



Academy of Central  
European Schools

# Call for School Partnership Projects

## GUIDELINES

2011/2012

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aces is an initiative of  
ERSTE Foundation



**ERSTE Stiftung**

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coordinated by  
Interkulturelles Zentrum



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in cooperation with



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[www.aces.or.at](http://www.aces.or.at)

## ACES | Academy of Central European Schools – Background and Aims

**aces** is an initiative of ERSTE Foundation that was established in 2006 within its programme “Europe”. The coordination of **aces** lies with Interkulturelles Zentrum in cooperation with Včelí Dom. Moreover, the initiative is supported by the Ministries of Education of all participating countries.

**aces** and its supporting partners are convinced that education makes an essential contribution to the European integration process as well as the promotion of European citizenship. Schools and the international cooperation of schools play an important role in fostering cross-border communication processes and the development of joint perspectives on a regional and European level.

The programme aims at supporting the establishment of a Central European network of schools. It is designed to enable a sustainable dialogue and cooperation of young people and to create a continuous network of knowledge, mutual learning and innovation. In this context, international school partnerships offer a concrete opportunity for intercultural exchange and cooperation. Therefore, **aces** encourages partnership projects between schools in Central European countries through an annual project competition. The awarded schools are supported in the realisation of their partnership projects through grants, various support structures and international network meetings.

### Rules of the Call for School Partnership Projects

#### 1. Eligibility Criteria

##### 1.1. Who can participate?

The call addresses schools (primary/secondary/vocational schools) in the eligible countries with a target group of pupils/students aged 12 – 17 years.

The **eligible countries** are: Albania, Austria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Hungary, Kosovo, Macedonia, Moldova, Montenegro, Romania, Serbia, Slovak Republic and Slovenia.

The partnership for every **aces** is made up of **one coordinating school (=lead applicant) and one or two partner school/s** which jointly develop and implement the proposed project. In selected projects, the coordinating school takes the responsibility for overall project coordination, including the partner schools, and acts as the main contact person for the **aces** team. Further, the coordinating school is responsible for the reporting of the whole project (short narrative report and simple list of expenditures). Even though these tasks are the responsibility of the coordinating school, ALL contact teachers of ALL partner schools **MUST** be able to communicate in English.

School partnerships can be:

- **Bilateral** – consisting of 2 schools from 2 different eligible countries
- **Trilateral** – consisting of 3 schools from 3 different eligible countries

Possible combinations for trilateral partnerships are:

- a) 3 schools from three different eligible countries
- b) At least 2 schools from different eligible countries and an additional partner school from a non-eligible European country (e.g. partner from a Comenius school partnership or another partner school from a non-eligible country). **Note: The participation of a partner school from a non-eligible country will not increase the amount of award money and this partner will not benefit directly from the award money!**
- c) **Special needs schools are particularly encouraged to get involved.**

Schools without partners in the above listed eligible countries should make use of the online **aces – Partner Finder** on [www.aces.or.at/partnerfinder](http://www.aces.or.at/partnerfinder) in order to identify a partner school. Interkulturelles Zentrum can also support schools to find relevant partners. See below for contact information.

## 1.2. Theme of the aces Call 2011/2012

When work doesn't cost anything, it often isn't appreciated either. Therefore, one aim of the European Year of Volunteering 2011 (<http://europa.eu/volunteering/>) is to increase the visibility and value the commitment of people working in their free time without being paid: Peers supporting those with learning difficulties in schools, concerts in old people's homes, young and old engaging in initiatives that protect the environment or fight discrimination... Everyone can volunteer; and apart from personal satisfaction it also provides important learning opportunities. Thus, the overall theme of the **aces** call 2011 also is "**Building bridges in societies – volunteer in your communities!**"

Further information about volunteering:

<http://www.evolvteering.eu>

<http://www.eyv2011.eu>

[http://ec.europa.eu/citizenship/news/news820\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/citizenship/news/news820_en.htm)

<http://www.72h.at/72h-international>

<http://www.sciint.org>

[http://ec.europa.eu/youth/youth-in-action-programme/doc405\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/youth/youth-in-action-programme/doc405_en.htm)

Additional info and background material on [www.aces.or.at/materials&tools](http://www.aces.or.at/materials&tools) → "topics"

## 1.3. Eligible Activities

Project idea and implementation: School partnership projects referring to the theme "Building bridges in societies – volunteer in your communities!" can be cross-curricular or based on a single subject.

There are no restrictions regarding project activities, although the design and use of innovative approaches and creative methods of implementation will be considered positively in the assessment process (e.g. projects using the opportunities offered by new information and communication technologies, new media, creative international exchange settings, joint actions among students, theatre, involvement of the media, etc). In addition, cross-border cooperation of pupils and teachers right from the beginning of the project (e.g. communication and working in international teams) is an important factor for a positive assessment.

If selected, the project idea is jointly realised by students and teachers in all the partner schools and countries. Moreover, participants are encouraged to involve and cooperate with other persons and institutions (e.g. experts, parents, local/regional institutions, companies, non-governmental organisations, media ...) to reach out into the local/regional public sphere.

