

EEA AND NORWAY GRANTS
FUND FOR BILATERAL RELATIONS

INITIATIVE PROPOSAL

Title of the initiative: Enhancing Youth Competitiveness through the Entrepreneurial Youth Center Pilot Program	
Implementing entity (beneficiary state entity): MTÜ Eesti Avatud Noortekeskuste Ühendus	
Partner(s) (minimum one donor state entity): Sveitarfélagið Múlaþing	
Bilateral priority area identified by the JCBF beyond the programmes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> € promotion of core European values, such as respect for human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, for law and the respect for human rights for all people, regardless of their racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, gender, disability, age, sexual orientation or gender identity; € E-governance (digitalization) € eastern partnership € equality and equal rights € competitive business environment, sustainable and adaptive governance (based on "Competitiveness Plan for 2020" approved by the Government of Estonia) 	
Allocation (total sum): <i>(A more detailed project budget description in the activity plan)</i> 126 457€	
Short description of the initiative: <i>(background, aim, participants, activity plan, budget outline, communication and dissemination)</i> <p>The study conducted by ICF, Praxis, Tallinn University, and Civitta Estonia (2022) shows that young people's self-initiative and entrepreneurship are low, and the potential of non-formal education is underutilized. This, in turn, hampers the effective entry of young people into the workforce and their economic competitiveness. ICF, Praxis, Tallinna Ülikooli ja Civitta Eesti. (2022) <i>Mitteformaal- ja formaalõppe lõimimise praktikad Eestis. Noorte edu toetuseks – võimekuse arendamine mitteformaalõppe lõimimiseks formaalõppega (REFORM/SC2021/066).</i> Link: https://www.hm.ee/et/mitteformaalse-oppimise-loimimine-formaalharidusse</p> <p>Representatives from the youth sector of the Múlaþing municipality visited us in 2022, and in 2023, the Estonian Association of Open Youth Centers made a return visit to Iceland. Previous meetings confirmed that the issue at the center of the application is relevant for both partner countries.</p> <p>The bilateral partnership between Estonia and Iceland focuses on developing youth initiative and entrepreneurship and enhancing cooperation in the youth sector across national borders. The project is based on the need to improve the quality of non-formal education in youth centers and to better understand its role in supporting youth entrepreneurship, thereby giving young people greater competitiveness when entering the labour market.</p>	

The goal is to develop and pilot a self-assessment model for supporting youth entrepreneurship as a tool through the bilateral partnership. This model will help youth centers evaluate and improve the effectiveness of their activities in fostering youth initiative, entrepreneurship, and entrepreneurial attitudes.

The project involves a key role for the steering group and youth sector experts from Estonia and Iceland. At the heart of the bilateral partnership is the exchange of knowledge, experiences, and practices between Estonian and Icelandic youth sector experts, aiming to develop an effective and functional model that can be piloted in both countries. The project includes 15 youth centers across Estonia, covering all counties, which will pilot the developed solution. Additionally, the local government Sveitarfélagið Múlaþing, which oversees four youth centers, is also involved.

During the project, regular meetings will be held between the members of the Estonian steering group and the youth centers participating in the pilot project. Additionally, there will be two meetings with Icelandic partners (one in Iceland and one in Estonia), as well as three virtual meetings.

The project budget covers expenses related to study trips, the involvement of experts, organizing meetings, developing and piloting the model, and communication efforts for disseminating the project's activities and results.

The project will be promoted through seminars, virtual meetings, and publications, with a particular emphasis on disseminating the results by involving various stakeholders in the youth sector. The Estonian Association of Open Youth Centers, which brings together 261 youth work institutions across Estonia, ensures that the model reaches every region of the country. Icelandic partners will help ensure that the benefits of the project extend to the international community as well.

The self-assessment model will be created as a tool to support the daily work processes of youth centers, allowing them to evaluate and improve their operations. The project will establish a certification system aimed at progressively distinguishing the readiness and capacity of youth centers in systematically supporting youth entrepreneurship. The certification is valid for three years, creating a cyclical feedback system that ensures youth centers maintain high standards and quality in their activities.

After the project ends, there are plans to open the certification system to other youth centers across Estonia, with the Estonian Association of Open Youth Centers managing the system. One component of the certification system is a physical badge that youth centers will display prominently in their centers. The guidelines for the developed model will also be made available in English, facilitating its adoption in Iceland and other European countries.

