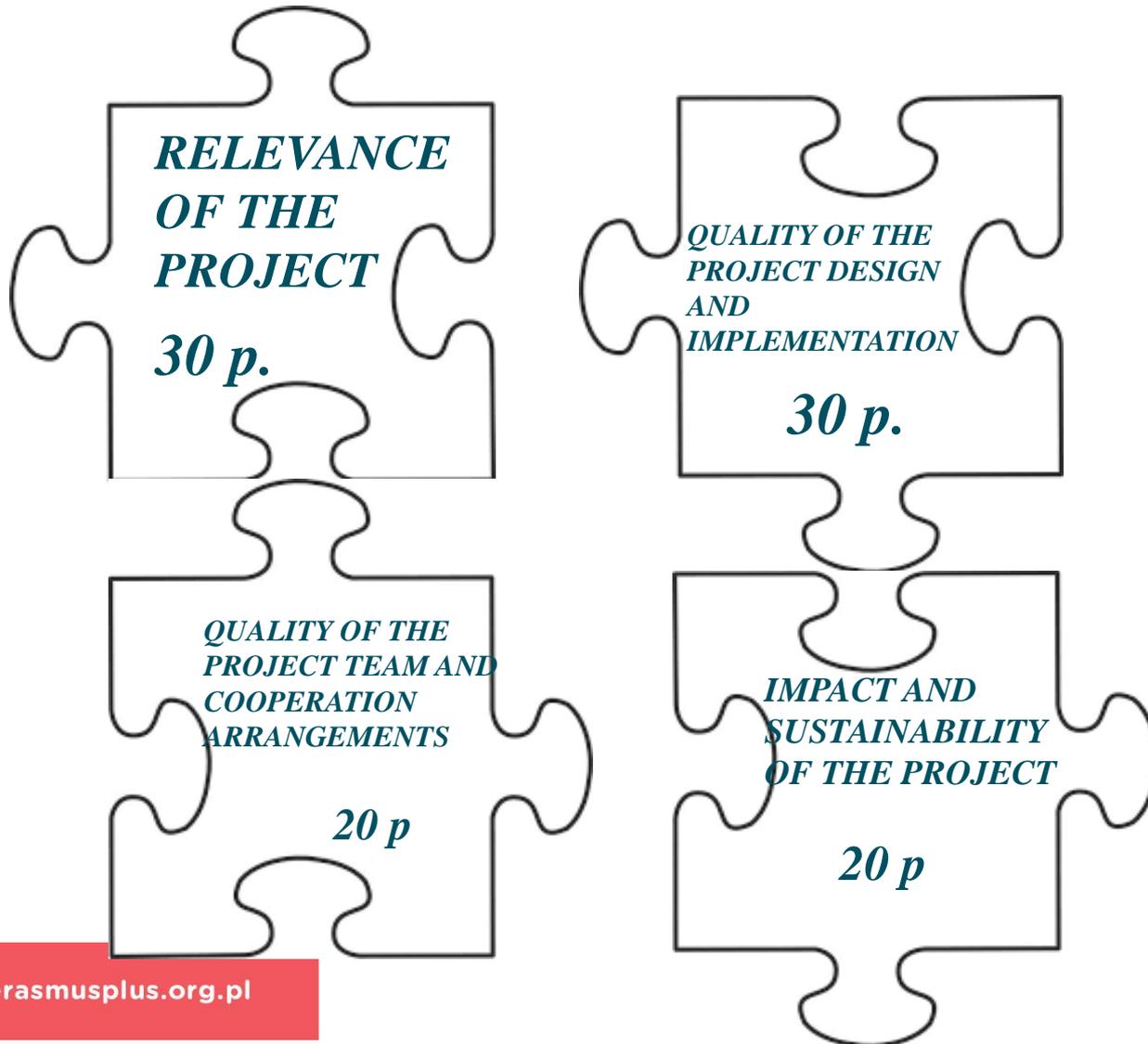


CAPACITY BUILDING IN THE FIELD OF HIGHER EDUCATION

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CBHE AWARD CRITERIA



TWO TYPES OF CAPACITY BUILDING PROJECTS

- ❑ **Joint Projects:** aimed at benefitting mainly HEIs and achieving impact at institutional / faculty level in the Partner Country/ies
- ❑ **Structural Projects:** aimed at supporting reforms of HE systems and achieving impact at national level in the Partner Country/ies and / or regional level (where at least two Partner Countries of a given region are involved)

