

BESTPRAC WG1/WG2/WG3 Meeting

Report

September 24-25, 2018

Faculty of Electrical Engineering, University of Belgrade, Serbia

The tenth meeting of the three working groups of COST Targeted Network TN 1302 (BESTPRAC) was held on September 24-25, 2018 in Belgrade, Serbia.

The main objective of BESTPRAC is to establish a network for the administrative, finance and legal services in universities, research organizations and related entities supporting researchers involved in the lifecycle of European funded projects in order to exchange experiences and share and develop best practices, encourage knowledge sharing, knowledge transfer and increased efficiency.

The target group BESTPRAC is aiming at is the staff in universities and research institutions carrying out administrative tasks in support of European projects during the post-award phase, often with low salaries, without any possibility to travel and to network and share experiences about carrying out administrative tasks in European research projects. The target group does not include researchers, European project officers focussed on the pre-award phase of the project lifecycle, managers/directors, and people with PhDs.

There was a great interest in participating in the joint meeting. In total, 144 applications were received. Finally, 100 research administrators from 32 countries attended the meeting. Among the participants 42% came from so-called inclusiveness countries, 28% were MC members, 72% Working Group members, and 53% so-called Early Stage Administrators. It shall also be mentioned that 77% of the participants were female and 72% already participated in previous BESTPRAC activities.

Three joint sessions of all three working groups as well as the meetings of the three individual working groups were scheduled. Theme of the joint session 1 was “GDPR and Data Management” presented by Dr. Irisz Szel, In-House Legal Counsel, Central European University, Budapest, Hungary.

During the joint interactive session 2 for all WG1/WG2/WG3 participants, Edwin Kanters, Borbala Schenk and Maja Skocanic presented the work and results of ISEC/SG/COMG. The three subgroups have had an interactive work session in Belgrade to further develop the sustainability and commination plan and proceed towards a sustainable BESTPRAC. In parallel sessions each group discussed the progression and help they could provide to the other groups. This was followed by a plenary session to combine the results these results were subsequently summarized by the three chairs of groups.

Sustainability group

The sustainability group discussed about pinpointing the actions towards a sustainable network. Many ideas have been put forwards and now a choice need to be made what direction needs to be taken. The conclusion is to proceed with the **liaising with EARMA and block funding** plan and in parallel apply for other networking funds such as **Erasmus plus**. Furthermore a delegation needs to go to Brussels to discuss the terms and conditions for liaising and make sure that the ideas behind Bestprac stay alive and are defended. These terms need to be defined in more detail and we need the communication and stakeholder group to increase the gross value of Bestprac giving us a better position for the negotiations. Next to talking to EARMA we also need to talk to people involved in allocating block funding and try to provide a construction that helps those not financial capable to still be part when BESTPRAC enters the next phase.

Impact and Stakeholder Engagement group

Following its first face-to-face meeting in Vienna in 2018, the Impact and Stakeholder Engagement Group of BESTPRAC has been working on identifying stakeholders, preparing SWOT analysis for BESTPRAC and analyze the possible sustainability tracks identified by the Sustainability Group. At the Belgrade meeting ISEG was assigned twofold task: preparing general stakeholder mapping and analysis for the project and also to focus specifically on two to the sustainability options: liaising with EARMA and lobbying for block funding in Brussels. On the session on September 25 in close cooperation with the leaders and the members of the Sustainability and the Communications Group ISEG discussed further the two sustainability options. The group also prepared a first version of the stakeholder map regarding to the lobbying for funding sustainability option. The leader of the group informed the plenary session on the progress made so far and the steps to take next towards the concise impact and Stakeholder Engagement Plan of BESTPRAC.

Communication group

Considering the direction the Sustainability group defined for BESTPRAC, the Communication group will make sure that the persons that are going to discuss the terms and conditions for liaising have strong tools in their hands. Therefore, the efforts of the group will be focused on building a **strong BESTPRAC brand** and **spreading the key messages of BESTPRAC**.

Besides sustainability in regards to funding, the Communication group also believes that the sustainability of BESTPRAC can be viewed from another perspective - in **sustaining the virtual network**.

Therefore, communication activities in the period from February until September 2018 were focused on improving the existing and developing new communication tools for BESTPRAC.

