



20.12.2017

21/2017

## ADMINISTRATIVE AND REPORTING GUIDELINES

### FIRST+ 2018–2019: THE FINNISH-RUSSIAN STUDENT AND TEACHER MOBILITY PROGRAMME

#### 1 GENERAL

The FIRST+ Programme (Finnish-Russian Student and Teacher Exchange) promotes partnership and collaboration between higher education institutions in Finland and in Northwest Russia. EDUFI has granted the FIRST+ project allowances for Finnish higher education institutions to implement student and teacher mobility as well as joint intensive courses between Finnish and Russian institutions of higher education. The allowance excludes any administrative costs incurred by the higher education institution.

The amount of the grant is announced in the decision and it is based on mobility activities, in the case of individual mobility. The final grant for the network will be determined according to the implemented mobilities (number of months/days) in connection to the final report. However, the final grant cannot exceed the grant announced in the decision, unless the network has applied and has been granted an additional grant during Autumn 2018.

The co-ordinating institution is responsible for the use of grants and will report to EDUFI after the agreement period. Grants are awarded to the coordinating institution, which will allocate them further to the students/teachers.

#### 2 DISTANCE CATEGORIES

The level of an individual mobility grant (all types of mobility) will be determined according to two distance categories.

**CATEGORY 1:** North-western Russia

Republic of Karelia  
Komi Republic  
Arkhangelskaya oblast  
Vologodskaya oblast  
Kaliningradskaya oblast  
Leningradskaya oblast  
Murmanskaya oblast  
Novgorodskaya oblast  
Pskovskaya oblast  
Nenetsky autonomous okrug  
Saint Petersburg

**CATEGORY 2:** All the other parts of  
Russia



20.12.2017

### 3 ACTIVITIES: STUDENT MOBILITY

The following principles should be complied with in the implementation of both long-term and short-term student mobility:

#### RECOGNITION OF STUDIES

Studies completed during the exchange will be recognised as part of a student's degree.

#### CITIZENSHIP

Students enrolled in a FIRST+ network institution are eligible to participate in the activities irrespective of nationality. However, as a rule, students may not undertake an exchange in their home country.

Mobility from Finland to Russia: Students who have Russian citizenship/background must have conducted their comprehensive school and/or general upper secondary education in Finland.

#### PRACTICAL TRAINING AND JOINT DEGREE PROGRAMMES

Mobility periods may also include practical training, if it is fully recognised as part of the student's degree. The programme also supports mobility in joint educational programmes (e.g. double degrees).

#### THE LEVEL AND FIELDS OF STUDY

The FIRST+ programme supports both long-term and short-term student mobility at BA, MA and PhD level. The programme is open to all fields of education, including students in Finland majoring in Russian language or students in Russia majoring in Finnish language (e.g. philology or translation studies) with the following condition:

- Mobility from Finland to Russia: Students majoring in Russian language (e.g. philology or translation studies) are not allowed to choose their major subject for their studies in a Russian institution.
- Mobility from Russia to Finland: Students majoring in Finnish language (e.g. philology or translation studies) are not allowed to choose their major subject for their studies in a Finnish institution.

#### 3.1 LONG-TERM STUDENT MOBILITY (OUTGOING AND INCOMING)

The FIRST+ programme supports long-term student mobility at BA, MA and PhD level, both from Finland to Russia as well as from Russia to Finland.

The duration of a long-term mobility period is 2-12 months.

The maximum student grants for long-term mobility are divided to two categories (see paragraph 3 "Distance Categories" for more details):

- CATEGORY 1: max grant €560/month
- CATEGORY 2: max grant €650/month

The amount is the maximum FIRST+ grant that can be paid to one beneficiary each month. The networks can decide on the individual grant level. The grant payment is based on an average number of four months of a mobility period, in other words one long-term student mobility grant (CAT1 or CAT2) consists of the monthly grant multiplied by four (4).



20.12.2017

In the final report stage the mobility grant will be calculated according to the realized long-term student mobilities in months.

Only one long-term student exchange grant can be paid for by a student.

A long-term student exchange can be part of joint educational programmes. The exchange period may include practical training if it is fully recognised as part of the student's degree.

Higher education institutions which participate in the north2north (n2n) programme of the University of the Arctic are eligible to apply for FIRST+ student grants for students enrolled in an n2n institution in north-west Russia.

