

Zagreb, 9 December 2015

Subject: Expression of interest for partnership on projects for higher education reform and development

Dear Sir/Madam,

The Institute for the Development of Education (IDE) would hereby like to express its interest to participate in projects for higher education reform and development within the framework of the EU's programmes and funds, especially through Erasmus+, Horizon 2020, Jean Monet Programme and the European Social Fund.

IDE is a Croatian non-governmental and non-profit organisation established in 1999, whose mission is to contribute to the development of higher education policy, provide expert support to institutions, connect domestic and international experts and enable individuals in Croatia and the region of Southeast Europe to achieve their educational goals. We would hereby like to invite potential applicants to Erasmus+, Horizon or other EU programmes/funds to consider IDE as a project partner in their project proposals. IDE can provide expertise in a number of policy areas in higher education, as well as in management and coordination roles, and can also assist countries in developing project proposals. We would like to stress out our finished projects on funding of higher education (ACCESS) and equity in higher education (E-Quality). Results of these project can be used and applied in various national settings and IDE is willing to assist in their application.

An overview of IDE's policy focus-areas and ongoing projects is provided below. For all further information about cooperation possibilities, please contact us by email at iro@iro.hr.

Policy focus-areas

- **Equity in higher education:** IDE has expertise on the range of factors that influence access to higher education and success in higher education. IDE has issued 6 publications related to equitable access to higher education (including the EUROSTUDENT report for Croatia), was a member of the Bologna Follow-Up Group's Working Group for the Social Dimension of Higher Education (2010-2012) and is currently a partner on a Europe-level project for developing peer-learning in the area of the social dimension of higher education (2012-2015). Through the IPA project E-Quality, IDE has developed tools for linking quality and social inclusion in higher education and has developed a quality label for equity. IDE also wrote a national report on educational inequalities in Croatia for the Network of Experts on Social Aspects of Education and Training (NESET).
- **Linking quality and social inclusion in higher education in Croatia (2013-2014):** the project aims to develop socially inclusive quality assurance procedures at higher education institutions in Croatia. IDE is the coordinator and the project is funded by the European Commission (Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance). www.ipa-equality.eu
- **Higher education funding:** IDE has expertise on European trends in both higher education funding and student financial support in Europe. IDE led an international consortium (23 institutions) under the TEMPUS project ACCESS (2009-2013) to define recommendations for the reform of the higher education funding system in Croatia, based on European best practices. IDE published two studies commissioned by the Ministry of Science, Education and Sports of higher education funding policies in Croatia and in EU countries and is working on a feasibility study for student loans in Southeast Europe.
- **Internationalisation and academic mobility:** IDE has expertise on global trends in academic mobility, on European policies for developing academic mobility and on the factors that influence participation in mobility programmes. IDE has administered 7

international academic mobility programmes and has 14 years of experience in advising students and academic staff on mobility opportunities. IDE led a national project to develop an action plan for Croatia's entry into the ERASMUS programme. IDE is also a member of the Croatian National Working Group for Removing Obstacles to Educational Mobility (2010–2014).

- **Quality assurance in higher education:** IDE participates as an associate member of the Accreditation Council of the Agency for Science and Higher Education (Croatia), which since 2011 is implementing the process of reaccreditation of all study programmes in the Republic of Croatia. Also IDE is currently leading and IPA-I funded project "QUALITYWATCH: Croatian Higher Education Quality Watchdog". Aim of this project is to make quality assurance procedures and their results more transparent and accessible for the interested public and to empower civil society organisations for monitoring quality assurance in higher education,
- **Qualifications framework:** IDE was a partner on a European-level LEONARDO project aimed to prepare policy recommendations for introducing recognition of prior learning at universities in Poland and Croatia (2011–2013). IDE also participated in the National Committee for the Development of Croatian Qualifications Framework (2010–2012). Currently we are involved as experts in three national project for implementing qualifications framework in the fields of mining, geology, petroleum and chemical engineering, biotechnology, and law. We are also providing advisory services in the field for several other Croatian higher education institutions.
- **Student services:** IDE has 14 years of experience as an educational advising centre for international mobility and financial aid opportunities in Croatia, Europe and the USA. IDE has also led a project to create a feasibility study and action plan for launching career advising services at Croatian universities (2006–2007), which resulted in the launch of such services at three Croatian universities between 2008 and 2010.

Ongoing projects

- **"QUALITYWATCH: Croatian Higher Education Quality Watchdog" (2014–2016):** Aim of this project is to make quality assurance procedures and their results more transparent and accessible for the interested public and to empower civil society organisations for monitoring quality assurance in higher education. Project is funded by European Commission (IPA – Transition Assistance and Institution Building Component). <http://www.ipa-qualitywatch.eu/>
- **Peer-learning initiative for the social dimension of higher education (2012–2015):** the project aims to provide policy-makers and practitioners in Europe with resources to develop effective measures for improving the social dimension of higher education. The project is led by the Institute for Advanced Studies (Austria) and IDE is one of four project partners. The project is funded by the European Commission (Lifelong learning programme, ERASMUS Multilateral projects). www.pl4sd.eu
- **Enhancing procedures of validation of study programmes on the University of Rijeka (2015–2016):** goal of this project is to enhance the quality of education on the University of Rijeka through creating occupational standards, qualifications standards and study programmes and life-long learning programmes based on the learning outcomes and labour market needs. <http://unaprori.uniri.hr/o-projektu/>
- **IURISPRUDENTIA - Enhancing education quality on law schools of the universities in Osijek, Rijeka, and Split (2015–2016):** goal of the project is to harmonize and modernize existing study programmes and create standards of qualifications and partial occupational standards in the field of law studies. <http://www.pravos.unios.hr/iurisprudentia>
- **TARGET - Establishing higher education qualifications standards in the fields of mining engineering, geology and chemical technology (2015–2016):** purpose of the project is to improve the system of quality assurance in higher education in mining engineering, geology and chemical technology through enabling recognition of qualifications in Croatian and European labour market and the comparability of qualifications obtained in various higher education institutions within Croatia and throughout the EU. <http://www.rgn.unizg.hr/hr/studiji/projekt-target>