

SHORT TERM SCIENTIFIC MISSION (STSM) SCIENTIFIC REPORT

This report is submitted for approval by the STSM applicant to the STSM coordinator

Action number: [TN1302](#)

STSM title: Group STSM to Flanders: VUB (Free University Brussels), Ghent University, KU Leuven

STSM start and end date: 12/June/2017 to 15/June/2017

Grantee name: Omar Sharifullah

Group STSM Report

Short term missions to three universities in Flanders

**Host institutions: VUB (Free University Brussels), Ghent University,
KU Leuven
15-12 June 2017**

Omar Sharifullah

Research Project Assistant
Academic Cooperation and Research Support Office
Central European University

Aim: Exchange of practice: EU research support and project management



COST Mission Statement

COST enables break-through scientific developments leading to new concepts and products and thereby contributes to strengthen Europe's research and innovation capacities.

COST is a unique means for European researchers to jointly develop their own ideas and new initiatives across all scientific disciplines through trans-European networking of nationally funded research activities.

COST key features are:

- Building capacity by connecting high-quality scientific communities throughout Europe and worldwide;
- providing networking opportunities for early career investigators;
- Increasing the impact of research on policy makers, regulatory bodies and national decision makers as well as the private sector.

Through its inclusiveness COST supports integration of research communities, leverages national research investments and addresses issues of global relevance.

COST is a building block of the European Research Area, instrumental for successful innovation strategies and global cooperation.

PURPOSE OF THE STSM: The Group STSM is aimed at supporting individual mobility, strengthening the existing networks and fostering collaborations by allowing – in particular – early stage administrators to visit more than one institution in another participating COST Country.

Knowledge sharing, knowledge transfer, and increased efficiency in project management.

My STSM to KU Leuven, Ghent University and VUB (Free University Brussels) was a brilliant opportunity, I have been working as a Research Project Assistant for almost three months at Central European University. Being new to my job I have learned so many things which could not have been possible to achieve otherwise in such a short period. The visit took place between 12 and 15 June, 2017. I and six other participants visited three mentioned universities, during the visit we met mostly with their research management and finance professional working teams. We learned about the institutions in general and the operation of their European Project offices

One of the STSM aim is that to establish a network for the administrative, finance and legal services in universities, research organizations and related entities.

In these four important days we exchanged best practices and experiences about:

- Latest developments in research projects specially in EU projects
- Research Support structure
- Roles in research administration
- Collaboration and international networks
- Communications
- Administrative, finance and legal services in universities

DESCRIPTION OF WORK CARRIED OUT DURING THE STSMS

Description of the work carried out during the

Monday 12 June 2017

UKRO offices

9:45 – 10:00 Welcome and coffee

10:00 – 11:30 Presentations of hosts' and participants' institutions

11:30 – 12:00 *the research landscape in Belgium / Flanders, Stijn Delauré (KU Leuven)*
12:00 – 13:00 *Sandwich lunch*
13:00 – 14:00 *Presentation on UKRO and H2020 vs. FP9, Jon Brookes (UKRO Advisor)*
14:00 – 15:00 *Networks for Research Managers: presentation of EARMA, Nik Claesen (EARMA Managing Director)*
15:00 – 15:20 *Coffee break*
15:20 – 16:00 *Financial hot topics within H2020 (new regulations, lumps sum financing, etc.)*
16:00 – 16:15 *Wrap up and end of the Welcome Day*
16:30 – 17:30 *Visit of the Parliamentarium (European Parliament Visitors' Center)*

KU Leuven – 13 June 2017 - Research Coordination Office (DOC)-(LRD)

