



EUROPEAN UNION SUPPORT TO HIGHER EDUCATION IN THE ASEAN REGION

Terms of Reference

"Design and Development of an Intra-ASEAN Virtual Exchange Platform"

Description of the Assignment	To develop an online platform that can be utilized by SHARE Partner Universities to conduct virtual exchange/COIL-based courses, as well as provide the user guidelines for the platform, and participate in capacity building trainings for ASEAN Universities to utilize the platform.
Location of Assignment	Online
ToR No.	09/SHARE RA3-TOR/VIII/2021
Duration of assignment	October 2021 – October 2022
Maximum Budget	EUR 100,000

1. Project Information/Background

The European Union Support to Higher Education in the ASEAN Region (SHARE) Programme is the European Union's flagship higher education programme with ASEAN. The SHARE Programme resumed with effect from 27 February 2021 for an extension until the end of 2022. The SHARE Consortium is comprised of the British Council, the DAAD, ENQA, and Nuffic. The SHARE Extension will see the programme continue its support of the ASEAN Secretariat and ASEAN stakeholders to enable greater harmonisation and internationalisation of ASEAN higher education. It aims to catalyse the transfer of ownership of programme outcomes to ASEAN entities and nominated organisations to be embedded within sustainable ASEAN-led structures and processes.

As student mobility plays an important role in the further internationalisation and harmonisation of higher education, one of SHARE's components is a scholarship programme for intra-ASEAN mobility among the 32 SHARE partner universities. However, in response to the current travel restrictions caused by the pandemic, SHARE is planning to initiate its first batch of virtual exchange under the SHARE scholarship. Building upon the results of previous workshops with SHARE partner universities to develop a virtual exchange programme that will be funded by the SHARE scholarship, the SHARE Programme would like to develop a new online platform that can be utilised by the SHARE partner universities to conduct these virtual exchange courses.

2. Objectives

The development of a Virtual Exchange platform for intra-ASEAN Virtual Exchange (VE) / Collaborative Online International Learning (COIL) will fulfil the following key objectives:

1. Provide an innovative platform that can be used by SHARE Partner Universities and Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) in the ASEAN region to jointly develop and deliver VE / COIL courses.
2. Provide an array of user-friendly digital tools and features that will help support HEIs in the ASEAN region in implementing these courses.

The platform will be developed based on inputs from an ongoing SHARE Mapping and Identification Study of Virtual Exchange Schemes in the ASEAN Region as well as feedback from several Workshops on the Conceptualisation and Design of an Intra-ASEAN Virtual Exchange Scheme that are being implemented by the SHARE Programme.

3. Context of the Assignment

3.1 Project Team

SHARE intends to contract one team of service provider (consultancy) to design and develop the technology architecture for an Intra-ASEAN Virtual Exchange Platform, as well as participate in subsequent capacity building trainings and pilot testing.

3.2 Duties and Responsibilities

The tasks in delivery of the project include, but are not limited to, the following aspects:

- Propose the implementation approach, and project schedule (including the infrastructure development, training, and piloting) based on desk research of existing Virtual Exchange platforms in the region, including the study.
- Build three versions of the digital credit transfer system in the SHARE ECTS platform:

- a demo of the beta version, used for capacity building trainings and preparation of the pilot phase;
- a beta version for live testing of the platform with ASEAN HEIs;
- a final version of the platform that includes all improvements suggested in the pilot phase.
- Deliver capacity training workshops to train SHARE staff and SHARE Partner Universities in the use of the platform, and specifically for the planned student exchange periods. To this end, produce a demo of the platform and a set of user guidelines to utilise the platform.
- Build and use a beta version of the platform for the virtual exchange of students as part of the SHARE student exchange periods.
- Develop and conduct a survey among the end users (institutions and students) to evaluate the platform against pre-set standards by the SHARE consortium. Produce an outcome report with an analysis of areas for improvement and platform maintenance based on a learner-centered design paradigm and discuss this with the SHARE Team Leader and team.
- Produce the final version of the platform based on all the recommendations in the outcome report.
- Produce a final set of user guidelines and a short video tutorial that institutions can use to start using the platform independently.

3.3 Expected result / key deliverable of the assignment.

Key deliverables:

- Desk research and project proposal;
- A demo, a beta, and a final version of the Virtual Exchange platform;
- Capacity building workshops for SHARE partners and university staff to train the SHARE Partners in the use of the platform and prepare for the pilot;
- A set of user guidelines and other training materials for the end users (institutions and students) how to use the beta version of the platform, to support the capacity building training;
- Pilot: Use of the Virtual Exchange platform for the virtual exchange periods within the programme;
- A survey among all end users (participating institutions and students) based on pre-set standards by the project coordinator to evaluate the beta version of the platform in the pilot phase;
- A survey outcome report with an analysis of results and main recommendations for improvements;
- A final version of the SHARE AECTS platform that includes solutions to the identified points for improvement in the pilot phase;
- A final set of hands-on guidelines and a video tutorial for future users of the platform how to fully engage with the platform.