The same Application Form and Award Criteria for both types of projects

RELEVANCE OF THE PROJECT

**Key issues which you need to discuss in your proposal
... and where experts find weaknesses:**

Links between the **project** and:

- **CBHE priorities** for the Partner Countries / Regions
- **national strategies** for HE in the participating Partner Country/ies
- **strategies** of the participating **Partner Country HEIs**

Identification of target groups of the project

Identification of specific needs / analysis of needs in the participating Partner Country/ies which the project will address



Projects which DO NOT CLEARLY ADDRESS the priorities are NOT FUNDED. Make sure your proposal shows how both its objectives and results address the chosen priorities.

RELEVANCE OF THE PROJECT

How is your project linked to the Partner Country national strategy/ies, and development strategies of the participating Partner Country organisations?

Refer in your proposal to:

- (a) **specific national strategy(-ies)** (e.g. higher education reform) and its / their specific priorities
- (a) **specific strategy(-ies) or document(s) of the participating organisations** (e.g. the Internationalisation Strategy of University X) and its / their specific priorities

Vaguely or not addressed at all in quite a few proposals

RELEVANCE OF THE PROJECT

What target groups in the Partner Country/ies
does your project address:
who does your project seek to benefit?

E.g. students, academic staff, administrative staff, university management, external stakeholders, incl. national authorities, employers.....

When identifying the target group(s) of your project, specify and quantify the group(s)

E.g. 20 students of the Master's degree programme in the field of xxx OR 8 international relations staff in each participating Partner Country university OR a different number for each participating University

Weaknesses in proposals: target groups identified vaguely and / or not quantified ⇒ difficult to demonstrate (and assess) the impact of the project

RELEVANCE OF THE PROJECT

What specific needs / problems in the Partner Country/ies does your project seek to address?