The project fosters cooperation between Estonian and Icelandic youth centers, aligning directly with the goal of strengthening bilateral relations and knowledge sharing between the beneficiary country (Estonia) and the donor country (Iceland). It contributes to social justice and the inclusion of vulnerable groups by aiming to enhance youth entrepreneurship and engagement, including those facing difficulties entering the labor market. The tools developed through the project will increase the capacity of youth centers to support youth development and civic engagement, contributing to the funder's broader goals of promoting democracy and civic activity. By the end of the project, a self-assessment model for supporting entrepreneurship and a description of the certification system

will be available in both Estonian and English on the Estonian Association of Open Youth Centers' website.

Activity plan:

	Activity	Time	Location	Cost	Participants
	Cooperation Meeting with Icelandic Partners	October 2024	Iceland	11 122€	Sveitarfélagið Múlaþing (4 youth work institutions) / Estonian Lead and Expert Groups / Icelandic Lead Group
	Development of the Self-Assessment Model and Certification System, Analysis of Meetings with Pilot Youth Centers, Project Interim Reports (12 Domestic Work Meetings of the Lead and Expert Groups) - Catering and Venue Rental Costs	October 2024 - April 2025	Estonia	5200€	Estonian Lead and Expert Groups
	Kick-off Seminar	October / november 2024	Estonia	2600€	Estonian Lead Group, Expert Group, and Public
	First meeting with pilot youth centers	November 2024	Estonia	Covered by labor costs and transportation costs	15 youth centers, Estonian Expert Group
	Virtual meetings with partners (three times)	November 2024 - april 2025	Estonia / Iceland	Covered by labor costs	Sveitarfélagið Múlaþing (4 youth work institutions) / Estonian Lead and Expert Groups / Icelandic Lead Group
	Second meeting with pilot youth centers	December 2024 / January 2025	Estonia	Covered by labor costs and transportation costs	15 youth centers, Estonian Expert Group
	Third meeting with pilot youth centers	February 2025	Estonia	Covered by labor costs and transportation costs	15 youth centers, Estonian Expert Group
	Experience exchange seminar for piloting youth centers, resulting in updates to the developed model	March 2025	Estonia	2800€	15 youth centers, Estonian Lead Group and Expert Group

	Cooperation meeting with Icelandic partners	April 2025	Estonia	10 567€	Sveitarfélagið Múlaþing, Icelandic Lead Group / Estonian Lead Group and Expert Group / Youth Centers Piloting in Estonia
	Final seminar for presenting the results of the pilot project	April 2025	Estonia	2600€	Estonian Lead Group, Expert Group, and Public
	Piloting workshop	November 2024 - april 2025	Iceland	3200€	Sveitarfélagið Múlaþing (4 youth centers)
	Project labor costs: Lead group (Project Manager, Coordinator, Communication Specialist), Expert group (5 Youth Sector Experts)	October 2024 - April 2025	Estonia	76 567€	
	Domestic transportation costs for Estonian meetings	October 2024 - April 2025	Estonia	3500€	Estonian Lead and Expert Groups
	Marketing costs / Infographics and design	October 2024 - April 2025	Estonia	5600€	Media Partners in Estonia and Iceland
	Souvenirs and certificates for pilot youth centers	March - April 2025	Estonia	2449€	15 youth centers across Estonia, Sveitarfélagið Múlaþing (4 youth work institutions)
	Office and communication costs	October 2024 - April 2025	Estonia	525€	Estonian Lead and Expert Groups

Planned results¹

OUTPUT	INDICATOR	TARGET
Development and piloting of the self-assessment model in youth centers	A developed and piloted self-assessment model aimed at evaluating the quality of support for entrepreneurship in youth centers.	At least 80% of the youth centers participating in the project have successfully completed the model's piloting.
Creation and implementation of the youth centers' certification system	The labeling system has been created and implemented, encompassing three different levels that measure the capacity of youth centers to support youth entrepreneurship.	All youth centers that completed the pilot project have received a certification based on the assessment results.
Establishing and strengthening a network of cooperation between	At least 2 in-person meetings and 3 online meetings with Icelandic	The best knowledge and practices from the youth

¹ Please refer to the [Results Guideline](#)

youth centers in Estonia and Iceland	partners have taken place, resulting in the sharing of knowledge and experiences.	sector in partner countries have been incorporated into the development of the model.
Raising awareness and emphasizing the importance of supporting youth entrepreneurship	Seminars dedicated to the project's results and dissemination of findings, including articles and guidance materials.	At least 300 youth workers and stakeholders have participated in events showcasing the project's results and are aware of the model's implementation opportunities. The project's outcomes have been disseminated through at least 5 media channels, including social media, reaching a broader target audience.
Assessment of project impact and results analysis	Impact analysis prepared at the end of the project, evaluating the effect of the model and collaborative projects on the quality of youth centers work and youth entrepreneurship.	At least 85% of the participants rate the project's impact as positive and recommend implementing the model in other youth centers as well.