The final version of the platform should at a minimum meet the following requirements:

- An adaptive Virtual Exchange platform that allows for:
 - A wide variety of digital tools to support virtual exchange / COIL courses in the platform, including, but not limited to, chat rooms, discussion boards, polls, quizzes, video conferencing;
 - User-friendly interface for students and university staff;
 - A digitally inclusive platform that is light and accessible on multiple platforms (PC, mobile, tablet);

- A matchmaking / message board system for universities to connect with each other on potential courses or projects;
- An online learning module for university staff to understand Virtual Exchange / COIL and how to utilise the platform to support their Virtual Exchange / COIL courses;
- Other features as recommended by the results of the Workshops on Conceptualization and Design of an Intra-ASEAN Virtual Exchange Scheme;

3.4 Target Group

The platform is intended to support the implementation of VE / COIL courses by 32 SHARE partner universities, which can also be used to support a wider network of universities in the ASEAN region after the SHARE Programme concludes in December 2022.

4. Experience Criteria

SHARE intends to contract a service provider (consultancy) which includes individuals with at least five (5) years of professional experience with the following requirements:

- a) Expert, consultant, or academic professional specializing in the field of international student mobility;
- b) Strong capacity in implementing digital modalities of internationalisation, including but not limited to Virtual Exchange, COIL, Massive Online Open Courses (MOOCs), and online study programs;
- c) Knowledge of the higher education sector in the ASEAN region;
- d) Excellent facilitation skills;
- e) Experience in conducting trainings on digital modalities of international education;

5. Scheduled Timeline

The assignment is expected to take place from October 2021 to October 2022, with the following tentative schedule to be further discussed and agreed upon between the service provider and SHARE:

Timeline	Steps
24 September 2021	Call for Proposals
8 October 2021	Deadline for Clarification Requests (Q&A)
13 October 2021	Deadline to submit applications
18 October 2021	Applications shortlist
22 October 2021	Interview with panelists
25 – 29 October 2021	Announcement of the winning bidder
1 – 5 November 2021	Meeting between external contractors and SHARE to discuss preliminary details

November 2021 – March 2022	Demo platform and user guidelines development process to be ready by January Beta/Pilot Platform ready for use in March
January 2022 – February 2022	Capacity Building Workshops with SHARE Team and SHARE Partner Universities
March 2022 – May 2022	Pilot Testing of the Beta Platform
May 2022 – September 2022	Maintenance and modifications of the Beta Platform based on inputs from the Capacity Building Workshops and Pilot Testing
October 2022	Submission of the final Platform and User Guidelines

6. Technicalities and Reporting

The service provider and experts shall report to the SHARE Team Leader and Result Area 3 Programme Manager throughout the process. The Programme Manager deems the project complete once the products of contribution have undergone the final quality assurance check by the SHARE Team Leader.

7. Budget

The duration of the work will be from October 2021 – October 2022 with a maximum budget of € 100,000.

Payment Schedule and Deliverables		
Phases	Deliverables	Payment (%)
Inception	Upon submission of the demo version of the platform and training for SHARE Partner Universities	30%
Interim	Upon submission of the Beta version of the platform and completion of the pilot testing	30%
Reporting	Upon submission of the final version of the platform and user guidelines	40%

8. Selection of Proposals

The selection of proposals will follow a two-stage evaluation process, as follows:

Stages of Selection	Items of Evaluation	Selection Timeline
Stage 1 Evaluation of documents submitted by the applying project team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A comprehensive proposal to address the expected outputs as further listed above, comprising of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Form 1: Proposal Submission Letter Form 2: Technical Proposal (Description of Approach, Methodology and Work Plan for Performing the Assignment) Form 3: Team Composition and Task Assignments Form Form 4: Financial Proposal Form 5: Declaration of Objectivity and Confidentiality Curriculum Vitae (CVs) of Lead Expert(s) and Company Profile 	Early October 2021
Stage 2 Presentation of proposals	Applicants present their proposal to a panel of experts.	Mid October 2021

The successful application will be announced following the completion of the two selection stages as described above.

Composition	Item of Evaluation	Weight
Applicant profiles	CVs of Lead Expert(s) and Company Profiles	10%
Cost Efficiency	Financial proposal (cost breakdown)	30%
Project Proposal	Project design	60%
	Feasibility of the work plan	
	Evidence from previous relevant projects	
Total Score		100%

9. Transferred Deliverables

All documents and other materials produced as a result of these Terms of Reference including but not limited to strategies, reports, application forms, report forms etc. are Transferred Deliverables and ownership of Intellectual Property Rights is to be assigned to the SHARE Programme without exception. This also includes the software licensing rights to the Virtual Exchange platform developed as a result of these Terms of Reference.