ICP Connect guidelines

Introduction to the formats and guidelines
ICP Connect 2025 Call

Phase 1 – Stage 2
Fully fledged – Final proposals

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SHARING MINDS, CHANGING LIVES

Agenda

13:00 – 13:15   Opening of session and intro

Jonathan Sudholt, Global Minds Manager

13:15 – 13:55   ICP Connect 2025 call basics and introduction to the formats

Ise De Smet, Mobility and Scholarship coordinator

13:55 – 14:15   Q&A

14:15 – 14:45   Financial guidelines & format for project proposal writing

Ise De Smet, Mobility and Scholarship coordinator

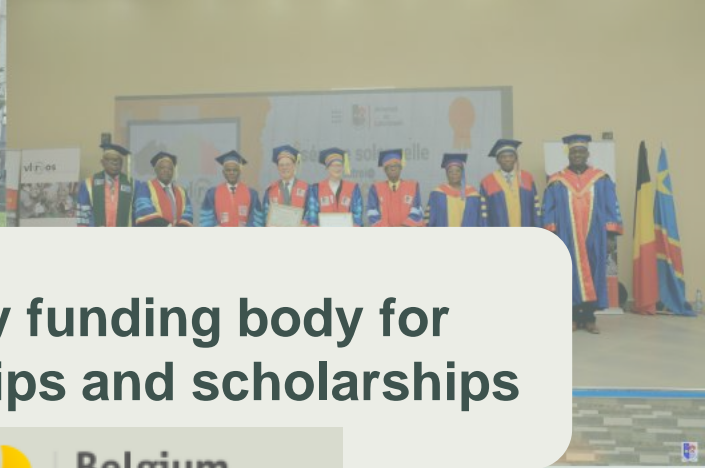Mathieu Lanin, Financial advisor

14:45 – 15:00   Q&A and closing

VLIR-UOS

VLIR-UOS

Primary funding body for partnerships and scholarships

Belgium
partner in development

Leading platform for all Flemish Higher Education Institutions

Our Pillars & Ambitions

Our Pillars

Grant Manager

VLIR-UOS designs programmes and funding schemes and oversees the full grant cycle of **partnerships & scholarships**

VLIR-UOS is responsible for reporting & has accountability towards funding government.

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Networking environment where community shares **information, experiences, results**, & explores and initiates **cooperation**

Creating platform where third parties can find academic **expertise and support for** (future) **projects**

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Knowledge Hub

Connecting partners and projects to create **new insights, knowledge, policies, tools and practices**

Pooling expertise on HES4SD and its **impact**

Claiming thought leadership in relevant **policy topics** or **research areas**.

Our Ambitions

Connect

Inspire

Learn

Mainstreamed throughout our ambitions, policies, portfolio, programmes, partnerships and scholarships

Leave no one Behind (LNOB) & inclusiveness

Interconnectedness & indivisibility

Coherence

Multi-institutional partnerships (MIPs)

Multi-stakeholder partnerships (MSPs)

VLIR-UOS
Revised Theory of Change

1 goal

⬇

3 impact areas

⬇

- -

6 **VLIR-UOS** outcomes
along 2 axes:
Individuals as agents of change
HEIs as driver of change

- -

⬇

6 **intermediate** change domains

Human Rights

- Human rights' framework Flemish universities

- Institution-specific operational framework to assess human rights' conditions

- Promoters are advised to reach out to the ICOS for more information.

1. Basic information

Disclaimer

A maximum of 10 projects were selected to advance to Stage 2. **These are the only projects that can apply to this current call for final proposals.**

A maximum of 6 ICP Connect projects can be selected during this Stage 2.

Two-stage procedure

Project submission in two stages:

1. **Stage 1 - Concept note - Completed**

- Focus on a <u>narrative description</u> of the sustainable development challenges the project wishes to address, overall strategy for the integration of global perspectives and network dimensions into the educational programme, project objectives and scientific approach (research and pedagogical methods, type of multidisciplinary and community-based approach,…).

- No operational and budget details.

- **Max. 10 selected projects** go to Stage 2.

Two-stage procedure

Project submission in two stages:

2. Stage 2 - Final proposal

- Building on Stage 1 concept note

- Fully developed Theory of Change

- Intermediate changes and activities

- Risk and stakeholder analysis

- Roles and responsibilities

- Budgeting

- **Max. 6 selected** ICP Connect projects.