### 3.2 SHORT-TERM STUDENT MOBILITY (OUTGOING ONLY)

The FIRST+ programme supports short-term student mobility at BA, MA and PhD level from Finland to Russia (NB! The FIRST+ programme does not support short-term mobilities from Russia to Finland).

Support can be applied for short-term mobilities, for example intensive study courses in a certain study field or practical training. However, participation in short-term language courses or cultural excursions is not a subject for support.

Duration of a short-term student mobility can be 5-59 days.

The maximum student grant for short-term mobility for CATEGORY 1 is as follows:

- up to the 7th day of activity: €50 per day
- between the 8th and 59th day of activity: €20 per day

The maximum student grant for short-term mobility for CATEGORY 2 is as follows:

- up to the 7th day of activity: €70 per day
- between the 8th and 59th day of activity: €20 per day

The amount is the maximum FIRST+ grant that can be paid to one beneficiary per day. The networks can decide on the individual grant level. The grant payment is based on an average number of 14 days of a mobility period, in other words one short-term student mobility grant has been calculated as follows:

- CATEGORY 1: (7 days x €50) + (7 days x €20) = €490
- CATEGORY 2: (7 days x €70) + (7 days x €20) = €630

In the final report stage the final mobility grant will be calculated according to the realised short-term mobilities in days.

## 4 ACTIVITIES: TEACHER MOBILITY (OUTGOING AND INCOMING)

The FIRST+ programme supports teacher mobility both from Finland to Russia and from Russia to Finland. The teaching provided during an exchange must be an integral part of the hosting institution's curriculum. Teaching may be given at any degree level.

The minimum duration of a teaching exchange is five teaching hours. Teacher mobility grants can be used to cover travel and subsistence costs.



20.12.2017

The maximum teaching grant in the FIRST+ programme is:

- CATEGORY 1: max grant €100/day
- CATEGORY 2: max grant €120/day

The amount is the maximum FIRST+ grant that can be paid to one beneficiary per day. The networks can decide on the individual grant level. The grant payment is based on an average number of three (3) days of a mobility period, in other words one teacher mobility grant (CAT1 or CAT2) has been calculated as follows:

- CATEGORY 1: 3 days x €100 = €300
- CATEGORY 2: 3 days x €120 = €360

In the final report stage the final mobility grant will be calculated according to the realised teacher mobilities in days.

## 5 ACTIVITIES: INTENSIVE COURSES

Intensive courses are short study periods which provide students and teachers with an opportunity to work together in a Russian-Finnish group. All intensive courses in the FIRST+ programme take place in Russia as a joint effort of two or more institutions (at least one Finnish and one Russian partner).

The minimum duration is one week (five working days + travel days). There must be an equal number of participating students and teachers from Finland and Russia.

Studies completed on an intensive course must be recognised as part of a student's degree. Intensive courses cannot consist of language studies or research alone.

Funding granted for intensive courses is intended to cover organisational expenses, especially participants' travel and subsistence costs. The support cannot be used for salaries and fees. An estimated budget for the intensive course should be included in the project plan.

There are three categories for an intensive course budget: a) travel costs, b) accommodation and subsistence costs and c) organisational costs. It is recommended that the category c) organisational costs do not exceed 20% of the total intensive course budget.

## 6 FLEXIBILITY RULES IN INDIVIDUAL MOBILITY ACTIVITIES

### 6.1 CHANGES IN THE PROJECT

The FIRST+ programme funding is allocated in line with the priorities and quality criteria of the programme, outlined in the Call for Proposals. Mobility within a network should follow the blueprint of the decision. If there are any greater changes relative to the grant decision, institutions must submit to EDUFI a well-justified amendment request in advance, especially when the changes affect the reciprocity of exchanges. Such changes must also be justified in the final report. Changes for which approval has not been sought may impact on the final level of support and on future grant decisions.