The BESTPRAC **website** is being modified and being made more user friendly. It's important that all the information is easily accessible to people outside of the network and that the possibility to join the network is clearly emphasized. All learning materials will be moved to one place and will be made more interactive when

possible. As far as **social media** is concerned, a [Facebook page](#) for communicating BESTPRAC achievements and a [Facebook group](#) for internal communication have been started. Also, an official BESTPRAC [YouTube channel](#) has been opened. BESTPRAC's [Twitter channel](#) and [LinkedIn group](#) have been regularly updated. BESTPRAC members are encouraged to post, comment, share or like posts published on our social media channels, to foster communication between meetings and contribute to the increased visibility of the network. Also, if any of our members have presented BESTPRAC or published something connected to BESTPRAC or research administration, they can send an e-mail to maja.skocanic@uniri.hr and it will be shared. Promotion of BESTPRAC **events** has been improved, by ensuring high quality photographs from the events, web streaming of training schools and specific sessions on WG meetings and filming video testimonials. Official acknowledgement letters for host institutions of WG meetings, training schools and STSMs have also been made. New **promotional materials** are in development. For now, posters for the WG meeting in Belgrade have been made. BESTPRAC members which have the possibility are encouraged to put a BESTPRAC message in their e-mail signatures in order to further promote the network. They're also encouraged to publish information about BESTPRAC on the official websites of their organisations, if possible.

Conclusion

Both the Communication group and the Impact and Stakeholder Engagement group will proceed with a general plan and focus on and assist with the liaisoning and block funding plan. It has been agreed upon that the BESTPRAC brand needs to be preserved and that in order to increase the collaboration between the three subgroups the three chairs will regularly have discussions and online meetings to increase collaborative action in the future.

Summary of WG1-meeting

WG1 general summary

WG1 had 3 different sessions on Tuesday on different topics sharing knowledge and best practises. Many participants have actively participated in organising, during the meeting or afterwards for the reporting. In total 42 WG1 members have been present at the meeting. We are in addition to this report providing more elaborate information in the form of handouts, handbook, guides and the presentations given at the meeting these are available for all research administrators to use. This meeting mainly due to the activity of the group was very successful.

WG1.1 introduction to peer to peer learning “intervision”

WG1.1.1 intervision introduction

Presenter Sascha Le Large

The technique was presented by Sascha Le Large from the University Medical Center Groningen. As Sascha explained, intervision has been shown to improve skills on a personal as well as institutional level and is a safe platform to share work issues and improve effectiveness. Intervision needs a case owner, the ‘issue holder’, a facilitator and participants, a ‘panel’ who will be presented with the issue and initially not provide any feedback or solutions. The advantage of the technique is that it’s beneficial for everyone involved as it requires an open mind not just for the panel who are ‘restricted’ to initially asking open questions only and not provide any feedback but also for the case owner who is able to reflect on his/her own behaviour. The thinking the case owner does without being interrupted is pivotal in finding his/her way out of the problem.

WG1.1.2 getting active with intervision, group intervention and role play

Discussion leaders: Sascha Le Large, Nicole Silva Elgueta, Edwin Kanters, Christina Oliveira, Virag Zsar, Sonia Sagrista and Elizabeth Groom

Working Group 1 practiced a technique called intervision in 7 small groups. On forehand cases were collected and discussion leaders were instructed on their role. *Testimonial* In Belgrade, I had the opportunity to experience this level of thinking thanks to a great and facilitator Even though the issue I presented related to bad communication in university settings, at the end of the session I realised that it’s an issue of trust which positive communication on its own cannot resolve. It was a pivotal moment.

Many participants we positively surprised what the technique could do and how effective it was in dealing and learning soft skills. A complete instruction manual will be provided on the website of Bestprac.

Guide on R&I Funding Programmes beyond H2020 WG1.2

WG1.2.1 European Economic Area grants and Norway grants

Presenter: Bartosz Brach

The grants concentrate on contributing to healthier lives and societies of the subjects in the participating countries and to reduce economic and social disparities in Europe to build a stronger Europe. It is clearly defined in the rules and regulations who can

participate and what is needed to fulfil eligibility conditions. Natural persons are not eligible consortium members. Three countries have the lion share of grants (see Bartoz's slides), other eligible countries have smaller contributions (Central Europe, Baltic, and South Europe).