Stage 2 : Important dates

ICP Connect Timeline

6 December 2023
Launch date of the call for proposals

14 December 2023
Online information session

25 April 2024 - 17h00 CET
Deadline for submission to VLIR-UOS

End of June 2024
Notification of selection decision

Start of the projects
Selected projects will be able to start their phase-in year as of 1 September 2024

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Application support

- The Institutional Coordinators for Development Cooperation (ICOS) / Global Engagement Officers (GEO).

- Liaison / first line of contact

- "Associatieve projecten" : set-up a minimum policy framework, organisational structure, and operation of HES4SD at institutional level + services to Flemish universities of applied sciences and arts

- Current ICP Connect programmes

- Hands-on training session in Brussels - 26 January 2024

Who are we & who to contact?

Ise De Smet

Mobility, ICP Connect,

ITP & Scholarships

ise.desmet@vliruos.be

Aimo Buelinckx

Mobility &

Scholarships Officer

Tim Zeuwts

Information

Management

data@vliruos.be

Expectations

- Final project proposal = beyond a promise but a clear project logic

- Strategy to gradually strengthen/build the partnership dimension and its implementation

- Depending on where you are at now – if (or not) building upon existing partnerships/networks

- Think about the long-term but what is feasible in one phase (5 years)

- True partnership = beneficial for both

- Partner ownership

- Support for scholarship candidates

Who can apply?

- Only 1 project proposal per Flemish lead promoter can be submitted. There can only be one Flemish lead promotor per project.

- Promotors of a current ICP (2022-2027) cannot submit an ICP 2025 project. They can, however, be a co-promoter or be part of a project team.

- Current ICP Connect projects (2022-2027) cannot submit a new proposal for the educational programme on which the project is based.

- ICPs that received funding before 2017 but were not selected for ICP Incremental Funding from FYP1 (2017-2022) onwards may apply.

- Different criteria for Flemish universities/ universities of applied sciences and arts

Eligibility of countries

- Partnerships with institutions from partner country list: A partner institution should be a higher education or science institution located in one of our 17 project partner countries: **Benin, Bolivia, Burundi, Cuba, DR Congo, Ecuador, Ethiopia, Indonesia, Kenya, Morocco, Peru, Philippines, Rwanda, South Africa, Tanzania, Uganda, Vietnam**

- **Scholarships for students from 29 country list:**

  o A reasonable cross-section of scholars from different countries and regions is targeted
  o Preference to candidates from vulnerable groups (Leave No One Behind).
  o A balance 40%- 60% gender ratio

Project duration

- 2 x 5 years maximum of 10 years in total.

- **Phase 1** focuses on **exploration** and the development and **implementation** of the ICP Connect strategy.

- **Phase 2** focuses on **consolidation, valorisation and sustaining the network**.

- Phase 1 and phase 2 of ICP connect projects have distinct results and activities, especially with regard to partnerships and alumni.

- Projects can move to Phase 2 on the condition of good performance, as will be assessed during a mid-term evaluation and on the basis of the assessment of a Phase 2 project proposal.

Budgetary Framework

- Selection is valid for a five-year period, with conditional renewal for another five-year term.

- The project is free to spread the total budget over the different activity years. The total project budget amounts to a maximum total budget for 5 years of:

  - € 750,000 for programmes of 120/180 ECTS
  - € 500,000 for programmes of 60 ECTS

- Exception: phase-in year : maximum of € 50,000

- One-time bonus for inter-institutional programmes: a complementary budget of € 20,000

Budgetary Framework

- The **scholarship budget** amounts to a maximum yearly intake of:

  - Annual intake of 12 / 10 new 1st year scholarships per study programme per academic year (Phase 1/2) (for programmes of 60-90-120 ECTS);
  - Annual intake of 8 / 7 new 1st year scholarships per programme per academic year (Phase 1/2) (for programmes of 180 ECTS)

- This is not part of the budget format since it is separate funding.

Procedure

- Assessment by the VLIR-UOS Educational (ITP & ICP Connect) Selection Commission

- The selection will be based on the **submitted proposals**, in combination with an **oral defence** per project.

