



Quality Customer Charter

2023-2027

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**An inclusive Ireland
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Léargas



Léargas manages international and national exchange programmes in education, sport, youth and community work, and vocational education and training. These exchanges connect people in different communities and countries, and bring an international dimension to the work of organisations across Ireland. We are the National Agency for Erasmus+ in Adult Education, School Education, Sport, VET and Youth. We also manage a variety other programmes and initiatives such as European Solidarity Corps, eTwinning, EPAL, Youth Wiki and CASE.

We have built a national and international reputation for effectively managing significant levels of funding to support international collaboration and exchange. We have also built a reputation for a friendly and supportive approach to programme applicants and beneficiaries.

Léargas is a not-for-profit organisation (CHY 8317). We are established under the aegis of the Department of Further, Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science (DFHERIS). Our Board is appointed by the Minister for DFHERIS. As well as working with the DFHERIS, Léargas works with colleagues in the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth and the Department of Education.

For more details, visit www.leargas.ie/about-us

Our Vision

Our vision is for:

“An inclusive Ireland where we all can participate in and enjoy the transformational value of national and international lifelong learning experiences and be supported to reach our potential.”



Our Values

Our Léargas Code of Conduct gives us an agreed set of ethical principles that are woven into our way of working together as an organisation. Education, continuous personal and professional development, and lifelong learning are vital for human growth. We bring the following values to life in our approach to our work:

Inclusion and Respect

Honouring diversity is central to all that we do. We respect and celebrate the diversity of people and organisations that we engage with. We strive to enhance their experience of inclusion, equity, equality and solidarity through the programmes that we manage.

Empowerment and Support

We believe in encouraging and supporting the people and organisations that we engage with. This spirit of encouragement, underpinned by practical support and competency development, vitalises people's sense of personal agency and empowerment by their learning from international collaboration. .

Collaboration and Partnership

The programmes that we manage can be transformative at individual, organisational and community levels. We believe in working in partnership, based on trust and reciprocity, to inspire and empower personal growth and development, through lifelong learning..

Our Purpose

Our purpose is to enable international collaboration and exchange. We promote and fund intercultural, collaborative projects between Ireland and other countries. All our work serves to advance national and European policy. We facilitate good working relationships that spark awareness and appreciation of inclusion, diversity, digital transformation and environmental sustainability across social, cultural and educational domains. We promote the value of international collaboration and exchange in education, training, and youth work. We make international cooperation and learning accessible to a wide range of people and organisations. We contribute to the implementation of policy and practice in education, training, adult education, volunteering and youth work. We provide opportunities for the development of new skills for active participation in society and education. We support the strategic development of organisations and the personal and skills development of individuals.

Our Customers



Léargas work with - and provide services to - a variety of people and organisations:

Citizens

Members of the public who want to find out more about the programmes we manage.

Programme Participants

Members of the public, organisations and institutions that take part in any of the programmes we manage

Irish Government Departments

Colleagues in the Department of Further, Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science (DFHERIS), the Department of Education and the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth —and sometimes other government departments—who work with Léargas staff or who make requests for information.

Other Agencies

Other agencies in Ireland with whom we collaborate on various projects and programmes, and also National Agencies that run similar programmes across Europe and beyond.

European Organisations

Colleagues in the European Commission Directorate General Education and Culture (DG EAC) and the Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA) with whom we work on European programmes.

Internal Customers

We recognise that our customers include our own staff for whom we aim to provide a supportive and friendly work environment in which we can all provide a quality service.



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**We aim to
supply accurate,
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Our Principles of Quality Customer Service



Quality Service Standards

We commit to setting out standards of quality service that all our clients can expect from us. This Customer Charter outlines those standards.

Equality / Diversity

We commit to providing equality of opportunity to all our clients, paying particular attention to avoiding discrimination on any of the nine grounds as defined under equality legislation . In a number of our programmes, we have specific targets for the numbers of disadvantaged groups or individuals that take part. We commit to meeting these targets each year and reporting on this.

Physical Access

We aim to provide a clean, comfortable and safe environment that complies with occupational and safety standards and provides access for those with disabilities and/or other specific needs.

Information

We aim to supply accurate, understandable, relevant and accessible information to all. See Our Statement of Service on page 6 and How we provide information on page 7.

Timeliness and Courtesy

In all our dealings with our clients, we aim to respond as quickly as possible and always with respect and courtesy. See Timeliness and Courtesy on page 6.

Complaints

We commit to managing complaints about service in line with the Office of the Ombudsman Guidelines.





Appeals

We follow a particular Appeals Procedure for Erasmus+ Grant Awards , for all other appeals, we follow the Office of the Ombudsman Guidelines.

