



## Frequently asked questions for the TCA Officers

v1 (08.04.2019.)

### **1. What are the objectives and targets of the Transnational Cooperation Activities (TCA)**

Transnational Cooperation Activities (TCA) aim at bringing added value and improving quality in the overall Erasmus+ programme implementation and so contributing to the increase of Programme impact at systemic level. Thus TCAs are tools for National Agencies (NAs) to form partnerships and to contribute to achieving the aims of the Erasmus+ programme such as promoting cooperation and mobility with the EU's partner countries or supporting innovation, cooperation and reform.

TCAs are targeting the

- support of high quality implementation of Erasmus+
- mobilisation of a maximum number of organisations and individuals to whom the Programme is addressed
- strategic support to the fields of education and training in line with the specific objectives of Erasmus +
- strategic support to the cooperation among the organisations active in the fields of education and training.

### **2. What are the priority areas of the TCAs?**

The Directors of National Agencies underlined 4 strategic priority themes for transnational cooperation activities (2017 Malta, NA Director's Informal Meeting). These priority themes are:

- impact
- internationalization of HE and VET institutions
- professionalization of teachers and staff
- inclusion

The priorities provide a strategical focus for the TCAs in 2018-2020, however they are not exclusive, other topics can also be proposed arising from regional and national features.

Some examples of the subtopics that can be linked to these priorities are presented [on SALTO platform](#).

### **3. How TCA officers are nominated and what is their role? How to report personal changes?**

It is recommended that each National Agency nominates one or more TCA officer(s), responsible for the planning, implementation and evaluation of the transnational cooperation activities. The TCA officer(s) could be appointed per educational sector (SE, VET, AE, HE) or per field (E&T) or covering both fields (E&T, Youth) according to the routines/needs of the national agency. It is important that all Erasmus+ educational sectors are represented in each programme country in the TCA network.

TCA officer(s) are the contact point for the other NAs, stakeholders and participants involved in Transnational Cooperation Activities.

TCA officers' list is available in the restricted part of the [SALTO E&T website](#). Each NA should inform SALTO E&T TCA RC about staff changes (new/leaving TCA officer, maternity leave, etc.).

An annual meeting for TCA officers (TCA Seminar) is organized once a year to promote TCA activities (planning, peer learning, capacity building, etc.). NAs shall delegate their TCA officer(s) – or in absence of an officer other staff member – to participate at the meeting. The NA representative should be able to present TCA related demand and/or offer of its NA.

#### 4. What are the sectors covered?

All educational sectors are covered: SE, VET, AE, HE and Youth as cross sectoral cooperation.

#### 5. What kind of activities can be organised and what are their objectives?

Contact seminars aim at bringing together European partners with similar interest, sharing experience, discovering new approaches, and **preparing Erasmus + project applications**.

Training seminars aim at bringing together European projects coordinators or partners, sharing experience, discovering new approaches, and **increasing the quality of project implementation**.

Thematic conferences aim at **raising awareness of the added value of Erasmus+ projects** on a specific issue. It also permits exchanges, networking among participants as well as disseminating good practices and success stories. Thematic conferences may contain the following types of events:



- Study visits aim at gathering European organizations, schools, stakeholders to upgrade their knowledge and skills through various visits focusing on a specific theme. These visits allow sharing of experiences and approaches as well as networking among European participants.
- Peer learning activities focus on sharing experiences in topics related to the Erasmus + Programme priorities.

Evidence-based analysis aims at analysing the **impact of the Erasmus+ programme**.

## 6. Where can I find all information about TCA?

The most relevant information on TCA can be found on [SALTO E&T IT Platform](#). The site is designed to serve two main user groups:

- Erasmus+ National Agency staff, primarily TCA officers and NA staff involved in TCA: responsible for initiating the TCAs, organizing events and/or sending participants on behalf of their National Agency
- Applicants/beneficiaries: visitors interested in participating at TCA events.<sup>1</sup>

