats held by each Member State in the European Parliament
- In cases where a Member State's quota allocation is not taken up fully, the untaken places will be reallocated to HEIs from other Member States, at the end of the assessment process. The decision will be made by the Evaluation Committee (DG DEVCO representative and representatives of the consortium), referring to the results of the evaluation of applications made by the independent assessment team.

## B. Assessment process – timeline:

**1. Post-deadline:** The deadline for applications for EHEF Kazakhstan is set as Thursday 28 May 2015 at 17.00 Brussels time. After the expiry of the deadline, all applications will be assessed by a team of independent evaluators (the EHEF project team does not take part in the allocation of scores to applications). The evaluators will score each application in line with the guidelines below, and present the results to the project team, which will collate the results and send to the European Commission (DG DEVCO).

**2. Evaluation Committee:** The evaluation committee is formed of representatives of DG DEVCO and the EHEF project team. The committee will review the data provided by the assessors in the Member State Evaluation Grids, in order to arrive at decisions regarding:

- a. Award of places to HEIs within the national quotas
- b. Award of places to HEIs beyond the national quotas, through the redistribution of places not filled in the quotas of other Member States.
- c. Form a reserve list of HEIs, to refer to in the case that an HEI that has been awarded a place subsequently informs the Evaluation Committee (by 23 June) that it does not wish to take up the award.

**3. Announcement of Results:** Applicants will be informed of the results by 16 June 2015. Successful applicants are given until 23 June 2015 to confirm that they accept the offer. Applicants placed in the reserve list are informed of this fact; unsuccessful applicants not placed in the reserve list are informed of this fact.

No appeals procedure (e.g. request for repeat assessment or scoring) is envisaged. The decision of the Evaluation Committee is final.

### C. Approach to Evaluation:

The independent evaluators are advised to assess applications in line with the following points:

1. The assessment should be based only on the contents of the application form (assessors should not factor external knowledge and evidence about an HEI into their scoring).
2. The approach to scoring should be positive – i.e. awarding marks to reflect the content provided in the applications, rather than seeking to reduce/deduct marks for any perceived shortcomings of the application.
3. All applicants are equal in status for the purposes of this evaluation.
4. If an assessor identifies a potential conflict of interest in assessing particular applications, this should be brought immediately to the attention of the project Team Leader.
5. The application form has been designed in order to cater for the diverse needs and experience of the HEIs from the 28 Member States – e.g. HEIs in some countries have considerably less experience of internationalisation than is the case for HEIs in some other countries of the EU. In order not to disadvantage HEIs with less experience, the form does not proscribe the requested content that applications should include, but gives suggestions regarding the possible content.
6. Allocation of marks: The scale of 100 (90 points available from the 3 compulsory sections, 10 additional points available from the 4<sup>th</sup> non-compulsory section) has been employed in order to allow flexibility to assessors in allocating marks across a wide range, in order to allow for differentiation among the scores obtained by the applicants.

### D. Advice on Completion of Application:

In line with the preceding information, the project team suggests the following advice to applicants:

- The application should be submitted on behalf of an entire institution (not individual departments, centres, programmes), and applicants must be prepared to represent the whole institution if selected for participation in EHEF Kazakhstan.
- Applicants are encouraged to demonstrate the range of the experience and commitment of their higher-education institution in the key areas covered in the 3 mandatory statements. The information provided should be explicit yet succinct, and refer to actual achievements and / or plans wherever possible. (Bear in mind that only information included in the application can be assessed – e.g. assessors will not review information provided in website links, references to external documentation, etc.)
- Applicants are encouraged to complete the 4<sup>th</sup>, non-mandatory, statement (proposal for contribution to the interactive programme of EHEF Kazakhstan).
- Treat each section as a separate entity, avoid repetition, cross-referencing to other sections
- Please respect the limits of the pages – do not exceed the page length in each section.
- Do not use a font size lower than 10 point.
- Forms should be submitted in English.