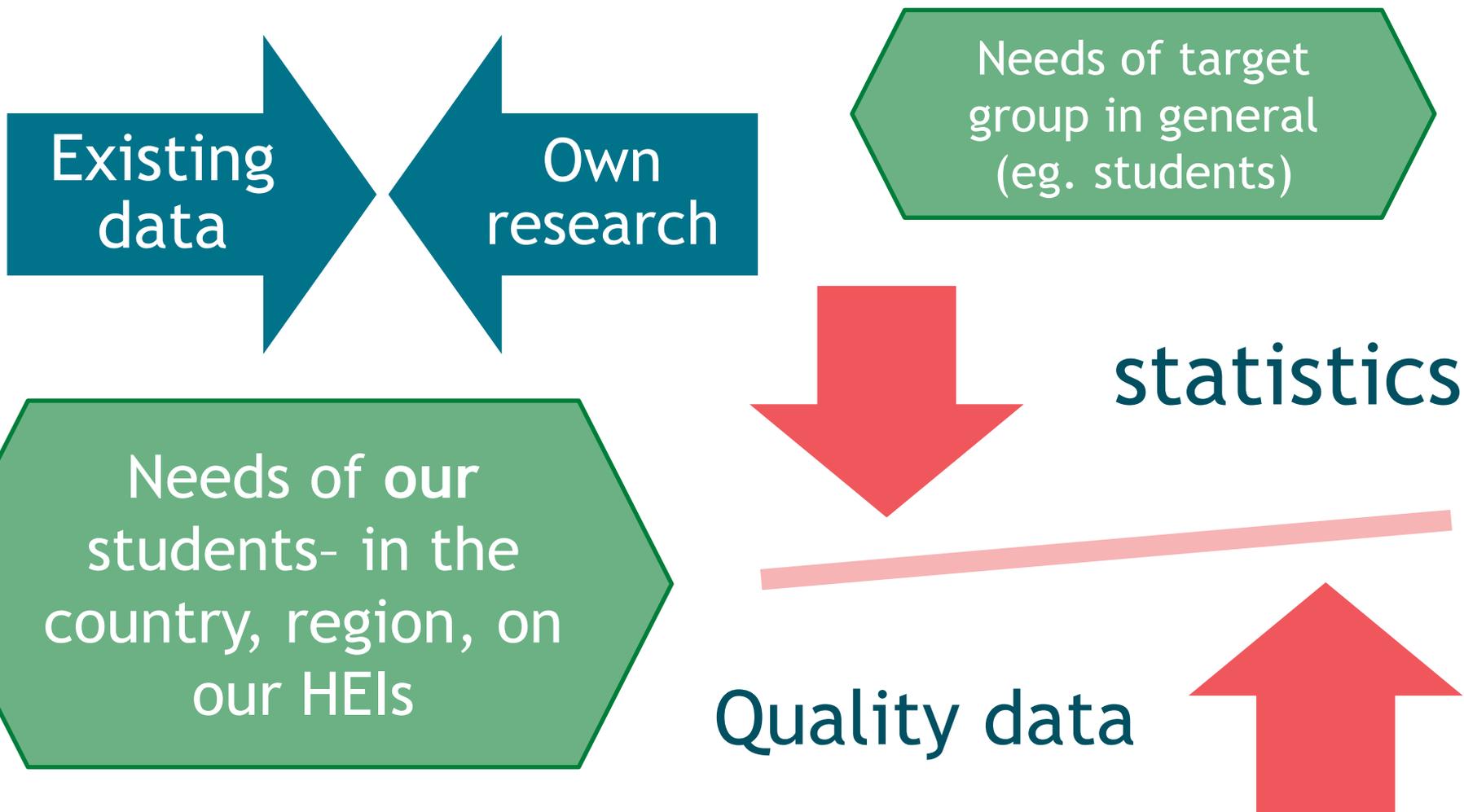
Do a **preliminary needs analysis**. A more in-depth analysis in the project cannot replace a pre-project analysis – you need to convince experts that your project is really needed

Where appropriate and possible, discuss needs / problems at 3 levels:

- **national level**: Partner Country HE system as a whole / ,systemic' problems; key level for **Structural Projects**
- **institutional level**: each of the participating Partner Organisations
- **individual level**: students, staff, ...

Provide **concrete evidence** to underpin your needs analysis (e.g. statistics such as unemployment rates, mobility data, findings from a survey on a specific topic) and refer to **specific sources** (e.g. official or internal statistical publication, study, report, survey)

TARGET GROUPS' NEED ANALYSIS



Own research among employers - what competences are our graduates missing

Reports of external organisations about the needs on education in the field of...

European/national recommendations

Research on the availability of results on the market that are to be developed in the project, eg. Text book, educational materials

QUALITY OF THE PROJECT DESIGN AND IMPLEMENTATION

Key issues which you need to consider and discuss in the proposal ... and where various weaknesses are found in proposals:

- ☞ **The consistency between project objectives, expected results and activities to be carried out to achieve the expected results**
- ☞ **Quality control arrangements for the project**
- ☞ **Project budget and cost-effectiveness**

QUALITY OF THE PROJECT DESIGN AND IMPLEMENTATION

Consistency between project objectives, expected results and activities to be carried out

Make sure that the **specific project objective(s)** is / are :

- **SMART**: specific, measurable, attainable, realistic and time-bound
- **clearly linked with CBHE priorities and the specific needs** in the participating Partner Country/ies that the project seeks to address

QUALITY OF THE PROJECT DESIGN AND IMPLEMENTATION

Results

Outputs: tangible and measurable results (‘products’) **Outcomes:** intangible effects

Examples:

Outputs: 5 new / restructured courses for an undergraduate programme in the field of xxx.