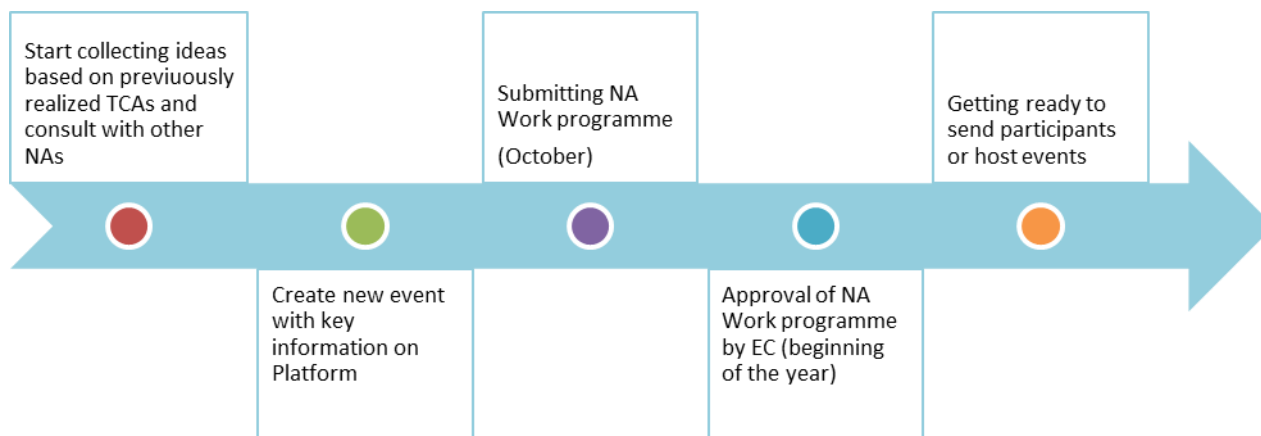
Visitors can get to know the main actors of the TCA work, read about the aims and objectives of TCAs and will be able to view results. They can browse public events and will be able to submit an online application<sup>2</sup>.

TCA officers (and NA staff) can search all uploaded events and can plan TCAs via SALTO platform. TCA officers need to request a login from SALTO E&T TCA RC to get access to these functions. (NA staff user access can be created by registered TCA officers/NA staff.)

Internal communication among TCA officers, sharing documents and information will be facilitated on SALTO platform as well. (IT development is in progress.)

## 7. How TCAs are planned by NAs?

The following illustration shows the suggested steps for TCA planning. For more detailed information on platform use, please visit User Manual:



1. figure: TCA lifecycle (from planning to realization)

<sup>1</sup> Online application will be developed in 2019.

<sup>2</sup> Online application will be developed in 2019.



A TCA approved in the Work Programme of a given NA for budget year 'N', has to be realised in the period **of 1 January N till 30 June N+1**. TCA plans shall be uploaded to SALTO platform for transparency reasons.

Each year the European Commission accepts the planned TCAs within the Work Programmes of the NAs. Their approval is necessary to use TCA funds for organizing TCAs.

Accepted TCAs are published on [SALTO E&T IT Platform](#), which allows potential participants to be informed and to apply<sup>3</sup> for the selected event.

#### *a. How to plan TCAs on the IT platform?*

[SALTO E&T IT Platform](#) serves as an online planning tool. TCA officers have editing rights to create new events online. *To ensure transparency and to ease the planning process, it is recommended to upload planned events as early as possible. Therefore, other NAs can get informed about TCA plans and partner search opportunities at an early stage, while participants can start compiling their application package well in advance.*

With an access given by SALTO E&T TCA RC, all TCA officers (and NA staff) can log in to the restricted part of the platform and fill in the event template with the relevant data of their planned activities. The events are added to the calendar as well and searchable by different criteria. Events are labelled based on the actual status of the TCA to ensure NAs to track the process.

#### *b. How to search events on the IT platform?*

Uploaded events are [searchable by different criteria](#), such as theme, priority, type, date, venue or sector. The orientation among educational sectors and the 'event status' are supported by colour codes and labels in the corner of the box.

#### **8. Who is considered to be a 'partner NA' in Lifecard Excel?**

Sending NAs, co-hosting / co-organizing NAs are all considered as partners in the LifeCard. The hosting NAs should indicate at least one partner which has expressed interest in participating in the planned activity.

#### **9. How to change or cancel planned and accepted Transnational Cooperation Activities?**

For the rules of any changes to the planned TCA and for any EU fund left unspent, please see Guide extract point 8. (page 2.)

#### **10. How are TCAs monitored by NAs?**

TCAs are documented and monitored in *EPlusLink*. NAs provide basic information about their events (aim, target group, date, partners, budget, etc.) in *EPlusLink*. TCA results will be shared via SALTO ET Platform by TCA officers<sup>4</sup>. TCA follow up with participants will be managed via the Platform from 2019 Q4.

#### **11. Who can send participants to TCA?**

All NAs can send national participants to TCAs organised by other NAs taking the profile of participants into consideration provided by the host/organizing NA(s).

