



*Erasmus*

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## Building New Blocks

Developing equity-based opportunity interventions for higher education participation

Outreach - Connecting Our Future

Email: [connectingourfuture@eur.nl](mailto:connectingourfuture@eur.nl)

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## 1. Connecting Our Future: Mission and aims

In the strategy '[Creating Positive Societal Impact, The Erasmian Way](#)', the Erasmus University Rotterdam (EUR) embraces her responsibility for addressing the complex challenges that our society faces today. One such challenge is to create equitable (educational) opportunities for all groups in our society, regardless of socioeconomic or cultural background.

The road to higher education is not equally obvious for all youth. Furthermore, once enrolled in university, navigating higher education is easier for some students than others. The EUR Outreach programme 'Connecting Our Future' aims to develop and implement evidence-based activities that contribute to equal educational opportunities for (prospective and enrolled) students who are historically underrepresented in higher education, drawing on the diverse socioeconomic and cultural experiences, perspectives, and talents of these students. The target group of Connecting Our Future include students with a migration background, students whose parents did not attend higher education, and students from low income families.

Students from underrepresented backgrounds may face systemic barriers on their way to and in higher education. We believe that university education should be equally accessible to all students who have the appropriate potential, regardless of their social or economic circumstances. Furthermore, we believe it is important that our students are properly supported to successfully complete their studies and fulfil their potential. With evidence-based activities targeting these systemic barriers, we aim to improve access to higher education, support student success (i.e., academic success and student wellbeing) within higher education, and facilitate graduation and employability.

## 2. Building New Blocks: A grant application programme

To develop evidence-based activities that have the desired impact, we need a solid base of ideas - coming from within our institution -, that can be institutionalized and scaled up within existing EUR structures. Connecting Our Future has therefore launched Building New Blocks, a grant application programme for EUR students and EUR staff. The goal of this grant application programme is to enable the EUR community to develop and evaluate equity-based interventions aimed to contribute to equal educational opportunities for prospective and enrolled historically underrepresented students. In addition, the programme will contribute to an (academic) knowledge base on EUR-specific interventions.

In the coming two years (2023-2024), Building New Blocks will provide financial support for projects run by teams led by EUR students or EUR staff. Projects may vary in duration but must be finished by the end of 2024. We differentiate between three types of projects, i.e., small projects (max €5.000), medium projects (€5.001-€25.000), and large projects (€25.001-€50.000). Each year, a total of €80.000 is made available through the programme. Decisions to fund projects are based on the overall assessment of the project and the available budget within Building New Blocks (see Section 6. Processing your application). It is possible to apply for funding more than once.

The grant will cover salary costs and material costs. Material costs that are covered include: development of teaching materials, costs to host a webinar or event, travel costs to schools, etc. Material costs that are *not covered* by this support include: equipment (e.g., laptops, monitors), general facilities (overhead costs) including e.g., ETC applications and training costs, software, and costs of scientific publications. For more information on (material) costs that are covered by the grant, please see the EUR [expense claims guidelines](#) (Dutch: Declaratie- en werkkostenregeling Erasmus Universiteit Rotterdam). Projects are encouraged to bring additional funding such as grants from [NWA](#), [Erasmus Trustfonds](#), or the [Rotterdam Municipality](#).

### 3. Building New Blocks: Points of attention

In order to be eligible for funding by Building New Blocks, special attention should be paid to the following considerations.

#### 3.1. Societal impact

As one of the strategic programmes financed by the [EUR strategy](#), creating positive societal impact is a cornerstone of Connecting Our Future. Projects funded by Building New Blocks must therefore align with the goal of Connecting Our Future, i.e., promoting equal educational opportunities for (prospective and enrolled) students historically underrepresented in higher education.

#### 3.2. Collaboration

Creating equal educational opportunities across the student lifecycle is a complex task, warranting collaboration with many stakeholders, including students, parents, educators, school leaders, community actors, policy makers, researchers, etc. Projects receiving financial support from Building New Blocks should therefore entail collaborations between multiple relevant stakeholders within and/or outside EUR.

#### 3.3. Evaluation

Connecting Our Future aims to develop evidence-based activities that positively impact both society and (academic) knowledge building. Projects eligible for funding by Building New Blocks should therefore include both the development of new activities as well as the evaluation of those activities. Evaluation may take the form of process and/or effect evaluation. Please consider that evaluation may need to take place in different stakeholder groups, e.g., students, parents, educators, schoolboard, etc.

#### 3.4. Institutionalization

Given the need for new and innovative activities and interventions, projects granted financial support by Building New Blocks may take the form of pilot projects. In order to maximize positive societal impact, we aim to eventually integrate pilot projects in existing EUR units, programmes, or services. Therefore, integration or upscaling in existing EUR structures should be possible for all projects financed by Building New Blocks, e.g., in [Science Hub](#), [Erasmus Ambassador Office](#), [Pre Academic Programme](#), EUR education, EUR research, EUR policy, EUR student services, etc.