WG 1.2.2 National Institutes of Health (NIH)

Presenters: Elisabeth Groom and Melanie Regal

The NIH provides financial support in the form of grants, cooperative agreements, and contracts to support the advancement of the NIH mission to enhance health, extend healthy lives, and reduce the burdens of illness and disability. In this duo presentation Beth and Melanie go into depths on NIH procedures

WG.1.2.3 Erasmus+

Presenter: Madalena Martins

Erasmus+ is the EU's programme to support education, training, youth and sport. It is set to last until 2020 intended for a wide scope of individuals and organisations. Aims to support the development, transfer and implementation of innovative practices and promotes cooperation, peer learning and experience exchange on a European level. Erasmus+ projects may be of two types: Strategic partnerships supporting innovation and Strategic Partnerships supporting exchange of good practices. Madalena presents an Erasmus example from her own experience.

WG 1.2.4 Visegrad Funds

Presenter: Fanni Bobák

The Visegrad Group (also known as the "Visegrad Four" or simply "V4") reflects the efforts of the countries of the Central European region to work together in a number of fields of common interest within the all-European integration. Czechia, Hungary, Poland and Slovakia. The Fund is an international donor organization, established in 2000 by the governments of the Visegrad Group countries to promote regional cooperation in the Visegrad region (V4) as well as between the V4 region and other countries, especially in the Western Balkans and Eastern Partnership regions. The Fund does so by awarding €8 million through grants, scholarships and artist residencies provided annually by equal contributions of all the V4 countries. Other donor countries (Canada, Germany, the Netherlands, South Korea, Sweden, Switzerland, the United States) have provided another €10 million through various grant schemes run by the Fund since 2012. Fanni shares her expertise on Visegrad Funds more information can be found in the guidebook

WG1.2.5 EIT Grants

Presenter: Javier Gonzalo

EIT is trying to put research to the market KICs (Knowledge innovation centres) are organized along different topics, such as EIT Climate-KIC, Digital, Food, Health, InnoEnergy, Raw materials, alumni Starting in 2008, independent body EU, 305 new start-up, closed community. Javier explains the complex rules and the way their institution is involved in EIT.

Guide on Horizon Europe WG1.3

WG1.3.1 How to get prepared?

Presenter: Estel Gil Guinon

A prompt overview on strategies to get prepared for the upcoming framework programme was delivered by Estel Gil Guinon representing Vall d'Hebron Research Institute (VHIR). Horizon Europe is the Commission's proposal for a €100 billion research and innovation funding programme for seven years (2021-2027). Estel shares her expert opinion on how to get prepared, more information can be found in the guidebooks.

WG1.3.2 requirements of the programme

Presenter: Olivier Sparagano

New Horizon Europe is coming our way with a budget of 100 billion, different pillars, novelties are the inclusion of missions, international collaboration, European innovation counsel and MSCFA. In the future look for potential new partners in countries that are going to get a new EU membership status. How does BestPrac fit in this new arena for instance as a tool to strengthen the European research area, reforming and enhancing the European R&I system.

Many opportunities lie ahead but plans need to be made to fit the requirements. Olivier shares his inside knowledge on Brussels and how the Coventry research support office works.

WG1.3.2 Mission Orientated Research and Innovation

Presenter: Virag Zsar

Development of the Europe Commission Framework Programme 9 (Horizon Europe) is underway and a number of reports have shaped the proposal for Horizon Europe including the "Mission-Orientated Research and Innovation in the European Union" authored by Prof Maria Mazzucato. This presentation of Virag outlines a problem solving approach to fuel innovation led growth. Virag presents her expert view on missions more information can be found in the guidebooks.

WG1.3.3 Societal impact: How to guide researchers into presenting the public benefits of their research

Presenter: Vesna Bozanic

Vesna Bozanic from Instituto Superior de Agronomia, Lisboa, held a presentation about social impact of the scientific research. She described that social impact is defined as an effect on change or benefit the economy, society, culture, public policy or services, health, the environment or quality of life, beyond academia. More about the presentation of Vasna can be found in the guidebooks

Summary of WG2-Finance Meeting

During the BESTPRAC Meeting in Belgrade, WG2 members (45 attendants from 28 COST Countries) analysed and discussed following topics as related to the three objectives of the WG2 for the period 2018-2020

1 . Financial implementation of Grant Agreement Amendments

- 1.1 Financial Management of H2020 Projects Guide to Best Practice Based on BESTPRAC members' experience

2 . Draw lessons from H2020 and prepare research administrators for financial implementation of Horizon Europe projects

- 2.1 CFS process in H2020
- 2.2 New pilot models of lump sum funding
- 2.3 Support for H2020 coordinators

3 . Supporting cross - WG topics

- 3.1 Revision of BESTPRAC FAQs
- 3.2 The Coordinator's Survival Kit

Financial Management of H2020 Projects Guide to Best Practice Based on BESTPRAC members' experience

Marija Sola Spasic, Chair of WG2, explained to the attendants that the draft of the Guide has to be adopted during the next WG2 Meeting in 2019. Therefore, Subgroups Leaders are asked to finalize the text during the next months.