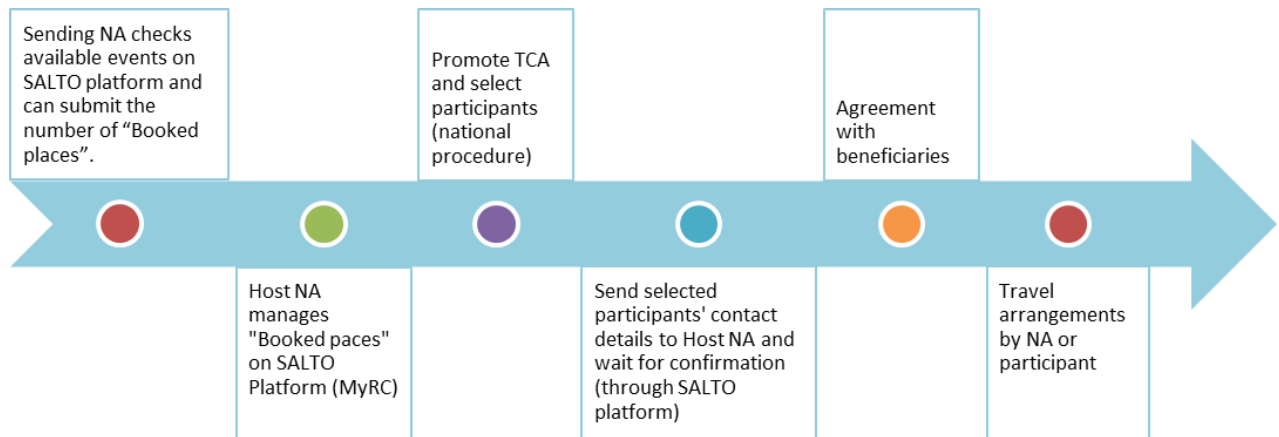
---

<sup>3</sup> Online application will be developed in 2019.

<sup>4</sup> Dissemination space to be used for uploading the results is going to be launched in 2019 Q2-Q3.

## 12. How to send participants to a TCA?

The following illustration shows the suggested steps for sending participants to TCAs, for more detailed information on platform use, please visit User Manual:



2. figure: Sending participants to a TCA

## 13. Who is eligible to participate in a TCA?

TCAs are generally open for all target groups of the Erasmus+ Programme.

Eligible participants can be the representatives of those institutions which are already participating in the Erasmus+ Programme or planning to apply for a grant in the Programme, specifically students, trainees, volunteers, pupils, youngsters, teachers, professors, trainers, youth workers, professionals of organizations active in the fields of education, training and youth or other stakeholders acting as multipliers in the area of education, training and youth. *The target public is specified for each TCA by the host/organizing NA(s).*

NA staff can participate in TCAs either as support staff, organizing team members or trainers/facilitators (participation cost cannot be covered from TCA budget unless the role is trainer/facilitator. (Only one person's travel and accommodation costs can be covered in such case.)

## 14. What are the rules for participation in TCAs from partner countries? In case of cross-sectoral TCAs (when Youth is involved) is the participation of such countries eligible?

In the youth field, participants from Partner Countries Neighbouring the EU can take part in a TCA if the content of the activity is relevant for them. In case of a cross-sectoral TCA, the costs of participants from partner countries have to be covered by the Youth budget as they are ineligible from the E&T budget. For eligible countries, please see GfNA 5.1.2.3.

## 15. Who pays seminar fees?

There are no obligatory rules to be followed and it depends on the partnership between NAs. In most cases there is no seminar fee to be charged. If a seminar fee is requested, it is usually paid by the sending NA to the organizer for its participants (specific information can be found on the SALTO E&T Platform (event cards).

### 16. Who pays the participants' travel and accommodation costs?

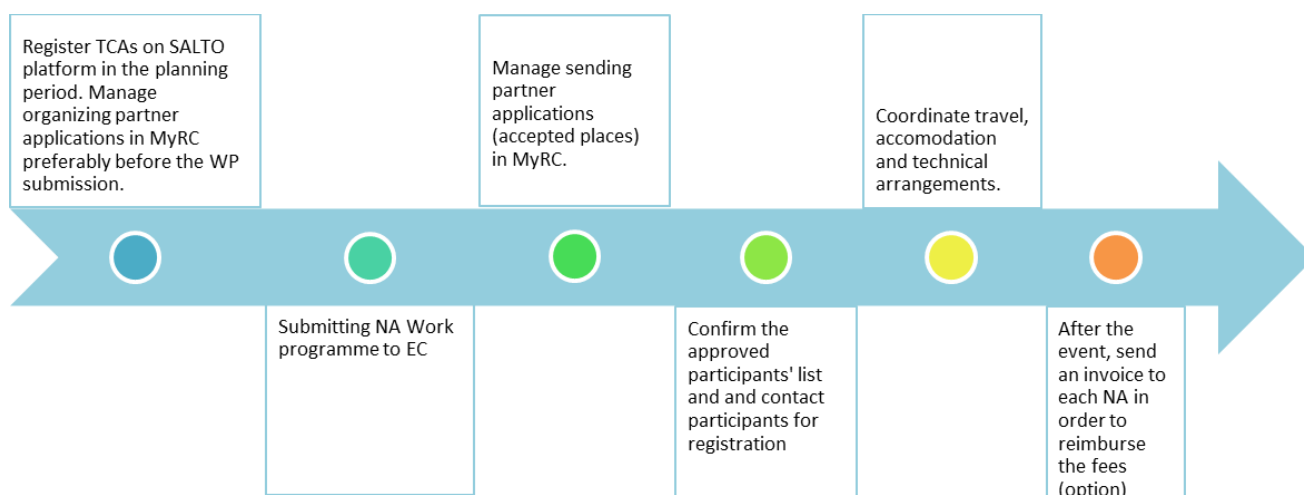
There are no obligatory rules to be followed and it depends on the partnership between NAs. The sending NA usually pays the travel fee for its participants. Financing the accommodation fee is a matter of agreement between the sending and the host NA. The funding model to be used shall be indicated on the SALTO ET Platform in order to inform other NAs about the funding construction.