Language: The language for **overall international communication is English** (aces co-ordination and international workshops/events, website communication, reporting). The use of several other languages ("neighbourhood languages") for communication between project partners is encouraged.

Duration: The duration of projects is maximum 7 months. Its activities have to be carried out between September 2011 and mid-March 2012. Some projects may foresee activities in the summer months before September (summer camp, meeting, etc). This is possible, but the grants cannot be transferred to participating schools before October 2011. Hence, such activities will have to be pre-financed in anticipation of the arrival of the grant in October 2011.

Location: The partnership project activities take place (only) in the partner countries.

Number of applications: A **lead** applicant school can submit only one project proposal.

## 1.4. Award and Eligible Use

**aces** awards the grant to the "project partnership", but in terms of administration each partner school receives its share of the award money directly. **Therefore, all the partner schools (or their school boards or parent's council, etc) need to have a bank account that accepts bank transfers in Euro (!).**

The amount of the award for a partnership project is composed as follows:

- Coordinating school: 1300 Euros (including an administrative bonus of 200 Euro)
- Partner schools from eligible countries: 1100 Euro each

So, for a bilateral partnership the overall sum will be 1300 + 1100 Euros = 2400 Euro. For a trilateral partnership involving only eligible countries the overall sum will be 1300 + 1100 + 1100 = 3500 Euro.

The awarded money has to be used for expenses arising from the realisation of the partnership project (costs incurred during the implementation period). Expenditures which are considered eligible include those involved in:

- preparation of information and working materials

- organisation of events/workshops
- meetings between partners (travel, subsistence)
- expert honoraria
- entrance fees
- minor ICT-equipment (e.g. for cameras, software, etc up to a max. cost of 350 Euro per item. If you need some piece of equipment for your project that costs more than this, CONTACT INTERKULTURELLES ZENTRUM IMMEDIATELY AND BEFORE THE PURCHASE.

Project partners can choose to increase their project budget with additional funding from other sources (for example, making use of private or public sponsorship). In general, partner schools make their own agreements concerning how to share the project costs.

## 2. How to apply?

### 2.1. Application Form

The proposal for a school partnership project must be submitted by using the online application form only. This **online application form** is available on [www.aces.or.at/apply](http://www.aces.or.at/apply) from February 1 to April 30 2011. Please note that it must be completed by the **coordinating school, ONLY**. The project proposal should, nonetheless, be a joint project application. This means that the project partners should jointly discuss the content of the before making the application. Applicants are invited to consult the questions asked in the online application about the project with your partners (see the document “**key questions for the project description**” at <http://www.aces.or.at/start.asp?ID=231710&b=858> ). This will help you to exchange ideas and jointly write the application.

The application form consists of 3 parts:

- Information about the partner schools
- Project description following the “key questions for the project description”
- Supporting documents:
  - o “Declaration for the Partnership Project”: to be completed, signed and stamped by the coordinating school
  - o “Partnership Statement for the Partnership Project”: to be completed, signed and stamped by all the partner school/s

The supporting documents are available at the end of the online application form on [www.aces.or.at/apply](http://www.aces.or.at/apply). They should be downloaded, completed by all partner schools and sent to the coordinating school in plenty of time so that the coordinating school has what it needs to finalise the online application procedure in time for the deadline. The coordinating school is responsible for filling in and submitting the complete online application form, including the uploading of supporting documents.

### 2.2. Deadline for Submission of Applications

The deadline for submission of project applications for this call is 30 April 2011. After submitting the online application form, you will receive an automatic confirmation of receipt.

Interkulturelles Zentrum will advise applicants on questions until the deadline.

### 2.3. Questions

Interkulturelles Zentrum can advise applicants on questions until the deadline.

If you have problems submitting your application using the online procedure, please contact

Rebecca Zeilinger, Interkulturelles Zentrum  
 Emails: [rebecca.zeilinger@iz.or.at](mailto:rebecca.zeilinger@iz.or.at)

## NO LATER THAN THE 15TH OF APRIL 2011

Make sure to indicate “aces Call 2011” in the subject line of the email.

### 3. Assessment of Applications

An international Selection Committee will assess the submitted project proposals according to the eligibility criteria (see Annex A "Project Assessment Criteria") and the "Project Quality Check List" (see Annex B). Approximately 45 school partnership projects will be awarded a grant.

### 4. Notification of Award

Interkulturelles Zentrum will inform applicants about the results of the assessment and of which projects were awarded until mid-June 2011.

### 5. Further Steps for Awarded Partnership Projects

The awarded school partnerships will be invited to implement their projects. They will receive further information regarding **aces** procedures and network events, as follows:

- **26 September – 30 September 2011:** International "**aces** Kick-off Meeting" taking place in Sarajevo (Bosnia and Herzegovina). This meeting is attended by delegations of 2 participants (1 student & 1 teacher) from each school involved in an awarded partnership project;
- **October 2011:** The award money will be transferred to all awarded partner schools;
- **September 2011 – mid-March 2012:** Implementation of school partnership projects through joint work and cooperation;
- **Mid-March 2012:** Deadline for submission of the final narrative and simple financial project report in English;
- **March/April 2012:** Final international "**aces** Academy", including presentations and evaluation of the outcomes of all partnership projects. The exact date of this event will be announced in September 2011.