20.12.2017

## 6.2 UNIT COST GRANTS

The grant amounts are based on the average length of the mobility period and on the maximum grants as follows:

- CAT 1 LONG-TERM STUDENT MOBILITY: 2240 € (=4 months x 560 €)
- CAT 2 LONG-TERM STUDENT MOBILITY: 2600 € (=4 months x 650 €)
  
- CAT 1 SHORT-TERM STUDENT MOBILITY: (7 days x 50 €) + (7 days x 20 €) = 490 €
- CAT 2 SHORT-TERM STUDENT MOBILITY: (7 days x 70 €) + (7 days x 20 €) = 630 €
  
- CAT 1 TEACHER MOBILITY: 300 € (=3 days x 100 €)
- CAT 2 TEACHER MOBILITY: 360 € (=3 days x 120 €)

The networks can decide on the individual grant level and this may affect the final number of mobilities. The previous cooperation and amount of realized mobility figures during the previous agreement periods have a significant influence on the grant decisions. Especially the realized mobilities from Finland to Russia play a crucial role in the future decision making. Please note also the possibility to report all mobility periods respecting the FIRST+ criteria to EDUFI in final reporting (as zero-grant mobilities). This includes both student and teacher mobilities not receiving FIRST+-funding.

## 6.2 FLEXIBILITY BETWEEN ACTIVITIES

The allocation is categorized by mobility direction as follows:

- Direction A.: Mobilities from Finland to Russia
- Direction B.: Mobilities from Russia to Finland

There is no budget flexibility from the Direction A to Direction B, ie. the networks are not allowed to transfer outgoing mobility grants for incoming mobility grants. However, flexibility from the Direction B to Direction A exists (requires a well-justified amendment request in advance).

Transfers inside the Direction A are possible as follows:

- Transfers between long-term and short-term student budget

Transfers both inside the Direction A and Direction B are possible as follows:

- Transfers from teacher mobility to student mobility (but not between directions)
- Upon a justified amendment request in advance: transfers from student mobility to teacher mobility

For Russian incoming mobilities (Direction B) additional funding may be applied only if the Direction A mobilities are implemented.

## 7 ACCESSIBILITY GRANT

The FIRST+ programme welcomes applications for accessibility grants for students and teachers participating in the programme. Accessibility grants support the participation in the programme of persons with special needs whose participation – for reasons of physical or mental health – calls for additional financial assistance.



20.12.2017

Accessibility grants are applied for on a separate form. There is a rolling deadline for these applications, to be handled by EDUFI on a case-by-case basis. More information is available on EDUFI's web-pages at <http://www.cimo.fi/ohjelmat/firstplus>.

## 8 GRANT AGREEMENT PERIOD, ADDITIONAL FUNDS AND REPORTING

### 8.1 AGREEMENT PERIOD

The funding awarded may be used within the period from 1 January 2018 to 31 August 2019.

### 8.2 ADDITIONAL FUNDING AND INTERIM REPORT

An interim report must be submitted to EDUFI by 28.09.2018 via the State Aid System (valtionapujärjestelmä). The electronic reporting system will automatically send a link to the beneficiaries before the reporting deadline. The interim report includes statistical and financial reports on the network activities up to then and an estimate of the total expenditure of the agreement period. Qualitative reporting and verifying documents are not requested at the interim reporting stage. Part of the programme funding (ca. 50.000 €) is reserved for additional funds. In connection to the interim report the beneficiaries may apply for additional funding if the number of mobilities is estimated to be higher compared to the granted mobilities in the initial decision. In the same connection, those networks which estimate that there will be unused grants during the funding period, may indicate this in the interim report for optimization of the funding.

### 8.3 FINAL REPORT

The final report must be submitted to EDUFI by 15.10.2019 via the State Aid System (valtionapujärjestelmä). The electronic reporting system will automatically send a link to the beneficiaries before the reporting deadline. The final report includes:

- a) Qualitative report: a qualitative summing-up report of project implementation. The template will be provided on the EDUFI FIRST+ webpage and the report will be filled in in the State Aid System.
- b) Statistical and financial report: The statistical and financial reports on student and teacher mobility and on the intensive course are drawn up in Excel and annexed to the electronic State Aid reporting system. Reporting templates will be made available on the EDUFI FIRST+ website.
  - The final report should also include any student and teacher mobility which has taken place without a FIRST grant.
- c) Documents to be appended to the final report: extract of accounts, with total sums tallying with those in the statistical and financial reports and showing the costs allocated to the project
- d) In case of intensive courses: The beneficiary will have to provide a participant list of intensive course participants including each individual participant's (students and teachers) signature and the dates (arrival date and departure date) of the participant.

## 9 FURTHER INFORMATION

More information about the programme and application guidelines will be updated on EDUFI's website at: <http://www.cimo.fi/ohjelmat/firstplus>

email: [FIRST@OPH.fi](mailto:FIRST@OPH.fi)