Outcomes: new teaching skills acquired by staff

Make sure the project will lead to results which address the chosen CBHE priorities

QUALITY OF THE PROJECT DESIGN AND IMPLEMENTATION

Activities: actions taken / tasks carried out to deliver the outputs identified

Examples: analysis of staff training needs or employers' needs; development of a course

Provide details about results and related activities; e.g. for degree courses as an output and related activities: number, level, area and indicative contents of courses to be developed or revised; duration; mode of delivery; teaching & learning methods and resources; indicative number of students to be enrolled

Examples taken from / based on the CBHE ,Instructions for completing the Application Package'

QUALITY OF THE PROJECT DESIGN AND IMPLEMENTATION

Double-check that:

planned activities lead to all of the expected results (outputs / outcomes) and that the results (outputs / outcomes) lead to all of the specific objectives of the project (consistency between the project objectives, results and activities)

QUALITY OF THE PROJECT DESIGN AND IMPLEMENTATION

Quality control / assurance arrangements for the project

Consider **what quality assurance mechanisms and tools** will be suitable for your project; e.g. internal and / or external project evaluation; regular reviews by a project QA Committee; a satisfaction survey among students / staff / project Partners; a project QA Handbook; ...

For each QA mechanism and / or tool, explain:

- **what it will cover** (which outputs / results such as a programme / course or a strategy or processes such as project management)
- **how** and **how often** it will be used
- **who** will be responsible
- how quality monitoring / assessment findings will be **used for improvement**

Additionally, for **project evaluation** (compulsory QA mechanism): make a **clear distinction** between internal and external evaluation if both are planned.

QUALITY OF THE PROJECT DESIGN AND IMPLEMENTATION

Project cost-effectiveness: how you can ensure that that the results of your project are achieved in the **most economical way**

Examples:

Don't inflate costs: budget based on **minimum inputs** required to achieve results

Consider '**economies of scale**', e.g. training a large number of people at the lowest possible cost: training a large(r) number of Partner Country staff locally by Programme Country partners rather than a small number in a Programme Country OR training a small number of 'trainers' in a Programme Country followed by cascade training in the Partner Country

Combine **travels for different purposes** (e.g. a project management meeting and a staff training seminar) wherever possible

Make sure your cost-effectiveness arrangements are indeed reflected in the project budget

QUALITY OF THE PROJECT DESIGN AND IMPLEMENTATION

Most typical budget-related weaknesses in proposals

STAFF COSTS

- **Insufficient justification of costs:** too little or vague information about the project activities and results provided in the relevant sections of the proposal
- **Overestimated costs**
- **Inappropriate Staff Category** (Manager, Teacher / Trainer / Researcher, Technician or Administrator) used to calculate costs: based on the status or title of the individual and not on the type of task to be performed

EQUIPMENT COSTS

- **Insufficient justification of costs:** 1) **Equipment items** to be purchased **not specified** in the Excel tables; 2) too little or vague information about **specific equipment needs** of Partner Country HEIs; 3) **link** between equipment and **project objectives or results** not explained ⇒ provide a detailed explanation in Section H (Work Packages)

QUALITY OF THE PROJECT TEAM AND COOPERATION ARRANGEMENTS

PROJECT CONSORTIUM: the Applicant / Coordinator, Partners / Partner Organisations, and Associated Partners (optional)

Partners:

- contribute directly to all key project activities
- sign a Mandate (a document where they undertake to adhere to the Grant Agreement for the project if it is funded).
- benefit from the project grant

Associated partners:

- have a limited and supporting role, contributing indirectly to specific activities (e.g. dissemination of project results); cannot be responsible for any key project activities
- do not sign a Mandate
- are not eligible to benefit from the project grant

→ You have no 'influence' over Associated Partners

→ Any organisation whose involvement is crucial to the achievement of project results and objectives (e.g. enterprises in a project focusing on university-enterprise cooperation) should be involved as a Partner / Partner Organisation

QUALITY OF THE PROJECT TEAM AND COOPERATION ARRANGEMENTS

Choice and presentation of Partners and key staff to be involved from each Partner Organisation

Tips based on weaknesses in proposals

- ☞ Keep in mind that **national authorities** are obligatorily involved as a Partner Organisation in a **Structural Project**
- ☞ Choose your partners on the basis of their **specific and complementary expertise**
- ☞ Involve **more than 1 key staff member** at each Partner Organisation (where there is only 1, their unavailability may pose a risk to project implementation)
- ☞ Make sure the expertise of the key staff from each Partner Organisation covers jointly both academic or other **content-related aspects** of the project (e.g. curriculum development) *and* **project management**
- ☞ When presenting the Partners and their key staff in your proposal, focus on the activities of the Partner Organisations and the expertise of key staff which are **specifically related to the project**, and highlight the **complementarity between the Partners** and their expertise

