

## Quality Customer Charter 2025-2030

### About Léargas

Léargas is a registered charity and a limited company that delivers international and national exchange programmes in education and training, sport, youth and community work. These provide funding for partnership and exchanges which connect people in different communities and countries and bring an international dimension to the work of organisations across Ireland through EU Flagship Programmes, Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps. Other European programmes and initiatives administered by Léargas include: eTwinning, EPALÉ, Eurodesk, Youth Wiki, PEACEPLUS ASPIRE, and VET team.

We work under the aegis of the Department of Further, Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science, we are not a public body.

Our work reaches into early years, school education, vocational education and training, adult education, sport, youth work and volunteering. We empower individuals and organisations to create opportunities, develop new skills and knowledge, and foster personal and professional growth through lived experiences of connecting with people from other cultures.

We encourage and support international projects across a broad range of themes which fulfil the main priorities of the Erasmus+ Programme and other EU programmes and initiatives for which we are responsible. The skills nurtured through Léargas programmes and initiatives - effective communication, adaptability, cultural awareness, teamwork, problem-solving, and leadership, among others - are essential for a competitive and prepared Europe. Through participation, individuals develop the professional and employability skills needed to navigate diverse and international environments, ensuring they are ready for today's evolving workforce.

For more details, visit [www.leargas.ie/about-us](http://www.leargas.ie/about-us)

### Our Vision

We envision a future where intercultural learning and meaningful connections across Ireland and Europe unlock potential and inspire positive change for individuals and communities.

### Our Mission

We are on a mission to strengthen connections and promote inclusion by enhancing access to European programmes and opportunities.

## Our Guiding Principles and Values

We strive to inspire individuals, organisations, and communities. And in turn, we are inspired by their stories, actions, and ideas. This shared inspiration drives our values and our commitment to unlock potential, empower connection, share stories, recognise impact, and advance learning, all to drive positive change, maximising the opportunities within European programmes.

Our Léargas [Code of Conduct](#) gives us an agreed set of ethical principles that are woven into our way of working together based on the principles of Trust, Information Management & Transparency, Governance, Diversity, Equity & Inclusion and Sustainability.

This reflects the shared European values of all EU members in a society in which inclusion, tolerance, justice, solidarity, and diversity prevail. These values are integral to the vision for a peaceful and harmonious European way of life which is inclusive of all, particularly, those with fewer opportunities.

## Our Strategic Pillars

Léargas' Strategic Statement 2025–2030 focuses our expertise and ambition on delivering excellence in our core operations - represented by IGNITE - while driving progress through the strategic pillars: INCLUSION, INNOVATION, and IMPACT. Our strategic direction is grounded in the guiding principles and values – INSPIRE.

### **Ignite**

The IGNITE pillar represents the operational backbone of Léargas. This is where we will drive excellence in programme delivery, broaden awareness of opportunities, and shape impactful and meaningful policies through strategic partnerships, laying the groundwork for transformative impact.

### **Inclusion**

INCLUSION lies at the heart of Léargas' mission, ensuring that everyone can access, engage with, and benefit from European programmes. By breaking down barriers, fostering diversity, and creating equitable pathways, this pillar supports individuals, organisations, and communities to unlock their potential, embrace shared learning, and build more connected and inclusive societies.

### **Impact**

The IMPACT pillar underlines Léargas' commitment to delivering meaningful outcomes by measuring and showcasing the transformative effects of its programmes. By capturing robust evidence, elevating the voices of beneficiaries, amplifying success

stories, and strengthening strategic partnerships, this pillar drives awareness about the value that Léargas initiatives deliver for individuals, organisations, and communities.

### **Innovation**

The INNOVATION pillar embodies Léargas' forward-thinking ethos, driving continuous improvement and adaptability across all areas of our work. By embracing new technologies, fostering collaboration, and embedding sustainability into our operations, this pillar ensures we remain agile, impactful, and aligned with the evolving needs of individuals, organisations, and communities.

## **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 Education 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.

*“We aim to supply accurate, understandable, relevant and accessible information to all. We commit to using different media so that our clients can find and use relevant and helpful information as efficiently as possible.”*

## **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 individuals and/or groups with fewer opportunities 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 6.

