



OPPORTUNITY FUND MANUAL

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A project of:



Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
Confédération suisse
Confederazione Svizzera
Confederaziun svizra

Swiss Agency for Development
and Cooperation SDC

Implemented by:



HELVETAS
NORTH MACEDONIA



MACEDONIAN
CIVIC
EDUCATION
CENTER



СТОПАНСКА КОМОРА
НА МАКЕДОНИЈА
ECONOMIC CHAMBER
OF MACEDONIA

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1. Terminology

Applicant: An eligible entity which can apply to the published Call for applications;

Application package: The package of all necessary documents and data submitted by the applicant;

Approved budget: Approved financial resources for the selected applications;

Call for applications: Public mechanism whereby a selection process is launched to select applicants on a competitive basis;

Cooperation contract: Contract which outlines the basic terms for cooperation, signed by the applicant and the E4E@mk legal representative;

Full project proposal: Information to be filled by the applicant in templates provided by E4E@mk, to apply for the Opportunity Fund;

Learner: Participant in non-formal VSD training with attendance of at least 70%.

1.1. Abbreviations

E4E@mk – Education for Employment in Macedonia project

PIU – Project Implementation Unit

SDC – Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation

TP – Training Provider

VSD – Vocational Skills Development

VET – Vocational Education and Training

MCEC – Macedonian Civic Education Center

ECM – Economic Chamber of Macedonia

2. Introduction

2.1. Objective of the Opportunity Fund

The main objective of the Opportunity Fund is to support VSD Providers towards provision of market-oriented and sustainable VSD offers, which lead to immediate employment¹ of the learners. Specific objectives are defined as:

- Increased number of employments as a result of the VSD offers
- Increased number of learners making use of non-formal VSD offers
- More market-oriented non-formal VSD offers
- Sustainable financing mechanisms of non-formal VSD offers

2.2. Eligible applicants of the Opportunity Fund

Eligible applicants of the Opportunity Fund include:

- a) Private providers of non-formal VSD
- b) VET Schools providing non-formal VSD
- c) CSOs providing non-formal VSD
- d) Employers providing in-house VSD

Note: All four categories of applicants are hereinafter referred to as “VSD provider”

Private providers, VET Schools and CSOs providing non-formal VSD can apply for the Opportunity Fund only in cooperation with one or multiple employers who guarantee in a written form to employ at least 35% of the trained learners within 3 months after completion of the VSD training. The cooperation with the employer/s shall be proved by a written declaration of the employer/s. This document is an integral part of the application.

An **employer providing in-house VSD** must prove the capacity to implement the proposed VSD training. Additionally, the employer shall guarantee in a written form to employ 50% of the trained learners within 3 months after completion of the VSD training. This document is an integral part of the application.

3. Methodology, organization and procedures

3.1. Eligibility criteria for application

The Opportunity Fund:

- Is open for applicants from the 7 economic sectors supported by the E4E@mk project: [(1) Hospitality, (2) Health and Social Care, (3) Personal Services, (4) Agriculture, (5) Food Technology (6) Machinery, (7) (Applied²) IT];

¹ The employment needs to be established during or within maximum 3 months after the completion of the training.

- Will give priority to applications which provide the highest numbers of trained and employed persons.

Note: One applicant can be supported maximum twice within the Opportunity Fund.

3.2. Call for applications

The Call for applications will be published four times per year as follows:

No of Call	Published	Deadline
1 st Call	End of February	End of March
2 nd Call	Beginning of April	End of April
3 rd Call	Beginning of June	End of June
4 th Call	Beginning of September	End of September

Note: If needed, additional Calls for applications will be published upon decision of the PIU.

The Call for applications will be published through (but not limited to) the communication channels of E4E@mk, SDC, MCEC and ECM.