QUALITY OF THE PROJECT TEAM AND COOPERATION ARRANGEMENTS

What you need

to consider to ensure effective cooperation and project management

... and what is often not presented convincingly in proposals

How the project will be managed

How tasks will be distributed among the Partners

How and how often the Partners will communicate

QUALITY OF THE PROJECT TEAM AND COOPERATION ARRANGEMENTS

How the project will be managed

A good proposal explains:

- at which levels the project will be managed and by whom; **3 possible levels: the international / project level, national / Partner Country level and institutional / local level (each Partner Organisation)**
- **bodies to be established at each relevant level (e.g. a Project Management Board at the project / international level; a National and / or Local Teams or Contact Persons): the composition and specific responsibilities of each body and relationships between them**
- the **decision-making process: who will take decisions on what matters, and how (e.g. consensus or majority voting)**
- a **mechanism for resolving conflicts among the Partners**

Make sure that:

- **all Partner Organisations are involved in the project management body and decision-making as equal partners**
- **the role of the Applicant / Coordinator is not too dominant; the project is a joint initiative of the consortium → a sense of ownership**

QUALITY OF THE PROJECT TEAM AND COOPERATION ARRANGEMENTS

How tasks will be distributed among the Partners

- ☞ Allocate specific tasks to each Partner and highlight the specificity in the description of Partners' tasks. Exactly the same tasks for a number of Partners: a weakness often highlighted by experts
- ☞ Distribute tasks:
 - ☞ according to the **expertise** of the Partner Organisations to ensure high quality of project results
 - ☞ in a **balanced way** among the Partners to encourage a sense of ownership of the project
- ☞ Identify clearly Partners Organisations acting as **Leaders** of Work Packages (groups of activities / tasks)
- ☞ Make sure that :
 - ☞ **Partner Country Organisations** are extensively and **actively involved**, also as Work Package Leaders
 - ☞ **National authorities from the Partner Country/ies** have a **clearly defined and substantial role** in a Structural Project

QUALITY OF THE PROJECT TEAM AND COOPERATION ARRANGEMENTS

How and how often the Partners will communicate

An aspect often ,neglected' in proposals involving Partners who have worked together before and have well-established communication channels

⇒ Methods / channels (e.g. face-to-face and virtual / online meetings, Skype, email, telephone) and the frequency of communication using each method to be discussed in the proposal

IMPACT AND SUSTAINABILITY

3 aspects to be considered and described in detail in the proposal:

IMPACT OF THE PROJECT	Benefits from the project for target groups at various levels (faculty / institutional, local, regional, national and / or European) / beneficial changes resulting from the project <u>during its lifecycle and after its completion</u>
DISSEMINATION AND EXPLOITATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dissemination: Activities / measures aimed at spreading information about the project / raising awareness / making the project visible beyond the circle of direct participants • Exploitation: Activities / measures aimed at mainstreaming and multiplying project results beyond the circle of direct beneficiaries Both increase the project impact and contribute to its sustainability
SUSTAINABILITY OF PROJECT RESULTS	Activities / measures ensuring that the results of the project will last beyond the project lifetime

Structural Projects should have sustainable impact at national level

Make sure that:

- the national authorities play a **key role** in all project activities, including **dissemination and exploitation activities**
- where possible, **project results** are **officially approved / endorsed / adopted** by the national authorities to be **mainstreamed** (e.g. integrated into a national policy, national guidelines, draft legislation....)
- approval / endorsement by the relevant national authorities is envisaged in the project as a **clearly defined activity**

Impact+ Tool

Use the Impact+ Exercise workshop guide to get the most out of this tool



PARTNER ORGANISATIONS

- What changes will occur in partner organisations as a result of the activities?
- What new or improved partnerships, products or services will be generated?
- How will policies or procedures be changed or improved?