- Four standard selection criteria: Relevance and coherence of the project; Quality of the project design; Implementation set-up of the project; Potential impact and sustainability.

- Since ICP Connect projects emerge from accredited study programmes, the emphasis is on the strategy to delocalize study material to local partners and to establish an international network

Procedure

- When: June 20, 2024

- Where: VLIR-UOS Office

- Who: may consist of up to three delegates – only live participation (not online/hybrid)

- How:

  - Max. five minutes to pitch your proposal

  - Oral defence - questions not shared beforehand

Start of the project

- Selected projects will be able to start as of 1 **September 2025**.

- The communication campaign for scholarships for the academic year 2024-2025 can be launched from **June 2024** onwards. This is also the phase-in year (optional but not mandatory).

Resources

- **[Website](): Call ICP Connect 2025 – Stage 2**

- **[Call document]() as entry point**

- **How?**
  - [Formats]() = working documents (Call Annexes)
  - Project applications are submitted through an [online platform]() (individual links!)

How does it work? ^

Who can apply? ^

Which partner countries are eligible? ^

Budgetary framework ^

How does the assessment procedure work? ^

Useful documents ^

Timeline ^

Need inspiration for a VLIR-UOS project? Here are some ideas for your project proposal. ^

How to submit a proposal? ^

APPLY NOW

Additional support

- Support videos: Theory of Change for ICP Connect projects tutorial

- Methodological background document: info on theory of change concepts / integration of SDG principles

- Framework for Scholarships in Belgium + conceptual framework of VLIR-UOS' scholarship strategy.

- Gender policy

- Current ICP projects & their mid-term evaluation

- Information per country – country reference frameworks

2. Formats and guidelines

Tool environment

- Access your project through an individual tool link – no new project needs to made

- General information copied but freedom to fill in most fields

- Copy of team members however not exactly the same format, additional data needs to be filled in! Be careful with DoB, discipline institution, etc.

Content: 8 modules

1: Context / problem analysis

2: Project strategy (Impact statement and ToC)

3: Organisation

4: Stakeholder management

5: Planning & budgeting

6: Risk management

7: Monitoring & evaluation

8: Learning & steering

Context / problem analysis

1. Sustainable development context
2. Individual and organisational capacity building context

ESSENCE
Develop a broad – and shared – understanding of the system in which the desired change is needed. The context analysis justifies the **importance / relevance** of the project, delimits the **scope** and contextualizes the **reasons** why the project is needed (i.e. interconnected **problems** being faced).

Each max. 3,000 characters

Project strategy
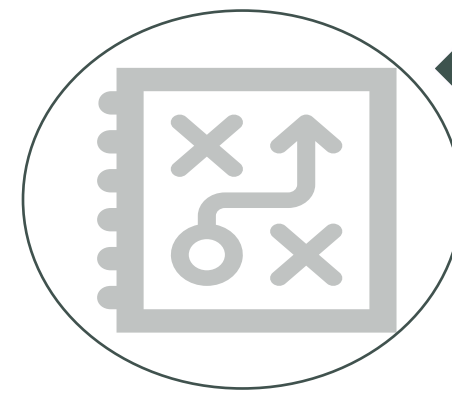
1. **Impact statement**
2. **Theory of Change (ToC)**

ESSENCE
Envision the desired long-term change (**ambition**) to which the project wants to contribute. Describe and visualise **change pathways** to develop an impact-oriented **strategy** with concrete activities and **deliverables** in the selected project change **domains**.

Developing a theory of change

Narrative description of the project strategy and the change process

Describe your project strategy along 3 key questions.

A fully-fledged ToC is not requested, rather the alignment of your project with the general VLIR-UOS ToC.

Key questions
1. What is the long-term change to which you want to contribute **= Why ?**
2. **What** do you want to achieve with your project in 5 years?
3. **How** do you want to do it?