Consultation and Evaluations

We assess the needs of our clients through consultation and evaluation using various methods including online, written and personal feedback, carried out by us and by third parties.

Choice

As a small agency, we are limited to one office (in Dublin); however, we aim to provide information and support to all our clients through our own events held countrywide and through our participation in third-party events. We also provide support and resources through a variety of media and online channels.

Official Languages Equality

Déanfaidh Léargas gach iarracht chun freastal ar dhaoine ar mian leo a ngnó a dhéanamh trí mheán na Gaeilge. We aim to provide our services in Irish as well as in English when requested.

Better Coordination

To ensure that we deliver an integrated and coordinated service to our clients, we work closely with our colleagues in DFHERIS, the Department of Education, the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth, and the Higher Education Authority in Ireland. We also work in cooperation with colleagues in the European Commission and in other National Agencies throughout Europe.

Internal Customers

We recognise that Léargas customers include our own staff for whom we aim to provide a supportive and friendly work environment in which we can all provide a quality service to Irish citizens.

To support our staff we will:

- ensure they are consulted and informed about how we deliver our services
- communicate effectively to keep them up-to-date about developments in the organisation
- provide access to relevant and appropriate training to ensure they are supported in meeting the requirements of their roles and in developing their careers.

Our Statement of Service



Timeliness and Courtesy

In all our dealings with our customers, we aim to respond as quickly as possible and always with respect and courtesy.

We will be courteous at all times in dealing with all our clients. We will respond as quickly as possible to requests for information or support (see How we provide information on page 7). We will provide required reports (to DG EAC, EACEA and relevant Irish government departments) by agreed deadlines.

How we answer requests

Telephone requests

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We are available to answer phone calls during our office hours of 09:30 to 17:30, Monday to Friday.

When you phone us with a request for information or technical programme support, we will:

- identify ourselves on the phone
- identify the person to whom we transfer the call, if necessary
- deal with the call as quickly as possible and in a friendly and courteous way
- provide you with the means to leave a message if the person you wish to reach is not available: this message may be left with another Léargas staff member or on voicemail
- return the call as soon as possible: we will do our best to respond within one working day.



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Written and online requests

When you seek information or technical programme support by letter or online through email, social channels or our website, we will:

- acknowledge the request as soon as possible, generally within two working days
- reply within a reasonable time (based on the nature of the request) but generally within 10 working days
- include relevant contact details on all our correspondence

Personal requests

When possible, we will be available to meet you by appointment during our normal office hours (09:30 to 17:30, Monday to Friday). This may be online or in our office. When you call to our office, we will:

- see you on time for scheduled meetings and appointments
- deal with you in a friendly and courteous way
- provide a clean, comfortable and safe environment for all, including those with disabilities or specific requirements
- provide the means to leave a detailed message or provide an alternative contact within our staff if the person you wish to meet is not available.

Other Requests for Information

We will provide responses to Parliamentary Questions (PQs), requests for observations etc. received on an ad hoc basis as promptly and accurately as we can.

We will respond to media requests for information as promptly and accurately as we can. If we need to do further research on a particular query, our staff team will keep journalists informed.

We will respond to both FOI and GDPR requests as required under the Acts. You can find further information about how we operate under FOI, GDPR, and data protection acts on our website .

Seirbhís i nGaeilge

Déanfaidh muid gach iarracht chun freastal ar dhaoine ar mian leo a ngnó a dhéanamh trí mheán na Gaeilge.

Service in Irish

We will make every effort to accommodate those who wish to conduct their business through the medium of Irish.





How we provide information

Providing information is a major part of what we do. We aim to supply accurate, understandable, relevant and accessible information to all. We commit to using different media so that all our customers can use various ways to obtain relevant and useful information as efficiently as possible.

Online

We maintain an up-to-date and informative website that provides relevant material on all our programmes, for example: calls for proposals, upcoming deadlines, background information, 'how to' guides, blogs and links to programme guides and application forms. Our site also provides information about our organisation, contact details, annual reports, etc. We also publish details of job opportunities within Léargas.

We use various social media channels to reach our different audiences as effectively as possible and to promote our programmes and opportunities as widely as we can.

