SHORT TERM SCIENTIFIC MISSION (STSM) – SCIENTIFIC REPORT

The STSM applicant submits this report for approval to the STSM coordinator

Action number: TN 1302
STSM title: Group STSM - Be proactive rather than reactive: learn and share best practices necessary for successful research management and become an expert on cross-cutting European research policy issues

STSM start and end date: 22/05/2018 to 25/05/2018
Grantee name: <u>Nadja Beglerovic</u>

PURPOSE OF THE STSM/

The purpose of the group STSM was to:

- Discuss and compare institutional practices, challenges and successes in order to improve and/or develop best practices;
- Exchange best practices (i.e. financial, legal and administrative experience);
- Get a thorough knowledge on a variety of topics (e.g. the European research policy issues, the role universities, research centres and the Hungarian Academy of Science play, etc), which can strengthen both pre-award and post-award practices.
- Help improve participants' skills as well as to motivate professionals to apply for various funding opportunities. This was done through meetings, workshops, presentations and discussions about day-to-day project management and other relevant issues.
- Disseminate information about funding opportunities;
- Get to know each other, network and promote future collaborations between our higher education institutions in Hungary, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Finland and Slovenia.

DESCRIPTION OF WORK CARRIED OUT DURING THE STSMS

The group STSM was organized by the Centre for Social Sciences (CSS), Hungarian Academy of Sciences and Central European University. It had a nice balance of workshops, presentations, meetings, and social opportunities for participants to network and get to know one another. Activities were carried out according to the Programme, which was prepared and sent to us by the host institutions prior to arriving to Budapest.

The schedule included visits to the Centre for Social Sciences, Hungarian Academy of Sciences, National Research, Development and Innovation Office, Central European University and HETFA Research Institute and Centre for Economic and Social Analysis.

Tuesday, May 22, 2018, Centre for Social Sciences, Hungarian Academy of Sciences

The schedule for the day included:

- Introduction of hosts and participants.
- Meeting with the Research Management team of Centre for Social Sciences. Both hosts and participants presented their institutions and their roles, ongoing projects, and discussed what makes their institution special. In addition, Dr. B. Schenk shared lessons learned from setting up a proactive pre-award research management, the importance of having a research impact and communication assistant, strong presence, as well as three pillars of action and setting up online procedure and forms. Receiving all requests via internet instead of through emails is the practice I would like to see my office implement. CSS has continuously worked on and increased the quantity and diversity of proposals. CSS also requires researchers to submit a "research pitch template", which is meant to provide basic information about research (i.e. research questions, data, methods), explain what makes this research idea stand out from previous ones, who will benefit from it, and request time to meet). The importance of deadlines was also discussed.
- Presentation: Institution branding – reflection on identity and branding profile (i.e. the importance of having a great pitch, knowing your audience, context of your presentation/ purpose, and building trust).
- Interactive workshop: the everyday challenges of research professionals.

Wednesday, May 23, 2018, Central European University

The day consisted of:
- Meeting with CEU Academic Cooperation and Research Support Office (ACRO);
- Attending an informative session on "Getting ready for GDPR: Challenges of implementation", which in details explained the purpose of GDPR as well as challenges that come with it;
- Networking;
- Learning about RESAVER pension fund scheme for European researchers;
- Discussing Open Science: Opportunities and Challenges;
- Addressing the importance of "communicating research for impact". The director of communications, Ms. A. Bruckner explained the importance of website, social media, photography and helping researchers with all external communication.

Thursday, May 24, 2018, Hungarian Academy of Sciences, National Research, Development and Innovation Office

- The group visited the Hungarian Academy of Sciences where participants learned about their mission, services they provide, MTA research network, science communication, fighting brain drain, ERC, which consisted of discussion on social science research in Hungary and countries of the participants as well;
- The lunch time was used for networking at the HEFTA Research Institute and Center for Economic and Social Sciences;
- The group also visited the National Research, Development and Innovation Office, where MSCA and ERC grant strategy and management were discussed.

Friday, May 25, 2018, Centre for Social Sciences, Hungarian Academy of Sciences

The last day was used to:
- Discuss "How to maximize impact and public outreach from the research management perspective". Dr. Schenk did a great job getting us to think about "impact" by doing a case-study.
- Share and exchange best practices and lessons learned related to SSH project management
- Wrap-up

DESCRIPTION OF THE MAIN RESULTS OBTAINED

As already discussed in the section "Description of Work", we were able to learn and obtain information about pre-award and post-award research management, the importance of branding, handling everyday challenges of research professionals, GDPR, Resaver, Open Science, and the role each of these institutions, research centres, offices play in research support and in research strategy making. Through a variety of workshops and presentations, participants were also able to not only learn about relevant issues but also gain insights on how they can improve existing services and/or implement new procedures and policies (e.g. GDPR).

Moreover, participants were able to learn about other institutions, their organizational structures/duties associated, their practices, helpful tips on how encourage researchers to apply for grants, and seek each others' advice on handling different situations. Participants were able to identify similarities and differences in practices, which helped us see which practices would be best suited for certain institutions. It was interesting to learn that my institution shares many similarities with Central European University (e.g. private, similar size, committed to providing scholarship to its students, large international student body, diverse staff, internationally accredited, etc.).

Successful cooperation is crucial for research management. This includes cooperation between the research administrators and researchers as well as between research administrators, researchers and other offices that assist with specific issues (e.g. communication office/PR, financial office, etc.). This adds to clear expectations as well as to a more structured and comprehensive support. I was truly impressed by CEU's well-organized research services, which consists of project administration, communication and open science. The presentation by Communications Office was extremely remarkable because they provide a wide range of services to the researchers while also ensuring that the university receives the attention it deserves.

The title of my group STSM was "Be proactive rather than reactive: learn and share best practices necessary for successful research management and become an expert on cross-cutting European research policy issues" and I think it described well what research administrators in all institutions aim to accomplish. We are proactively looking for new strategies and ideas to further help our researchers secure research projects. For example, the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, a self-governing body, elected by the Academy is, runs the largest research network in Hungary and is committed to preventing brain drain and improving success rates in EU projects while giving a special attention to ERC. Therefore, they have the "Lendulet Monument Programme, which is meant to help increase researchers' skills and lead to better chances of getting ERC.

While at the National Research, Development and Innovation Office, the participants were given information on MSCA, its different subtypes, benefits and challenges. The group STSM ended on a perfect note, discussing how to maximize impact and public outreach from the research management perspective.

FUTURE COLLABORATIONS (if applicable)

All participants agreed to keep in touch. Although our institutions vary in size, structure and on-going project, we all deal with certain issues. We can offer and seek advice from each other. Thus, an email contact list was created, which will be used to share best practices, helpful information, and connect if opportunities for collaboration arise. I am also interested in finding opportunities to collaborate on projects in the future.

Additional note: Attending the group STSM was a very rewarding and helpful experience. Not only did I learn many new things, I was also reenergized and inspired by positive, dedicated and knowledgeable professionals/colleagues I had met during the group STSM. I would like to thank the host institutions for going above and beyond when organizing this group STSM, which not only offered a content rich schedule but many opportunities for networking and social activities in the evenings. I am also grateful to the COST and BESTPRAC for providing us with this opportunity in the first place.