Outline detail on the following slides

Developing a ToC – Key Question 1

Key questions

1) What is the long-term change to which you want to contribute = **Why?** → short **impact statement**

   ⚑ *Max. 500 characters*

2) Elaborate on the envisaged impact, why it is important and for whom? = **Why and for whom?**

   ⚑ *Max. 1,500 characters*

Developing a ToC – Key Question 2

What do you want to achieve in 5 years?
The **changes** you want to achieve/observe by the end of first phase of the project
How these align with the **VLIR-UOS outcomes** (cf. call document / ICP Connect ToC)

Max. 3,000 characters
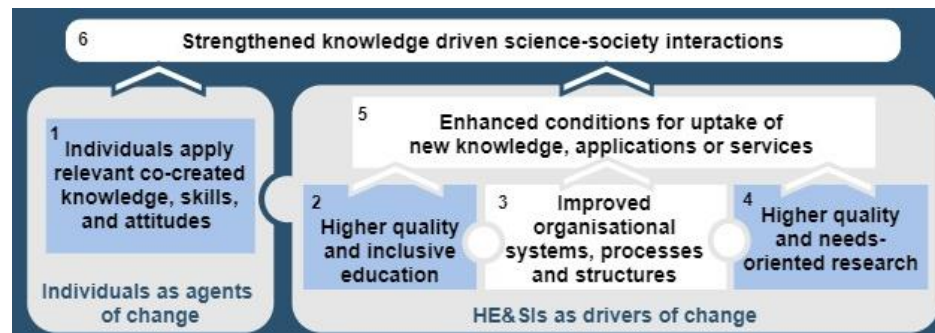
Select the relevant VLIR-UOS outcomes and domains to which your project aligns in the VLIR-UOS tool

Developing a ToC – Key Question 3

How do you want to do it?

Explain how :
- Describe your operational plan and methodological approaches
- Specify the role of the partner(s)
- Identify key deliverables and activities

→ Activities are to be organized according to the six standard VLIR-UOS project domains

Max. 6,000 characters

Developing a ToC – Sustainability

Describe the sustainability challenges of the project results and the possible strategies to tackle those challenges.

- Challenges of the project results after the VLIR-UOS funding has ended in terms of continuation of improved research/education/extension activities +

→ the possible strategies to tackle those challenges

- What results would you hope to sustain after the project period?
- What is feasible, taking into account the situation at your institution(s) and involved partners' institution(s)?

Max. 1,500 characters

Integration of the 3 SDG principles

Explain how your project integrates the 3 SDG principles :
- Interconnectedness with due attention for the integration of gender, diversity & inclusion, and environment
- Coherence, Multi-Institutional partnerships and Multi-Stakeholder partnerships
- Leave No One Behind (LNOB)

Max. 4,000 characters

Organisation
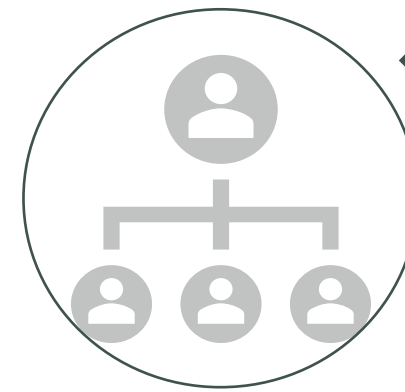
1. Who is involved?
2. How is the project structured/organised?

ESSENCE
Describe **who** is (internally) involved in the implementation of the project – and how. Clarify the **structure of the organisation** and assigned **roles** and responsibilities of individuals working on the project.

Max. 3,500 characters

Organisation : Annex 1

Who is involved?
Update the information about who is involved in the project in the Excel format. Apart from personnel details, information is requested on the experience and contribution (know-how, expertise, etc.) to the project.
Preference: online links to CVs

First name	Last name	Role in the project	Email address	Nationality	Gender	Date of birth	Institution	Institution (free field)

Department/unit	Discipline	Function within the institution	Previous involvement in VLIR-UOS project(s)	Experience and contribution to the project	Curriculum vitae (link)

Organisation

Targeted communication and recruitment policy
- Focus on specific region or country or specific background (LNOB)
- How will you reach
  - participants from the VLIR-UOS scholarship list
  - Both male and female participants in a 60/40 ratio
- How will you incorporate these scholars in your programme & what (specific) services will they receive?

Max. 3,000 characters

Organisation

Selection criteria for candidate-participants (students)
- Examples
  - Academic level
  - Domain(s) of previous education
  - Professional expertise
- Describe the procedure (incl. selection commission) to select (scholarship) candidates.
- How will you involve actual/potential partner(s)?