During this session of the meeting, each Subgroups Leader presented the content of the chapters under his/her coordination, and discussed with the WG2 Chair and the attendants questions and comments reaching following decisions:

- Draft of the Guide will be shared by Marija Sola Spasic with Google in order to allow the WG2 Members to change/integrate/comment - Deadline: the end of October 2018
- Deadline for version 2 – the end of November 2018
- Each Leader will try to adopt for the chapters the structure of Chapter 4 ("Layout" and "Tips and Tricks")
- Parag. 5.1 will be the part of the Introduction of the Guide, and Jagdees Pabla will be responsible for this part
- The Questionnaire developed by the Subgroup 6 led by Dace Kärkle included in Chapter 8, will be a single document and published on the Bestprac Website as deliverable of the Meeting
- Parag. 5.2. Financial Management remains - Cash flow will be part of Chapter Budgeting - Per Inge Andersen
- The Guide will have following structure with following Leaders:
 - o Chapter 1 - Introduction: Jagdees Pabla
 - o Chapter 2 – Legal Framework - Vera Shiko and Vanessa Ravagni
 - o Chapter 3
 - ✓ Eligible and ineligible costs - Géraldine Leonard and Stéphanie Rossard
 - ✓ Other direct costs - Wolfram Rieneck
 - o Chapter 4 –Budgeting - Per Inge Andersen

- Chapter 5 –Financial Management - Maria Saalpo - will be deleted
 - Chapter 6- Financial monitoring & reporting - Maria Saalpo
 - Chapter 7 –Financial Audits- Jonne Ritari
 - Chapter 8 - Subgroup 6 - Synergies between H2020, ESIF and other funding sources - Dace Karkle
 - Chapter 9 - Authors - Leader of each subgroup will add WG2 members involved in each paragraph.
- First language check - 15 December – 03 January - Bojana Obradovic Kuzmanovic
 - Editing text - 03 January - 10 January – Martin Grančay
 - This document will be available for reading and comments/discussion from 10 January – 10 February
 - 10 February - 1 March – Final language check (Vanda Baloh and Jagdees Pabla) and Final comments/recommendations which must be discussed during the next meeting (if any).

CFS process in H2020

Gyða Einarsdóttir and Úlfar Kristinn Gíslason presented the characteristics of the CFS in H2020 and the results of the survey of July 2018 among Bestprac members (**59** answers from **55** institutions and **33** countries)

New pilot models of lump sum funding

Staska Mrak Jamnik (University of Ljubljana) analyze the pilot models testing two options for lump sum funding in 2018 presented by the EC as one of the main elements of the second wave of simplification of H2020. Furthermore it will be evaluated in view of Horizon Europe.

Support for H2020 coordinators and the Coordinator's Survival Kit

Dirk De Craemer (Ghent University) and Per Inge Andresen (Norwegian University of Science and Technology) presented the experience of their institution in supporting coordinators of H2020 Projects. Taking into account Members experiences and the Survival Kit developed by WG3, WG2 attendants decided to discuss in the next WG2 Meeting a Coordinator's Survival Kit focused on financial issues

Revision of BESTPRAC FAQs:

Bestprac Questions, divided in three groups, were presented by Elena Ioannidou (Personnel costs) , Primož Petek (Other direct costs) and Veronika Csapo (Other Issues). Marija Sola Spasic presented comments and suggestions, WG2 Attendants decided to contribute/correct/amend to the FAQ in order to have the final version for the end of October.

Deadline for revision is middle of november.

Topics and Volunteers for the next WG2 meeting

- Adoption of the Financial Guide: Jagdees Pabla, Vanda Baloh, Martin Grančay, Bojana Kuzmić Obradović
- Coordinator's Survival Kit: Dirk De Craemer , Per Inge Andresen, Vanessa Ravagni

Summary of WG3-Legal meeting

Introduction

WG3 legal had 12 participants. Most of the WG3 participants (10) participated in previous BESTPRAC meetings but we also welcomed 2 participants new to BESTPRAC. WG3 is mainly composed by legal counsels but also by EU research administrators who have to deal with legal issues in their day-to-day work without legal education and background.