### 17. Who can organise a TCA?

All NAs from Erasmus+ Programme countries can host a TCA in cooperation with other NAs (or exceptionally, with a national scope. Please see exceptions defined in the GfNA 5.1.2.1. (1)

### 18. How to host a TCA?

The following illustration shows the general steps which are suggested to be applied in hosting a TCA. For more detailed information on platform use, please visit User Manual:



3. figure: Hosting a TCA

### 19. Is it possible to organize a TCA event without TCA funds?

Yes, you can use national contribution for instance. It permits other NAs to use their TCA funds to send participants, if it corresponds to the strategic plans laid down in the NA Work Programme regarding sending activities. Please note that in case national contributions are used, the hosting TCA must still be approved by the Commission (with zero budget) and all nationally funded TCA (both hosting and sending) must be registered in EPlusLink (also with zero budget).

### 20. What is the basic financial rule?

The EU support for TCA must always be complemented with a co-financing of 5% minimum from other sources other than EU. Co-financing may take form of participants' fee to a TCA, national contribution to the staff costs of TCA officer(s), partial reimbursement of the travel costs by the participant to the TCA or further external sources other than EU funding. The NA shall keep the evidence of the actual



costs incurred as well as the level of co-financing. For more specific information, please visit Guide for NAs (TCA chapter 5.1.3)

**21. *Is it possible to use budget of 2018 for sending participants to events hosted from 2019 budget (in the first half of 2019) or whether events hosted from 2018 budget (in the first half of 2019) can accept participants financed from 2019 budget?***

Hosting and sending participants to TCAs do not have to be financed from the same budget year. It is each NA's own responsibility to claim hosting and sending costs in line with the applicable rules.

**22. *How can TCA officers communicate with each other? What are the communication channels?***

There will be an internal communication function on SALTO platform where TCA officers will have the possibility to discuss TCA related questions. A dynamic NA member contact list – who are registered SALTO platform users - is available on the platform in **Admin >> [NA & SALTO members](#)** menu (when logged in.)

The annual **TCA officers' meeting** (TCA Seminar) which takes place *once* a year can also be considered as a communication platform for the TCA officers where they can meet and introduce their plans personally.

TCA officers can make their voice heard also through the TCA Working Group and/or the SALTO E&T TCA Resource Centre. (see next questions)

**23. *What is the Working Group for and how can I contact the members?***

The aim of the education and training TCA WG is to represent the opinion, interests, experience and knowledge of TCA officers and to support the planning, implementation and the follow-up of high quality TCAs. The Working Group's voice is considered as a primary reference in TCA coordination issues and therefore is consulted about related developments by the SALTO E&T TCA Resource Centre.

WG members can be contacted at [tca-wg@tpf.hu](mailto:tca-wg@tpf.hu) email address.

**24. *What is SALTO Education and Training TCA Resource Centre and how is it supporting me?***

The **SALTO Education and Training TCA Resource Centre** is operating as a supporting body for improving Transnational Cooperation Activities (TCAs) since 1 January 2018.

It helps TCA work by:

- providing online and offline platforms and tools for promoting consultations, planning, effective realization and evaluation of transnational cooperation activities;
- designing trainings for increasing the capacities of NA staff regarding TCAs;
- arranging the public sharing of TCA results.

**25. *How to contact TCA Resource Centre, if I need further information?***

**SALTO Education and Training TCA Resource Centre**

E-mail: [tca-rc@tpf.hu](mailto:tca-rc@tpf.hu)

Phone: +36 1 237 – 1300



SALTO E&T TCA platform: <https://salto-et.net/>

For further questions, please visit [NAConnect](#), where you will find more TCA-related questions and answers.