Max. 3,000 characters

Stakeholder management

1. Identification
2. Analysis
3. Strategy

ESSENCE
Identify and **analyse** the project stakeholders and elaborate a strategy to **manage** the stakeholders throughout the project.

Max. 3,000 characters

Identify the 5 most important stakeholders

Planning and budgeting
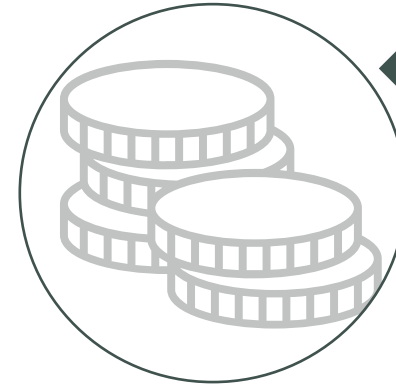
1. Operational plan
2. Budget

ESSENCE
Focus on how the project will contribute to the set goals in the six project domains. It specifies what activities must be done to achieve a particular goal (or goals), when they need to be done and who is going to do them. Includes both the **outputs that need to be delivered and the financial & human resources attached to it.**

Operational plan

In the operational plan, activities are to be organized according to the six standard VLIR-UOS project domains

Domain	Intermediate change
Research programmes and methods	Improved (interdisciplinary) methodologies and strengthened quality and relevance of research to allow for better knowledge management and high-quality research results serving societal needs
Education programmes and methods	Improved, innovative and inclusive teaching methods, didactics, and digital approaches. Improved curriculum content to support knowledge co-creation and equip students with the necessary skills and knowledge ensuring their employability after graduation and ability to tackle global challenges from a holistic, interdisciplinary perspective
Outreach and policy support	Enhanced interaction with relevant public, private and academic stakeholders to share knowledge, create the conditions for uptake and provide policy advice/support
Systems, policies, and infrastructure	Better management, information systems, educational and research policies to improve functioning of HE&SIs, including policies on gender and diversity, research integrity and uptake. Improved equipment, laboratories and offices for education and research
People	Students, alumni, staff, researchers are trained/sensitised in a supportive learning environment to strengthen their knowledge, skills & attitudes in diverse domains (e.g. leadership, global citizenship).
Networks and partnerships	Strengthened interactions within reciprocal partnerships and engagements at local, regional and global levels between HE&SIs, researchers, staff, students and other stakeholders in society (public actors, private actors, other civil society organisations (CSOs), communities, etc.) for sustainable development

Activities : Annex 1

ACTIVITIES

Please provide information on the activities of your project.

Please also note the following:
- Please do not leave any rows empty inbetween filled rows. **This will disrupt the import process.**
- Please do not change or delete the column headers. **This will disrupt the import process.**
- Further explanations are provided below when you click the header of each column (e.g. "Description").

Domain	Description	AY0 - S1	AY0 - S2	AY1 - S1	AY1 - S2	AY2 - S1	AY2 - S2	AY3 - S1	AY3 - S2	AY4 - S1	AY4 - S2	AY5

Budgetfile : Annex 2

Budget lines
A. Investment costs
A.1. General investment costs
A.2. Vehicles
A.3. ICT
B. Operational costs
B.1. General: goods & services
B.2. Dissemination & uptake (events)
B.3. ICT (operations and services)
B.4. International mobility & subsistence
B.5. Local mobility & subsistence
C. Personnel costs
C.1. Employment contracts
C.2. Topping-up
D. Scholarship costs
D.1. Short term scholarship allowances in Belgium
D.2. Study scholarship allowances in Belgium
D.3. Research scholarship allowances in Belgium
D.4. Short term scholarship allowances in partner country
D.5. Study scholarship allowances in partner country
D.6. Research scholarship allowances in partner country
Total A-D
E. Coordination Costs
E.1. Coordination costs in Belgium
E.2. Partner coordination costs
TOTAL

Budget: value for money

Motivate & elaborate how much will be spent on the different activities and why you choose this repartition + explain co-funding

Particular attention :

    (a) any personnel costs,

    (b) investment costs or

    (c) phase-in year + one time bonus (if applicable)

If relevant, identify what parts of the budget will be managed by which partner (Flemish/partner HEI(s)).
For the 10% coordination cost, clarify
    (a) 10% coordination cost in Belgium (10% lump sum) or
    (b) 5% coordination cost at the level of the Flemish institution + 5% at the level of
         the Partner institution (if relevant to be subdivided over different institutions).