## 4. Requirements for your application

### 4.1. Requirements for the applicant

1. Academic and non-academic staff of EUR, or
2. Bachelor or Master students of EUR

### 4.2. Requirements for the project

1. The project contributes to the aims of Connecting our Future, i.e., to promote equal educational opportunities for (prospective and enrolled) students who are historically underrepresented in higher education
2. The project is a collaboration between several relevant stakeholders inside and/or outside the EUR
3. The project is evaluated on process and/or effect
4. Integration or upscaling of the project in existing EUR structures is possible
5. Projects may vary in duration, but must be finished before the end of 2024
6. Projects are eligible for funding of max €50.000,-

## 5. Sending in your application

### 5.1. Content of the application

The application consists of a project proposal and a project budget. Templates for both are available through the website of [Building New Blocks](#).

The project proposal contains the following subsections:

- Project information
- Project background
- Project aim(s)
- Project plan
- Project valorisation
- Project co-financing
- Project summary

The project budget contains the following subsections:

- Material costs: A description of all expected material costs should be provided. Information on what material costs are covered and how expenses can be claimed during the project can be found in the template.
- Salary costs: A description of all expected salary costs should be provided. Information on how to calculate salary costs for EUR employees and EUR students can be found in the template.
- For both material costs and salary costs, please fill in the expected costs for each year that the project is running.

### 5.2. Deadline for the application

- September 30<sup>th</sup>, 2022
- All applications are due at 17:00 PM (noon) Central European Time

Deadlines can be subject to change. No rights may be derived from this information.

### 5.3. How to send in the application

- Carefully read the application guidelines
- Make sure you meet the requirements for application
- Grant applications can be written in Dutch or English
  - The project summary must be written in Dutch and English
- Please avoid the use of technical abbreviations and jargon, unless adequately explained
- Make sure the application is complete
- Send your application to [connectingourfuture@eur.nl](mailto:connectingourfuture@eur.nl) with the title "Building New Blocks 2022"
- Submit your complete application before the deadline



## 6. Processing your application

### 6.1. The decision procedure

All applications are carefully processed, and all personal and project information provided will be handled confidentially. During the decision procedure, project proposals are assessed based on the extent to which the project meets the requirements for the application and the quality of the project proposal (including the budget). Grants are awarded based on the overall assessment of the project and the available budget within Building New Blocks.

All applications are reviewed by the review committee of Building New Blocks. For small projects the review committee will consist of the programme manager of Connecting Our Future (dr. Anne Wijtzes) and the Chief Diversity Officer of the Diversity & Inclusion Office (prof. dr. Semiha Denктаş). For medium projects and large projects, the review committee will furthermore include other members of the [Diversity & Inclusion Office](#), depending on the specific topic of the project proposal. We aim to inform you on our decision within eight weeks. In exceptional cases, it may take longer before a decision is made.

### 6.2. After a decision has been made

A notification of the decision will be sent to the applicant by e-mail. If financial support is granted, the grant letter states the amount granted and the requirements/conditions under which the grant is made. As part of the project proposal, all projects will be asked to provide a short project summary (max 250 words) to be published on the Building New Blocks website. For small projects, an end report is requested. For medium and large projects, a mid-term report and an end report are requested. Instructions for the mid-term report and end report will be sent out to project leads in due time. For further information, please contact the programme manager of Connecting Our Future (dr. Anne Wijtzes: [wijtzes@eur.nl](mailto:wijtzes@eur.nl)).

## 7. Contact and additional information

### Contact information

For information about the grant application programme, requirements of applications, or other questions on Building New Blocks, please contact the programme manager of Connecting Our Future, dr. Anne Wijtzes: [wijtzes@eur.nl](mailto:wijtzes@eur.nl).

### General information

For general information about the EUR Outreach programme, please visit the website of [Connecting Our Future](#). For more information about the grant application programme, please visit the website of [Building New Blocks](#).

### General codes

Within EUR, everyone involved in education and research is responsible for maintaining our research integrity. Compliance with the general principles of a professional scientific approach is required at all times:

- [The Netherlands Code of Conduct for Research Integrity \(2018\)](#)
- [The Code of Conduct for the Use of Data in Health Research \(2004\)](#)

### Transparency and confidentiality

Building New Blocks deems an objective decision-making and transparent assessment procedure important when providing financial support to the EUR community. Applicants for Building New Blocks funding can be confident that applications are carefully processed, all personal and project information provided will be handled confidentially, and that decisions are taken without bias or personal interest.

### Complaint procedure

It is not possible to appeal against a rejection of your application. Should you consider that the procedure with respect to the handling of your project proposal has not been correct, you may submit a complaint up to four weeks after the date of the rejection letter via an email to [connectingourfuture@eur.nl](mailto:connectingourfuture@eur.nl) with the title "Complaint Building New Blocks 2022".