

REVES EXCELLENCE AWARD 2017

Application form



▪ **Part A: APPLICANT'S DETAILS**

Name of the organization: Kokkotyö Foundation
Type of organization: Foundation
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▪ **Part B: DESCRIPTION OF THE INITIATIVE**

1. Name of the initiative: INTEGRA- entering labor market through job coaching
2. For which topic(s) are you applying?

- Integration of migrants/refugees
- Digital economy
- European Structural and Investment Funds (in particular the implementation of Community-Led Local Development, CLLD)
- Youth capacity building
- Child poverty and vulnerability
- Transfer of enterprises (e.g. worker buy-out phenomenon)

3. Please describe the context of the initiative, providing also information about the identification of perceived needs and constraints in the target group(s).

The unemployment rate among immigrants is high in our region. The methods used so far are traditional and have seldom led to employment. The objective of the project is to create a new method for coaching immigrants in the workshops of Kokkotyö Foundation and to be used in workshops at national level. The method supports the integration process through

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work by linking intensive language training and work try-out in the workshops of Kokkotyö Foundation. The approach and the methods are innovative and based on the needs and experiences of the immigrants and developed in a process where they are included.

(Max 7 lines)

4. Which are the main objectives of the initiative?

The objective of the project is to speed up and secure the integration process of immigrants and support entrance into the labor market by a long term based process including new learning methods and an inclusive and participative process. The objective is also to enhance multicultural development and increase tolerance at workplaces. Cooperation between different actors shall be improved. The needs of immigrants will be better identified and addressed.

(Max 5 lines)

5. Please describe the initiative, including the actors involved and the concrete activities.

In the INTEGRA project immigrants are coached to enter the labour market with the help of a newly developed training period in Kokkotyö Foundation. This period includes a two-month intensive language course, with introduction to Finnish work culture, to Finnish society, and participation in one's own community. The training of Finnish language is done with functional methods; i.e. the practical use of everyday language is highlighted. There are no designated books but the material is developed and produced by ourselves for the immediate need. After the intensive training period a trainee goes to a work try-out which takes place first in one of the workshops in Kokkotyö Foundation and then in a company. The immigrant and the workplace get support from the coaches and the cultural interpreter.

The project settles between other services that offer language training for immigrants. Not all immigrants enter these courses so Integra is in between catching these dropouts into our project. The extra support provided by the Integra-project has found its place amongst the official services and measures (e.g. language courses and career-counselling) offered to immigrants. It's often a case that an immigrant is not able to start a long-term Finnish course arranged by the Employment Administration in his/her best convenience and need. This is where Integra has been able to provide flexible help and prevent possible down and out-development.

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When an unemployed person participates in an employment measure like career training or work try-out, one gets an allowance. The negotiation with Ostrobothnia Employment and Economic Development Office in order to accept the intensive language courses as equivalent to an employment measure and trainees would receive an allowance got negative response.

But in the end and as a result of intensive lobbying there is a chance that the Finnish Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment might accept the intensive language course as comparable with other employment measures. Then the Integra project has had an significant impact on national policy and create a new employment measure for immigrants in Finland.

(Max 25 lines)

6. Please highlight the strengths of your approach, stressing also the elements that make it a real partnership.

Integra project supports the Employment and Economic Development Office and the municipalities to respond better to the needs of immigrants. For most of the immigrants the principal aim is to integrate in to the Finnish society through language and work experience. The immigrants have got tailored training and coaching that better meet their needs. The processes are inclusive and participative, which is not very traditional in the Finnish context. The Employment and Economic Development Office clerks have appreciated our service and between us there has risen a genuine and ongoing dialogue and stable partnership. The Service Manager of the Employment and Economic Development Office of Kokkola is a member of the steering group of the project, which has become a new platform for actors involved in the integration process of immigrants.

(Max 10 lines)

7. Please explain who are the partners, what exactly is their role and what is their concrete contribution to the initiative.

Kokkotyö Foundation conducts and supports the project by offering premises and instruction from the workshop coaches to various vocational skills.

The regional Ostrobothnia Employment and Economic Development Office is the main partner of the project. Their role is to interview and direct unemployed immigrants to the project.

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The Municipality of Kokkola is funding 20% of the project and the Development Manager is a member of the steering group.

The role of the Foreigners Office of Kokkola, as well as the Multidisciplinary Joint Service that promotes employment for long-term unemployed (TYP) has been to identify the participants to the project. The coordinator of the Foreigners office and the leading social worker of TYP are members of our steering group.

Kokkola University Consortium Chydenius (University of Jyväskylä) is doing research on immigrants and our trainees have been interviewed about social inclusion and how they use different services.

The Centre for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment (ELY Centres) has started a parallel project where a job seeker is searching for jobs for the trainees of Integra, which is a new measure.

(Max 10 lines)

8. Which are the main results – if already visible – resulting from the described initiative; and how do you imagine the continuation of this action?

By now we have developed an intensive language training period described above. Right after participating in the language training three trainees have got a work try-out place outside Kokkotyö Foundation and four trainees have got a studying place. One trainee has got a workplace.

We have produced various new teaching materials for language training that, as well as the whole training model, are unique and transferable to other Work Orientation Centres in Finland.

The Culture interpreter is a new method of working. The role is to identify the life situation of the trainee and help solving problems as well as supporting the coaches in solving matters related to cultural differences. Assisting the trainees and supporting them when they start the work try-out in Kokkotyö Foundation, in companies or if they start studies or work is an important task. The model is transferable to companies and organisations.

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If the initiative to the Finnish Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment will be accepted, the the system of support in Finland will change. A new employment measure for immigrants is launched and will be precedent for the decisions made in the future.

(Max 10 lines)

9. Please provide some details on how you raised the resources for the initiative. (This is not an element to be judged by the jury – however, it is important to readers of our Yearbook in which eligible initiatives will be presented.)

INTEGRA project is financially supported by ESF and the city of Kokkola. There are three employees in the project: project manager, developer/individual coach and a cultural interpreter. Most of the activities take place in the premises of Kokkotyö Foundation. Additionally the parallel project provide economic support to companies employing an immigrant of the project, which is an important incitement for the employer.

(Max 5 lines)