



Academy of Central
European Schools

Call for School Partnership Projects

GUIDELINES

2012/2013

aces is an initiative of
ERSTE Foundation



ERSTE Stiftung

coordinated by
Interkulturelles Zentrum



in cooperation with



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. The coordination of **aces** lies with Interkulturelles Zentrum in cooperation with Včelí Dom. Moreover, the initiative is supported by the Ministries in charge of education in 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.

A school partnership project is a partnership of all the schools taking part in the project. Every **aces project** 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 financial report). 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!**

Special needs schools are particularly encouraged to get involved.

RESTRICTIONS for participation!!

1. **Schools that have been awarded and received grants from aces already 3 times in a row, need to take a break of one year before applying again** in order to give newcomers more chances.
2. **Every school can be a partner within ONE project application only** – either as coordinating or as partner school. (Multiple participation of the same school in several applications is not possible!). It might happen that two teachers from one school submit one application each without knowing about the other application. In this case we will accept only one application – the one which has been submitted first.

Schools without partners in the above listed eligible countries should make use of the online **aces – Partner Finder** on 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 2012/2013

Media products don't only inform and entertain us, they also play an important role in how we view the reality around us. Mass media – and especially digital media – offer broader access to information and new ways of participation but also carry the risk of greater manipulation. **Media literacy** is a crucial factor for active citizenship in today's society. It is a repertoire of competences that enables people to access, analyze, evaluate and create media products, allowing them to become responsible consumers and creative producers. In order to foster learning about this topic, the overall theme of the aces call 2012 is „**Reality Check – How we perceive and construct the world through media.**”

Further information on media literacy and media education:

<http://www.medialiteracy.com/>

http://portal.unesco.org/ci/en/ev.php-URL_ID=23714&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html

<http://www.unicef.org/magic/index.html>

<http://mediaed.org.uk/teaching-ideas/general>

<http://www.mediamanual.at/en/index.php>

http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/activities/sip/index_en.htm

<http://www.politik-lernen.at/site/gratisshop/shop.item/106085.html> (German only)

<http://saferinternet.at/> (teaching material in German only)

Additional info and background material on www.aces.or.at/materials&tools → “topics”

1.3. Eligible Activities

Project idea and implementation: The content of the project proposal and its foreseen activities must reflect the general aims of aces, the annual theme “Reality Check – How we perceive and construct the world through media” and the chosen focus of the school partnership project.

The activities can be implemented cross-curricular or in one specific subject.

There are no restrictions regarding project activities as long as they are appropriate for the age group and useful to achieve the project aims. Also, 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, 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 community.

Language: The language for **overall international communication is English** (aces coordination 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 2012 and mid-March 2013. 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 2012. Hence, such activities will have to be pre-financed in anticipation of the arrival of the grant in October 2012.

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

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 (preferably 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: 1800 Euros** (including a coordinating bonus of 200 Euros: this bonus adds up to the grant money of the coordinating partner school of 1600 and is understood as additional allowance which shall also be used for direct project expenses in the same way as the rest of the grant. The coordinating school benefits from the bonus, e.g. by being able to take one student more to the project exchange visit or the like. Thus, the amount of the bonus and related expenses also have to be documented in the final financial project report.)
- **Partner schools from eligible countries: 1600 Euros each**

So, for a bilateral partnership the overall sum will be $1800 + 1600 = 3400$ Euros. For a trilateral partnership involving only eligible countries the overall sum will be $1800 + 1600 + 1600 = 5000$ Euros.

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

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

The costs for the participation of school delegations in the two aces network meetings (Kick-off Meeting and aces Academy, see p. 5) are covered additionally by aces and must NOT be paid from the project grant!

In case you have expenditures concerning the provision of VISA during the implementation of your school partnership project (for partner visits) aces can also **reimburse de facto visa costs** (including health insurance, travel costs and others items related to visa). These costs may add up to the **maximum amount of 300 Euros per concerned school** in addition to your aces school grant. The reimbursement of the visa costs is handed in and paid out only **at the end of the project** after submitting a specific form for the reimbursement of visa costs.

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 from February 1 to April 30, 2012. 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 their partners (see the key questions in the document **“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
- 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. They should be downloaded, completed by all partner schools and sent to the coordinating school in due 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 2012**. After submitting the online application form, you will receive an automatic confirmation of receipt.

2.3. Further questions and information

For further details and advice regarding the application, **we strongly recommend that you carefully read all other related call documents “Instructions for Application”, “Project Description” and “Criteria for Project Quality & Assessment”** available at <http://www.aces.or.at/start.asp?ID=231710&b=858>

Interkulturelles Zentrum can advise applicants on questions. However, **keep in mind that we need sufficient time to react before the deadline.**

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

Rebecca Zeilinger, Interkulturelles Zentrum
Email: rebecca.zeilinger@iz.or.at

Make sure to indicate “aces Call 2012” 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 the related document “**Criteria for Project Quality & Assessment**” <http://www.aces.or.at/start.asp?ID=231710&b=858>). Approximately 45 school partnership projects will be awarded a grant.

4. Notification of Award

Interkulturelles Zentrum will inform applicants about the results of awarded and non-awarded projects until mid-June 2012.

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:

- **24 September – 28 September 2012:** International “**aces** Kick-off Meeting” taking place in Laško (Slovenia). This meeting is attended by delegations of 2 participants (1 student & 1 teacher) from each school involved in an awarded partnership project;
- **October 2012:** The award money will be transferred to all awarded partner schools;
- **September 2012 – mid-March 2013:** Implementation of school partnership projects through joint work and cooperation;
- **Mid-March 2013:** Deadline for submission of the final narrative and financial project report in English; (for schools concerned also submission of the claim for reimbursement of visa costs)
- **April 2013 (calendar week 15):** 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 time.

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 regarding this call

Contact

Interkulturelles Zentrum (IZ)

Rebecca Zeilinger
Lindengasse 41/10
1070 Vienna, Austria

Tel: +43 1 58644-20

Fax: +43 1 58644-9

rebecca.zeilinger@iz.or.at

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

Information on ERSTE Foundation: www.erstestiftung.org