

Annex 2-eEurope Standardisation Action Plan Grant Application Form

Part I – General Information

<u>Title:</u> Specification for Course Descriptions	<u>Organisation:</u> CEN
<u>Short description:</u> <i><please provide a short technical description of the proposed activity in maximum 15 lines></i> <p>The project will provide a specification for describing courses (or other forms of educational offerings on all levels), facilitating the establishment of national and international course catalogues, course portals (e.g. covering all ECTS course descriptions within a European context, or learning opportunities through the PLOTEUS portal) and other services helping students to choose from organized learning opportunities.</p> <p>The specification will strictly address the semantics of describing a learning opportunity, and referencing other specifications, e.g. for describing institutional entities, persons, learning resources, reading lists etc.</p>	
<u>Output/deliverables:</u> <i><please indicate the expected deliverables and the timetable for completion></i> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A specification defining all key concepts and describing the semantics of the concepts used to describe a course through an interoperable machine-readable metadata instance. 2. An implementation guide with examples of elements of which will be used to define a XML binding. <p><i>Tasks to be performed:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Start specification work on the basis of a XML binding developed by Norway Opening Universities (NOU) with funding from the Norwegian Ministry of Education, ref. www.norgesuniversitetet.no/esu and the Education Information Markup Language, ref. http://mjukis.skolutveckling.se/mjukis/start.jsp?vp=ZA21 developed by a group of Swedish National Agencies based on the studera.nu-project, ref. www.studera.nu and the SUSA-model ref. http://mjukis.skolutveckling.se/mjukis/start.jsp?vp=ZA3 •Establish an international Project Team •Work through the proposals over several Project Team meetings to reach an international consensus •Present the work to the CEN/ISSS Learning Technology Workshop 	

Timeline:

A group led by Norwegian experts in close cooperation with Swedish experts will develop the specification. Experts from France and the UK have already expressed interest in participating in the work and will among others be invited to join the Project Team.

The proposed specification will be ready to present to the CEN/ISSS Learning Technology Workshop end of 2004.

Requested financial support: *<please indicate the requested financial contribution from the EU/EFTA in absolute figures, as well as a percentage of the total eligible costs>*

Specification work:

Both the The Norwegian National Educational Portal and The Swedish Authority for School Development have national project groups working on the specification. And we know of groups both in France and in the UK that is analysing the Norwegian XML binding and doing specification work on their own. Thus there are considerable resources in kind attributed to the work.

However it is urgent to coordinate these efforts to get consensus on a European level. The Norwegian National Educational Portal, (www.utdanning.no), has therefore funded the initial phases of the internationalization with app. 24.000 €. More resources are needed to facilitate the consensus process:

We consider that in addition

10 man-days are needed to do an initial comparison of the national data models, 20 man-days are needed to write the specification, and 10 man-days are needed to write the implementation guide.

Group management

3 Project Team meetings: 24 man-days

48.000 € is requested in financial support from EU/EFTA. The financing will cover support to a Project Team of experts selected under CEN/ISSS rules to prepare draft materials.

Part II – Policy relevance and expected impact

Policy relevance: *<please describe the relevance of the proposed initiative to the eEurope 2005 Action Plan and which specific policy objectives are supported>*

DECISION nO 2318/2003/EC OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL of 5 December 2003 adopts a multiannual programme

(2004 to 2006) for the effective integration of information and communication technologies (ICT) in education and training systems in Europe (eLearning Programme).

Better communication of course offerings across national boundaries will significantly contribute to the education and skill-development in the European society.

The DG Education and Culture of the EC has launched the second phase of PLOTEUS (Portal on Learning Opportunities Throughout the European Space). PLOTEUS II aims to provide European citizens with a query tool that give direct access to learning opportunity descriptions, in opposition to the existing portal <http://europa.eu.int/ploteus>) that "only" offers categorized links to learning opportunity sources (universities, national databases, etc).

To fulfil the PLOTEUS II aims it is necessary to have a European consensus about how to exchange Course Description Metadata.

Expected impact: *<please describe the expected impact of the proposed standardisation initiative in support of the eEurope 2005 Action Plan. Who would benefit potentially from this initiative? What would be the cost of non-implementation?>*

The Course Description Specification will create a common basis for establishing a European market for learning opportunities. Educational institutions, both in the public and private sector, will benefit from this work, as well as the learners in all walks of life throughout Europe.