Day 1: September 24, 2018

First day of the meeting was fully devoted to ISEG/SG/COMG joint meeting and joint sessions of all WGs. WG3 had no session to lead.

Day 2: September 25, 2018

In the beginning of the second day WG3 leaders Sarah Dello (Ghent University, Belgium) and Niina Mikkonen (Aalto University, Finland) presented the agenda for the day including WG3 objectives and approach for the current and upcoming meetings.

After the introduction, the WG3 participants briefly presented themselves.

The agenda of WG3 contained the following three topics, (co)-lead by 10 WG3 volunteers.

1. GDPR – Experiences of universities since the entering into effect of the Regulation; how are universities tackling the practical issues
2. Knowledge transfer; how to shape a license deal? (legal) tools and provisions and practical examples
3. First glimpse at the structure of Horizon Europe: Analysis of the EC Rules for participation

WG3.1: Experiences of universities since the entering into effect of the Regulation; how are universities tackling the practical issues

The new General Data Protection Regulation came into force on May 25, 2018. As the GDPR takes the form of a regulation, it is directly applicable in all EU member states, without being implemented in national legislation. The new GDPR introduces stricter rules regarding data protection applying to all data controllers and processors across Europe.

During the WG3 meeting in Bucharest in February 2018, the session on GDPR focused on how universities could prepare for GDPR coming into force. The session gained interest in other WGs and few participants from WG1 and WG2 attended the GDPR part of WG3 meeting. The great interest in this topic both within WG3 and other WG's was decisive for including this topic again in the program for the meeting in Belgrade.

The session on GDPR held this time in Belgrade had a very pragmatic approach: 4 volunteers each presented how their respective universities deal with the implementation of GDPR.

- Niina Mikkonen: implementation of GDPR at Aalto University (Finland)
- Cătălin Marius Radu: implementation of GDPR at Spiru Haret University (Romania)
- Miriam Ryan: implementation of GDPR at Maynooth University (Ireland)
- Kristin E. Harðardóttir: implementation of GDPR at University of Iceland

Thanks to practical presentations, good discussions were held in the group and best practices were shared. Due to interest and high significance of the GDPR in the near future, the group agreed to continue with this topic in the upcoming WG3 meetings.

WG3.2: Knowledge transfer; how to shape a license deal? (legal) tools and provisions and practical examples

Based on the questionnaire completed by the WG3 participants, (knowledge transfer and) technology transfer has been identified as one of the topics which are useful to be tackled in the forum of WG3. Although this topic is not directly linked to H2020, sharing best practices on technology transfer is valuable in the view of impact being a crucial aspect of good research proposals. It is also a topic that many university legal counsels have to deal with.

The session started with a presentation of Vadim Iatchevici (Agency for Innovation and Technology Transfer, Republic of Moldova) and Albena Vutsova (Sofia University, Bulgaria) on the general principles of knowledge transfer and an overview of the various tools for effective technology transfer. Also the role of technology transfer offices within universities was highlighted. In order to make the topic of technology transfer more hands-on, a second presentation was given by Nina Smerdu (University of Ljubljana, Slovenia) which focused specifically on one of the technology transfer tools: licensing. The presentation gave a good insight on the principles of a licensing deal and also provided some example clauses.

The session was practical and focused on best practices and the clauses within license deals.

WG3.3: First glimpse at the structure of Horizon Europe: Analysis of the EC Rules for participation

Horizon2020 is currently half-way its implementation; the mid-term evaluation report being published opened the door for looking back but also for looking forward towards the upcoming framework program Horizon Europe.

In this session Ella Bouquet (MESRI, France) and Sarah Dello (Ghent University, Belgium) presented an analysis of the draft Rules for Participation of the upcoming framework agreement. Nataša Jakominić Marot (University of Rijeka, Croatia) focused on the practical consequences of the Brexit in relation to Horizon Europe.

The topic of Horizon Europe will be continued on the upcoming WG3 meetings as insights and more information will become available in the upcoming months.

Looking ahead

A short survey was conducted amongst the WG3 members in order to identify i) which topics would gather interest of the WG3 participants and ii) to identify which specific expertise of the WG3 members is available and can be used for putting together the programme for the upcoming WG3 meetings. For the upcoming meetings, ideas for topics are:

- Continuation of GDPR
- Continuation of Horizon Europe
- Technology Transfer with focus on spin-offs
- Impact section in proposal from the legal point of view

Aim of WG3 is also to provide practical guides/survival kits focusing e.g. on GDPR and consortium agreement negotiations.