CRITERIA FOR PROJECT QUALITY & ASSESSMENT

INTRODUCTION

Applications submitted to aces are first assessed for eligibility, according to the conditions outlined in the aces guidelines on http://www.aces.or.at/howtoapply. Once a project is eligible, the quality of the project proposal is assessed. For transparency and to be able to make a fair assessment of eligible project, the aces Selection Committee refers to assessment criteria, which have been elaborated based on standards for international educational projects.

aces aims at promoting intercultural dialogue, educational innovation and international cooperation between young people in schools through school partnership projects. In addition, each aces call for applications has a specific focus. The Selection Committee pays particular attention to the quality of the application in relation to the general aims of aces and to its annual thematic focus. Summing up the Selection Committee considers aspects of your application including clarity, coherence, completeness, feasibility, innovative character of the project idea and specific thematic focus and the suitability of the project to the age of the participating students. Remember! For the Selection Committee it is more important to get a clear picture of your project idea’s relevance to aces and of your project implementation plan than to receive a lot of detailed information.

In the following you will find an overview of the criteria for project quality & assessment that are used by the Selection Committee in their assessment and selection process. These are followed by a series of questions you can ask yourself in relation to the content of your application so as to check its quality in relation to the criteria.

1. Criteria concerning the project idea

- The project idea is relevant to the
  - objectives of the aces programme (intercultural dialogue, educational innovation and international cooperation between young people in schools)
  - overall annual aces theme (see guidelines and theme www.aces.or.at/calltopic2015)
  - interests, life contexts and age of the students participating

- The aims are clear and realistic for the
  - project as a whole
  - partnership building process

- The project idea is suitable to the
  - the participating students (age groups, students’ abilities and skills)
  - (chosen specific focus within the overall) aces theme of the year

Quality control questions

Is the description of your project idea clear and simple enough for an outsider to understand?
What is the relevance of the project idea to the general aims of the aces programme?
What is the relevance of the project idea to the annual aces theme?
Does your project’s chosen focus address the life contexts and interests of the participating students?
Can the activities you plan deliver the results you expect?
2. Criteria concerning principles promoted by the project

- Students develop ownership of the project through active participation
  - in project planning
  - in project decision making
  - in implementation
  - in international cooperation with other participating classes

- Equal opportunities (regarding e.g. gender, disadvantaged or extra gifted students) are actively promoted through specific measures

### Quality control questions

How are students included in the decision-making about the project? 
For example, teachers have asked the students to decide which specific focus the project should have and about desired project activities...

What measures will you take to ensure equal opportunities for all to participate in the project? 
For example, students who need more support to get actively involved have been encouraged to ask for it and know to whom they can turn if they want to discuss their participation...

For example, tasks and responsibilities are equally shared among all partner schools in consideration of the (divers) abilities of the students.

How does your project ensure that there is continued international cooperation and joint work by all students throughout? 
For example, students will work in international working teams right from the beginning of the project in addition to exchanging about respective results at the end of the project with the other participating class/es from the other country/ies...

3. Criteria concerning project organisation & implementation

- Activities and methods
  - are coherent with the aims and themes of the project and promote abilities and skills of the participants (including disadvantaged students/teachers where applicable)
  - are suitable to the age-range of the participating students and promote their personal abilities, competences and skills
  - promote creativity, diversity & educational innovation

- Integration with the school curriculum
  - is ensured through specific school subjects and / or extracurricular activities

- Project implementation plan
  - includes a realistic schedule
  - is appropriate to the capacities of the partners
  - demonstrates a well-balanced division of responsibilities among all partner schools
  - ensures any kind of continuous communication and international cooperation of students right from the beginning

- Participants
  - a similar number and proportion of teachers & students from each partner school is involved
  - the number and proportion of students to teachers participating in the project
from each school is balanced
- the composition of the participating student group is as balanced as possible from the perspective of age-range, gender, background, abilities etc.

- Languages
  - various languages, including but not exclusively English, are used in the project

- External partners
  - a variety of institutions and groups beyond the participating schools are directly and indirectly involved in the project

- Evaluation
  - is foreseen and appropriate with regard to its aims
  - is suitable for the target group(s), e.g. in terms of the right evaluation methods
  - is planned to take place both on an ongoing basis as well as at the end of the project

- Sustainability
  - Some specific measures are foreseen in the project to ensure the medium to long term continuation of the project partnership and activity

**Quality control questions**

Is your work plan realistic and feasible for all the partners involved?
*For example, the number of class hours involved in the project is manageable considering the rest of the students’ study responsibilities; teachers can conduct project work within their available time...*

How do the activities and methods you propose to use in the project foster the development of creativity, skills and new knowledge among students and teachers?
*For example, the methods proposed are interactive, involve different learning settings, involve experiencing and doing, and not only traditional ways of learning (reading, writing)...*

Are the tasks and responsibilities involved in your project clearly and equally shared among all the partner schools (teachers and students)?
*For example, specific tasks within the project activity plan have been distributed; all teachers and students have something to do; no one school has too much to do in comparison to the others...*

Are all the activities planned going to be completed between September 2015 and mid-May 2016?

What evaluation tools do you plan to use? And, are the chosen evaluation methods the right instruments to fulfil your evaluation purpose and suitable for the people you will ask for feedback?
*For example, a specific sheet/poster with 4-6 different feedback areas is developed and used in order to investigate on the students’ experiences and their competence development during and after the project; a short questionnaire with specific questions is used to ask the parents for feedback on the family stays of students.*

What specific measures does your project foresee for ensuring the continuation of the project partnership and activity beyond the timeframe of this project?
*For example, the project proposes the establishment of an internet forum using social media to allow students to continue to exchange about the theme of the project even after the project is over; students from each partner school will be appointed to ensure that the internet platform is being populated and animated; there are some ideas about possible follow-up activities that can be funded from other sources than aces...*