We commit to using our online presence effectively to publish accessible and relevant news, information and resources for all our clients on time and as clearly as possible. Our online channels include:

-  leargas.ie
-  facebook.com/Leargas.Ireland/
-  twitter.com/Leargas
-  instagram.com/leargas.ireland/
- linkedin.com/company/leargas

Print

We provide print material, as appropriate, to all our customers. Some of this material is provided for programme participants by the European Commission, some of it is produced by us. We commit to the following regarding our own materials:

- our material will be up-to-date and reflect accurately the information we receive from the DGEAC, EACEA and our Irish government colleagues
- we will present information clearly and in a style appropriate to its audience
- our presentation choices will reflect a suitable use of resources

Events

We run seminars, workshops, meetings and an annual Gathering to provide information and support to our customers. Our events can be in person or online. We run live events and also share information via pre recorded digital tutorials. We publish our schedule of events on our website (see leargas.ie/) and promote them through our social media channels. We commit to the following regarding our events::

- our material will be up-to-date and reflect accurately the information we receive from the DG EAC or other relevant authority
- we will present information clearly and in a style appropriate to its audience
- our presentation choices will reflect a suitable use of resources
- where appropriate, we will provide support materials as back-up to the workshops
- we will be courteous and professional at all times
- we will evaluate our events through feedback forms or other methods as appropriate

Reporting

Léargas is contractually obliged to provide regular reports to the DG EAC, EACEA and Irish government departments. Each contract contains specific information about deadlines and commitments. Assuming that accurate and complete project reports are received on time, we commit to producing our own reports within agreed deadlines.

If we foresee a delay in meeting a reporting deadline, we will send a message at least 5 working days before the deadline to the relevant person in the Commission/Department/other funder regarding the predicted length of delay and requesting an extension.



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How we make Grant Payments

Assuming we have received funding on time, we will make payments to programme participants within the timelines specified in grant agreements. The typical timelines are:

On receipt of:	We will typically make payment within:
a grant agreement signed by a beneficiary and the Léargas legal representative	30 days
a complete and accurate interim report (where relevant)	30 - 60 days (depending on the agreement)
a complete and accurate final report	60 days

How we provide an accessible and relevant service

We are fully committed to providing a service that is accessible and relevant to all our customers and accommodates needs and aspirations specific to particular groups of customers. If you have queries about accessibility, contact us at access@leargas.ie.

How we safeguard children and young people

Léargas believes that the best interests of children and young people attending our services are paramount. Our guiding principles are underpinned by Children First: National Guidelines for the Protection and Welfare of Children; Child Safeguarding: A guide for Policy, Procedure and Practice; the United Nations Convention on the Rights of a child; the Children First Act 2015; and current legislation.

Our guiding principles apply to all paid staff, committee/ board members, volunteers and students on work placement within our organisation. All Committee/ board members, staff, volunteers and students must agree and abide by these guiding principles and child safeguarding procedures. We will review our guiding principles and child safeguarding procedures every two years, or sooner, if necessary due to service issues or changes in legislation of national policy.

You can access our Child Safeguarding Policy on our website.



Help us to help you



You can help us to improve our service to you by giving us the information we need to help you, for example:

- providing feedback about our services
- reporting any issues as they arise
- taking part in any customer surveys we conduct

We also ask that you:

- treat our staff with courtesy and respect
- be fair and honest in your dealings with us.

Complaints and Appeals



As a customer, you may be dissatisfied with the quality of service you receive from us. We recognise that mistakes can be made and delays occur. If you are not satisfied with the service you receive, we ask you to first of all raise it with the staff member you have been dealing with.

If you prefer, or if you feel the issue has not been resolved, then we ask you to contact us at: customerservice@leargas.ie or write to Customer Services, Léargas, King's Inns House, Parnell St, Dublin 1, D01 A3Y8.

When we receive a complaint, we will:

- acknowledge the complaint within three working days and respond to it within 10 working days
- deal with the complaint in a fair and appropriate way
- treat the complaint in confidence unless you wish otherwise (and subject to our obligations under the relevant FOI & GDPR and data protection acts).

The Ombudsman

If your complaint is unresolved, you may appeal further to the Office of the Ombudsman at:

The Office of the Ombudsman, 6 Earlsfort Terrace, Dublin 2, D02 W773 |
Lo-call: 1890 223030 | Tel: 01 639 5600 | www.ombudsman.ie

The Ombudsman for Children

If you think our actions have negatively affected a child or children, you can contact The Ombudsman for Children and make a complaint. You can contact them at:

Ombudsman for Children's Office, Millennium House First Floor,
52-56 Great Strand Street, Dublin 1, DO1 F5P8
Complaints Freephone: 1800 20 20 40 | Office: 01 865 6800

Appeals about funding decisions under Erasmus+

If you believe that the procedural rules (as outlined in Part C of the Erasmus + Programme Guide , Information for Applicants) have not been followed in the award of an Erasmus+ grant, you may appeal the decision to Léargas.

You must submit a written appeal—issued by the authorised application signatory—within 10 working days of the date of receipt of your grant award notification to appeals@leargas.ie.

We will acknowledge appeals as soon as possible and provide a final decision within 10 working days of receipt.

Note: Questioning the results of the qualitative assessment of a grant application cannot constitute the basis for an appeal.

Disclaimer

Our publication of these service standards does not create or confer any new legal rights on customers.





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