### **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 5.

### **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 the Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science, the Department of Education and Youth, the Department of Communications, Culture, Arts, Sport and Media, 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**

#### **Timelines and Courtesy**

In all our dealings with our stakeholders, we aim to respond as quickly as possible and always with respect and courtesy. We will be courteous at all times in our interactions, and we will respond promptly to requests for information or support (see How we

provide information on page 7). We will also provide required reports to DG EAC, EACEA, and relevant Irish government departments by the agreed deadlines (see Reporting on page 8).

We value respectful and constructive communication and ask all stakeholders to engage with us in the same spirit. Léargas staff have the right to work in an environment where communication remains considerate, calm, and appropriate.

## Policy on Respectful and Proportionate Communication

At Léargas, we are committed to providing a high standard of service to all applicants, beneficiaries, and members of the public. Our staff are expected to act with courtesy, fairness, and professionalism at all times, and we ask the same of those who contact us.

### Our Commitment to You

- We will respond to enquiries, applications, and complaints in a timely, clear, and respectful manner.
- We will ensure that your concerns are listened to and that you receive a reasoned reply where appropriate.
- We will apply the principles of good administration in line with the [EU Code of Good Administrative Behaviour](#).

### Your Responsibilities When Communicating with Us

To help us provide a fair and efficient service, we ask that communications with Léargas are:

- Respectful and courteous in tone.
- Focused on issues relevant to your project, application, or official processes.
- Free from repeated submissions on matters that have already been fully addressed.

### Limiting Communications

While we respect the right of individuals to contact us, Léargas has a duty to use public resources proportionately and to protect staff from abusive or threatening behaviour.

Therefore, we reserve the right to:

- Limit responses to communications that are repetitive, abusive, or threatening, once a full and reasoned reply has been provided.
- Restrict future correspondence with individuals to matters directly relating to their project applications, funded projects, or formal review/complaints procedures.
- Refer any communications containing threats, abuse, or harassment to An Garda Síochána.

## Why This Matters

This policy ensures:

- Fair allocation of time and resources to all applicants and beneficiaries.
- A safe and respectful working environment for staff.
- Adherence to the principles of proportionality, fairness, and good administration.

## How we answer requests

### Telephone requests

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.

*“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.”*

### 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 in our [FOI section](#) and [Privacy Policy](#) 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:

- [Facebook](#)
- [LinkedIn](#)
- [Instagram](#)
- [X](#)
- [YouTube](#)

### **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 share information via pre-recorded digital tutorials. We publish our schedule of events on our website (see [leargas.ie/training-and-events](https://leargas.ie/training-and-events)) 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 a delay in meeting a reporting deadline is anticipated, we will promptly inform the relevant contact in the Commission, Department, or other funding body, indicating the expected duration of the delay and formally requesting an extension.

### **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/periodic 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](mailto: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. We aim to resolve complaints informally in the first instance. To begin this process, we ask you to contact the Complaints Liaison Officer who will arrange for an appropriate staff member to review your concerns and work with you to find a resolution without formal escalation.

If you are not satisfied with the outcome of the informal process, you may then submit a formal complaint to [complaints@leargas.ie](mailto:complaints@leargas.ie) or write to Customer Services, Léargas, King's Inns House, Parnell Street, Dublin 1, D01 A3Y8.

You can find out more about our Complaints procedure on our website [here](#).

When we receive a complaint, we will:

- acknowledge the complaint within five working days and respond to it within 15 working days. Where more time is needed, we will inform the complainant in writing.
- deal with the complaint in a fair and appropriate way
- treat the complaint in confidence unless consent is provided or required by law (and subject to our obligations under the relevant FOI & GDPR and data protection acts).

### **The Ombudsman**

If you remain unhappy with our response, you can refer your complaint to the Office of the Ombudsman. The Ombudsman is impartial and free to use.

The Ombudsman will ask you for details of your complaint and to provide a copy of this letter (our final response to your complaint). The best way to do this is through:

- ‘Make A Complaint’ at [www.ombudsman.ie](http://www.ombudsman.ie)

You can also write to: Office of the Ombudsman, 6 Earlsfort Terrace, Dublin 2, D02 W773 or call 01 639 5600 if you have any queries.

### **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 calendar days of the date of receipt of your grant award notification to [appeals@leargas.ie](mailto:appeals@leargas.ie). The NA reserves the right to extend the response period in more complex cases and/or during holiday period. In such case, a holding email to that effect shall be issued to the appellant.

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.