Note: **It is expected that delegations of all selected schools attend the aces network events.** The members of the delegations taking part in **aces** network events (i.e. the Kick-off Meeting and the Academy) must master the English language in order to exchange and work with the other participants. Participating delegation members are expected to attend for the entire duration of these network events.

### For further information about this call

#### Contact

#### Interkulturelles Zentrum (IZ)

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[www.iz.or.at](http://www.iz.or.at)

**Information on aces**, the Call for School Partnership Projects (application form), the online Partner Finder and our partners in the Ministries of Education of all participating countries are available on [www.aces.or.at](http://www.aces.or.at)

**Information on ERSTE Foundation:** [www.erstestiftung.org](http://www.erstestiftung.org)

## Annex A

### Project Assessment Criteria

#### Introduction

The selection committee first assesses the formal eligibility of applications according to the conditions outlined in the **aces** guidelines. Once a project has been approved as eligible, the quality of the application and project proposal are assessed.

To be able to assess the submitted in a fair and transparent manner, the **aces** Selection Committee refers to specific **assessment criteria**. These assessment criteria have been elaborated based on standards for international educational projects. The selection committee will also refer to the **project quality checklist** (see Annex B) for making their final assessment of project applications. **aces** aims at **promoting intercultural dialogue, educational innovation and international cooperation between young people in schools** through school partnership projects. The selection committee therefore pays particular attention to the quality of the application in relation to these aims.

#### Application Assessment Criteria

##### 1/ Content of the project proposal

- The project idea is relevant to the
  - objectives of the **aces** programme (intercultural dialogue & educational innovation)
  - overall annual **aces** theme (see Guidelines 2011 and, for more information, [www.aces.or.at/projectcontest](http://www.aces.or.at/projectcontest))
  - interests and living contexts of the students involved
- The aims are clear and realistic for the
  - project as a whole
  - partnership building process
  - promotion of intercultural dialogue & educational innovation
- The project idea is suitable to the
  - age of the participating students
  - specific focus within the overall **aces** theme

##### 2/ Principles promoted by the project

- Students develop ownership of the project through active participation
  - in project planning
  - in project decision making
  - in implementation
  - in international cooperation with other participating classes
- Equal opportunities
  - are actively promoted through specific measures

##### 3/ Project organisation & implementation

- Activities and methods
  - are coherent with the aims of the project
  - promote creativity, diversity & educational innovation

- Project is integrated into the school curriculum
  - through specific school subjects
  - through extracurricular activities
  
- Action plan
  - includes a realistic schedule
  - is appropriate to the capacities of the partners
  - demonstrates a well-balanced division of responsibilities among all partner schools
  - fosters continuous communication and international cooperation of students right from the beginning

## Annex B

### Project Quality Check List

*(This list of additional questions and examples will help you check the quality of your application. You should use the questions to help you and your partners to assess the clarity of the answers to the questions in the application form once you have made your first draft, and to improve the quality of the application. It is also used by the selection committee to help them to assess your application.)*

#### 1/ Concerning the project idea and its specific focus

- Is the description of your project idea clear and simple enough for an outsider to understand?
- What is the relevance of the project idea to the general aims of the **aces** programme (intercultural dialogue & educational innovation)?
- What is the relevance of the project idea to this year's **aces** theme?
- Does your project's chosen focus address the life contexts and interests of the participating students?
  - for example, teachers have consulted the students involved in the project about their interests
- Can the activities you plan deliver the results you expect?

#### 2/ Concerning the implementation of the project

- Is your work plan realistic and feasible for all the partners involved?
  - For example, the number of class hours involved in the project is manageable considering the rest of the students' study responsibilities; teachers can conduct project work within their available time
- How do the activities and methods you propose to use in the project foster the creativity, skills and new knowledge among students and teachers?
  - For example, the methods proposed are interactive, involve different learning settings, involve experiencing and doing, and not only traditional ways of learning (reading, writing)
- Are all activities planned going to be completed between September 2011 and mid-March 2012?

#### 3/ Concerning the cooperation among the partners

- Are the tasks and responsibilities involved in your project clearly and equally shared among all the partner schools (teachers and students)?
  - For example, specific tasks within the project activity plan have been distributed; all teachers and students have something to do; no one school has too much to do in comparison to the others
- How does your project ensure that there is continued international cooperation and joint work by all students throughout its development and implementation?
  - for example, students will work in international working teams right from the beginning of the project in addition to exchanging about respective results at the end of the project with the other participating class/es from the other country/ies

#### 4/ Concerning the participation of the students

- How are students included in the decision-making about the project?
  - for example, teachers have asked the students to decide which specific focus the project should have and about desired project activities
- What measures will you take to ensure equal opportunities for all to participate in the project?
  - for example, students who need more support to get actively involved have been encouraged to ask for it and know to whom they can turn if they want to discuss their participation.