3.3. Application procedure

Interested applicants shall develop their own proposal according to the template stated as Annex 2. The complete application package which needs to be submitted by the interested applicants includes:

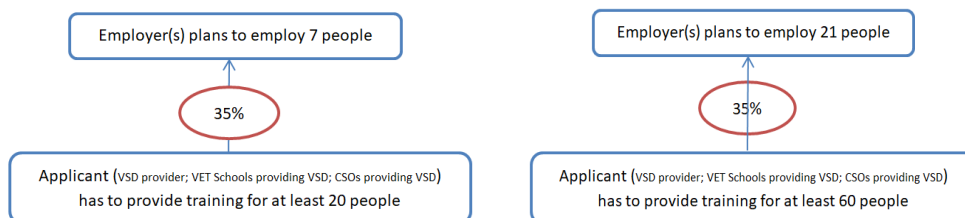
- Applicant's Registration certificate issued by the Central Registry of the Republic of North Macedonia;
- Solvency Statement;
- Fully completed Application template with required annexes (Budget template, Training programme);
- Written commitment by single or multiple employers that at least 35% (or 50% in case of employer providing in-house VSD) of the persons who have successfully completed the VSD training will be employed.

Note: Eligible to attend the trainings are unemployed youth age 18-29. Youth younger than 18 years of age are not allowed to be selected as learners. On average, up to 35% of the learners can exceed this age range i.e. can be older than 29.

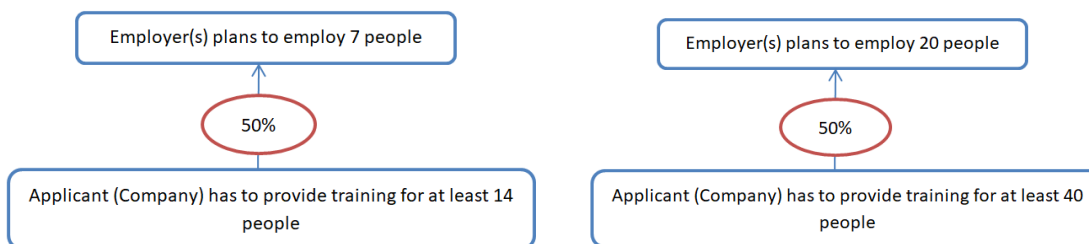
² Applied IT combines the usage of digital technology in relation to vocational skills development. The Opportunity Fund will not support proposal where main focus is software development.

The graphical representations below could serve as examples:

- i) Example for the following applicant categories: Private providers of non-formal VSD; VET Schools providing non-formal VSD; CSOs providing non-formal VSD.



- ii) Example for category - Employers providing in-house VSD.



Interested applicants may submit questions for clarification during application process to the following email address: boris.trimcev@helvetas.org with a subject: **OF 2019 Question**

During the evaluation process of the applications the project will not provide additional information related to the applications.

3.4. Budget formation per application

As part of the application package, the applicants shall provide a budget proposal based on the budget template provided (Annex 3). The following constraints must be considered when preparing the budget:

- The total budget is composed of a minimum contribution by the employer and/or the learner in the amount of 20% (provided in cash or in kind) and a maximum contribution of 80% by E4E@mk;
- The maximum amount per learner trained should not exceed the market price for related trainings in the sector;
- The prices stated in the budget must be realistic ones. Applications with unrealistic budgets will be rejected;
- The requested contribution from E4E@mk should not exceed 500.000 MKD.

3.4.1 Eligible costs (but not limited to)

- Costs for the teacher(s)/professor(s);
- Costs for the mentor(s) in the company/practical learning;
- Materials used during the training (detailed description needed);
- Cost for premises where the training will take place.

3.4.2 Non-eligible costs

- Costs related to the learners (transport, per diems etc.);
- Purchase of equipment;
- Costs for activities which are not directly linked to the training.