Max. 3,000 characters

Risk management
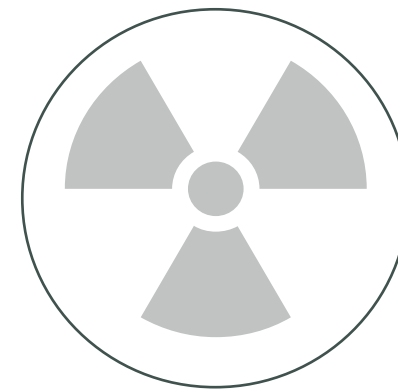
1. Identification
2. Assessment
3. Risk response and monitoring

Identify, analyse, and manage the key risks the project will potentially face.

- Identify and analyse key risks of the project.

- Formulate a mitigation strategy.

Max. 2,000 characters

Monitoring and evaluation

Describe your approach in terms of monitoring & quality assurance
- Describe how you will assess/monitor the results of your project (can be both qualitative or quantitative).
- What would success look like and how will you assess it?
- What is your strategy for continuous learning and your plan to incorporate monitoring results/lessons learned into actions?
- Selected projects will be asked to report on a limited set of generic, standard indicators

Max. 2,000 characters

Learning and steering
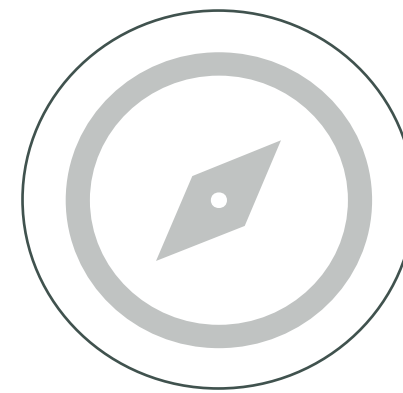
1. Lessons learned
2. Follow-up & steering

ESSENCE
Describe how to follow-up on changes, adaptations and **lessons learned** from (previous) experiences in order to improve the quality of the project.

Learning and steering

Key questions

1) Project track record:

- Relevant previous experiences or projects between the project partners and describe the achievements / actions already undertaken. How will the lessons learned from previous experiences be taken on board?
- In case of ICP projects that received funding before 2017 but were not selected for ICP Incremental Funding from FYP1 (2017-2022): Add and highlight key evolutions since 2017.
  (A checkbox will be included in the online submission tool)

Max. 2.000 characters

2) How did you take into account the conclusions and recommendations formulated by the ICP Connect selection commission (Stage 1 – ICP Connect concept note)? How were these integrated?

Max. 1,500 characters

Annexes

Annexes should be all composed in English. No further annexes will be accepted for review other than simple uploaded images.

- Annex 1: Excel sheet with ICP connect modules Organisation and Activities
- Annex 2 : ICP Connect budget format

Mandatory Annexes without format
- Annex 3: CVs of the promoters (if no online link)

Optional Annexes
- Endorsement letter of the partner institution(s)
- CVs of co-promoters (not mandatory, except if the project is submitted by a Flemish post-doc and supported by a Flemish co-promoter with min. 10% ZAP status)

Recommendations

- The content of the proposal should be suitable for a broad scientific public and in English.

- Incorporation of gender (number, organisation, content) can be improved. Not only focus on numbers.

- Gender, LNOB and SDG's are sometimes hard to detect and are less prominently developed, their transformative role should be more present.

- The needs analysis has to take all the partners into account (in Flanders and in the VLIR-UOS partner countries).

- Student services information (from before the programme start) should be better incorporated/mentioned.

Recommendations

- A clearly developed plan of implementation.

- The proposals would benefit from demonstrating how the learnings and experiences from previous projects or courses have brought about positive change and the value these adjustments bring (not purely listing previous projects). Mention adjustments you are making explicitly.

- Team table = making clear who is going to deliver the project, not listing everyone involved.

- Reflection on monitoring and evaluation should be strengthened, how this will be done and steering of actions.