

# THE VELUX FOUNDATIONS

VILLUM FONDEN ✕ VELUX FONDEN

## INTRODUCTION TO THE VELUX FOUNDATIONS' EUROPEAN VET DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE 2018-28

THE VELUX FOUNDATIONS aim to improve vocational education and training (VET) for youth in Europe, with priority given to Central and Eastern Europe.

The programme is established to focus primarily on Poland, Hungary, Czechia and Slovakia, and secondarily on relevant partner activities and reference projects in the rest of Europe.

Our motivation is the substantial lack of young people with adequate vocational skills needed for the current and future labour market. Therefore, our goal is to contribute to a significant improvement in the quality of vocational education and training (+20%), so that:

- Businesses more frequently request relevant trained workforce
- Young people seek to enrol in VET, because they can see better job opportunities and a brighter future
- Society at large increasingly associates vocational careers as opportunity

### ✕ FOCUS AREAS

The programme seeks to make it easier for young people to enter the labour force by focusing on vocational education and training and related activities.

The areas of activity are defined below. It should be stressed, however, that the field is under constant development and that adjustments may and will be made:

- 1. Mobility** projects for students, teachers, managers and others who have significant influence on the content and framework of training programmes and direction of their development. Mobility is to be improved through partnerships and schol-

arships, exchanges and the sharing of new methods and content.

- 2. Excellence** projects focusing on key burning platforms that are generally seen as being crucial and uniquely important for the continuous improvement of the educational system. Currently, these are identified as: expert level vocational training (nicknamed 'vocational PhDs'), soft skills, work based learning (WBL) and recognition of prior learning (RPL).
- 3. i-VET** development as a socially oriented initiative directed towards specific socially at-risk groups and/or geographic areas that would benefit from projects tailored to their needs.

### ✕ QUALITY DEVELOPMENT

Ongoing self-evaluation combined with external evaluation is considered an engine of progress and quality development, also including ongoing evaluations at all levels (students, teachers, school administrators and companies involved in educational development processes) of initiatives and their results. We will provide a framework for this approach that grantees must participate in.

The initiative's systemic ambitions are defined and redefined as needed through budget allocations. An initial DKK 100 million (EUR 13,5m) budget allocation per year was decided by the Board in December 2017.

### ✕ BACKGROUND AND APPROACH

The basis for the programme is THE VELUX FOUNDATIONS' ownership of companies within the VKR Group and the wish to support societies in which the VKR Group is active.

Our vision with the programme is to promote improved conditions and better opportunities for the future in Central and Eastern Europe.

In the programme period 2007-16, emphasis was on social as well as educational projects targeting at-risk children and youth.

From 2017, emphasis is on projects that can serve as examples of how to improve vocational educational and employment opportunities for young people.

Instruments are dialogue with the applicants, assistance in developing project descriptions, control of goal, performance and finances, friendly sparring, monitoring throughout the entire project period, supporting the drafting of reports and summarising experience and knowledge gained from projects. We provide financial resources to support projects with the necessary means in order to reach quality, ensuring an exit strategy and testing of sustainable initiatives leading to concrete improved conditions for youth.

We aim at being recognised as a serious partner with a high level of ambition, making logic and understandable demands, being critical and asking sensible questions to the projects we cooperate with. Our continuous dialogue with the applicants – before, during and after a grant – is relatively unbureaucratic and responsive to good arguments and common sense.

We work in a reactive as well as a catalytic way and has an impact-oriented approach with focus on high quality and credibility in supported projects.



*THE VELUX FOUNDATIONS are comprised of the two philanthropic foundations VILLUM FONDEN and VELUX FONDEN. Among our grant areas are science, environmental, social and cultural purposes in Denmark and internationally. In 2017, the two foundations gave joint grants of approx. EUR 168 million.*

*Both foundations were established by graduate engineer Villum Kann Rasmussen – the founder of VELUX and other companies in the VKR Group, whose mission it is to bring daylight, fresh air and a better environment into people's everyday lives.*