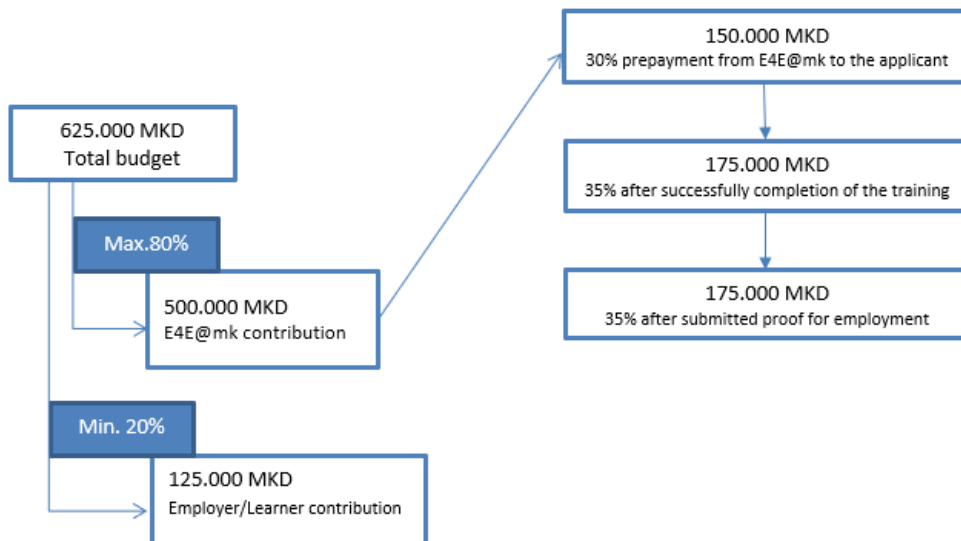
3.5. E4E@mk financial contribution and payment procedure

The agreed financial contribution of the E4E@mk is provided to the VSD Provider.

The financial contribution is dependent on the number and the ratio of learners trained and learners employed. From the agreed E4E@mk financial contribution 65% are paid per learners who completed the training and the remaining 35% per learners who are employed by the company within 3 months after completion of the training.

The contribution for both trained and employed learners will be reduced proportionally if the proposed numbers in the application are not reached.

The following scheme presents an example of the E4E@mk financing scheme under the assumption of the maximum possible budget / contribution (500.000 MKD) provided by E4E@mk, and under assumption that all learners have successfully completed the training and out of them 35% are employed within given time frame (within 3 months after the completion of the training)).



Graph 1. E4E@mk financing scheme

Note: In cooperation with the VSD provider, E4E@mk will monitor closely the VSD training development/implementation and will measure its impact on employability of the learners through different measurement methods.

3.5.1 Payment procedure

- After signing the agreement, the applicant will receive 30% of the total E4E@mk contribution budget as a Prepayment for the implementation of the activities;
- The Midpoint installment (35%) will be payed to the applicant after successful completion of the training. If some of the learners will be present less than 70% out of the total number of planned lessons it will be counted as “not completed training” and the amount will be correspondingly reduced;
- The Final installment (35%) will be payed to the applicant after submitted proof for employment for the learners. If less than 35% of the learners are employed the amount will be correspondingly reduced.

i) The following table summarizes the payment procedure

Total budget	Max 80% E4E@mk contribution	Min 20% employer/learner contribution
Prepayment	30% after signing the financing agreement	
Midpoint payment	35% after successful completion of the training	
Final payment	35% after submitted proof for employment	

3.6. Training criteria

- A learner is counted as trained if she/he attended minimum 70% of the training programme;
- The training programme is an integral part of the application, and agreed upon with PIU;
- There is no time limitation regarding the duration of the training;
- Drop outs (learners who leave the VSD training) can be replaced during the implementation of the first 30% of the training programme;
- The location of the VSD training must be on the territory of the Republic of North Macedonia.

3.7. Submission of documents

Interested applicants should submit the complete documentation electronically in scanned (PDF) form. The applicants are encouraged to submit their applications in English language.

Proposals submitted in Macedonian or Albanian language will be taken into consideration too. The applicants are invited to submit the documents to the following e-mail address: boris.trimcev@helvetas.org with a subject: **OF 2019 Application**.

4. Checklist

<i>Checklist – required documents</i>		
1	Applicant's Registration certificate issued by the Central Registry of the Republic of North Macedonia	Yes/No
2	Solvency statement	Yes/No
3	Completed Application template	Yes/No
4	Completed Budget template	Yes/No
5	Training programme	Yes/No
6	Written commitment by single or multiple employers that at least 35% (50% in the case of in-house VSD) of the persons who have successfully finished the training will be employed (Guarantee Template provided)	Yes/No