IMPACT TOOL



LEARNERS

- What change will occur for learners as a result of your activities?
- What new skills or competences will they gain?
- How will their attitudes, opinions or aspirations change as a result of the project?



YOUR IMPACT

What is the main thing or things that your project hopes to achieve?

Think about the problem or issue that you are trying to solve.

- How will your activities affect staff working on the project?
- What new experience, skills and competences will they develop?
- How will involvement in the project support staff in their continuing professional development?

PROJECT STAFF

- What changes to legislation or public policy will occur in your sector or field?
- What contribution will you make to improvements in professional practice or methods of learning?
- What new or improved qualifications or learning modules will you produce?
- What benefits will your project deliver for sector or professional networks?

SYSTEMIC





IMPACT TOOL

<https://www.erasmusplus.org.uk/impact-and-evaluation>

www.erasmusplus.org.pl



IMPACT AND SUSTAINABILITY

A good dissemination and exploitation strategy:

Defines clearly **project results** to be disseminated, mainstreamed and / or multiplied

Identifies precisely and quantifies **target groups / users** both within Partner Organisations and outside them

Covers both **internal and external activities** (within and outside Partner Organisations) and makes a clear **distinction** between them

Uses a **wide variety of methods or tools** (websites, social media, events such as conferences or fairs, training sessions, printed materials, ...), each suitable for a **specific target group**

Envisages dissemination activities starting early and exploitation activities **starting when relevant results are available**, and both types of activities **continuing throughout the project and beyond it**

Describes the **role of each Partner** (incl. Associated Partners where applicable)

Involves **institutions / organisations** which are **well-placed to spread information** widely and / or **mainstream results** (e.g. national authorities, associations, networks)

DISSEMINATION PROCESS

Step (1) • Describe the result

Step (2) • Identify target group

Step (3) • Choose channels and tools

Step (4) • Dissemination activities

IMPACT AND SUSTAINABILITY

A good sustainability strategy:

- ⇒ **specifies the project results** which will be maintained and **activities** which will continue after the end of project funding
 - e.g. Sustainable results: **a new / updated programme; new arrangements for student practical placements.** Sustainable activities: **joint supervision of PhD students by Partner and Programme Country partners; activities involving HEIs and enterprises such as student practical placements; cooperation between Partner and Programme Country organisations**
- ⇒ envisages **specific measures** / activities to ensure **sustainability at 3 levels**: institutional, financial and policy levels
- ⇒ plans such activities **as early as possible** in the project
- ⇒ involves **faculty / institutional and / or national authorities** (if they are not represented in the project) to ensure their support for project results (e.g. through regular update meetings or consultations)

IMPACT AND SUSTAINABILITY

How you can ensure ...

☞ **Institutional sustainability:** providing a formal basis / framework for the maintenance of project results at faculty/institutional level:

- ☞ **Official approval / adoption / endorsement of project results** (*through internal university regulations, decisions at the relevant level, agreements*) as a **clearly defined project activity**; e.g. approval of new courses by faculty/department authorities; national accreditation of a new programme; cooperation agreements with the project Partners or enterprises
- ☞ **Adequate training for a sufficient number of staff** in the participating Partner Country organisations to use the project outputs ... e.g. to teach new courses
- ☞ **Upgrading of facilities** ... e.g. purchase of equipment to deliver new courses

☞ **Financial sustainability:** securing funding for the maintenance of results; **specific sources of funding** to be indicated for each sustainable result and activity: the university's own budget and / or external sources, e.g. national budget, enterprises, foundations, international and EU programmes

☞ **Sustainability at policy level:** encouraging, initiating or facilitating change beyond the Partner Organisations (*multiplier effect*) through dissemination and exploitation activities targeted at other HEIs and national authorities.

A COMPULSORY READING LIST FOR APPLICANTS:

Detailed guidelines in:

- Erasmus+ Programme Guide, CBHE Sections
- CBHE Priorities for Partner Countries / Regions
- CBHE Application Form
- CBHE Instructions for Completing the Application Package



THANK YOU!

www.erasmusplus.org.pl