09:30-11:30 – *discussion with Stijn Delauré, head European Research Affairs unit @DOC*
Intro to KU Leuven and its research policy, general structure of Grant Office and EU support team, services offered, matchmaking on funding opportunities, communication and tools, workshops & trainings, stimulation policy & incentives, pre-award support, advocacy generally & WP level, networks
11:30-12:00 – *discussion with Patricia Pardon, head Project & Budget Administration @DOC*
KU Leuven financial procedures and IT tools, EU financial reporting, audits
12:15-13:30 – *lunch at Leuven Grand Place, with EU support team colleagues*
13:30-15:00 – *discussion with Myriam Witvrouw, European Research Advisor @LRD*
Intro to the TTO, the EU support unit and its services, pre- and post-award European project support to researchers, grant preparation, project management, consortium agreement and legal issues
15:15-15:45 – *discussion with Hannelore Vanhaverbeke, Data & Analysis coordinator @DOC*
Open Access in Horizon 2020, Data Management Plan, services (tbc)
15:45-16:00 – *closure of the meeting, by Stijn Delauré @DOC*

VUB site visit – Wednesday 14 June 2017

10:00 – 10:30 *Wim Schreurs (Coordinator European Liaison Office – R&D)*
Introduction to VUB and research support services at VUB
10:30 – 10:45 *Wim Schreurs*
Process flow: how is an EU project supported at VUB in each phase of the project lifecycle
10:45 – 11:15 *Marie Arousseau (Erasmus+ Project Manager, International Relations and Mobility Office)*
Supporting Erasmus+ project proposals by IRMO
11:15 – 11:30 *Coffee break*
11:30 – 12:00 *Kim Coppens (EU financial officer, Financial Department)*
Best practices financial management of EU-projects at VUB
12:30 – 13:30 *Lunch break and short campus tour*

13:30 – 14:00 *Stien Mommaerts (European Liaison Officer, R&D)*

ERC support track at VUB

14:00 – 15:00 *Elger Vercayie (European Liaison Officer and legal advisor, R&D)*

Introduction and basics of consortium agreements and IPR (intellectual property rights) for non-legals

15:00 – 15:15 *Coffee break*

15:15 – 15:45 *Stien Mommaerts*

Discussion on incentives related to EU projects

15:45 – 16:30 *Conclusions of VUB site visit*

Comparison with home institution

Questions

16:30 *End of the VUB session*

UNIVERSITEIT GENT (UGent) site visit

Thursday 15 June 2017

09:45 *Welcome and coffee*

10:00 *Margo Baele, Nathalie Vandepitte/Véronique Victor (to be confirmed), European Research Advisors*

Organization of the European Research Office and support services; European strategy and incentives; trainings offered to researchers

11:00 *Discussion with Katrien Windels and Ann Moens, financial officers at European research office*

H2020 financial administration and reporting issues

11:30 *Dirk De Craemer, head of the Research Coordination Office*

Research policy of Ghent University, position of European Research Office in the Research Coordination Office

12:15 *Lunch*

13:30 *Transport to the UGent campus Technologiepark*

14:00 *Leen Verlinden, TechTransfer Office, Business Development Fund advisor*

Business Development Centers at Ghent University as industrial liaison network

15:00 *Meeting with dr. Elke Gruyaert, Magnel Laboratory for Concrete Research*

Practical experiences with FP7 and H2020 projects, Coordinating projects, Cooperation with the European Research Office

16:30 *End of the UGent session and transport to the railway station*

DESCRIPTION OF THE MAIN RESULTS OBTAINED

Central European University is a small graduate-level university that offers English language Master's and doctoral programs in the social sciences, the humanities, law, management and public policy, and has developed a distinct academic and intellectual focus, combining the comparative study of the region's historical, cultural, and social diversity with a global perspective on good governance, human rights, development and social transformation.

At CEU we have a central office for research support (the Academic Cooperation and Research Support Office – ACRO).

Since before the STSM I had very little knowledge and experience concerning the research administration before my job at CEU I was working as a culture advisor with NATO in Afghanistan, after that I was teaching Morphology subject at one of higher education institute in Afghanistan so STSM was a great experience for me I have learn so many things.

To conclude, all presentations were interesting, and from each and every one of them I have learned something interesting and useful. However I would mentioned some of them such as:

- A. Finance department: KU Leuven has a central office which is responsible to prepare the financial statements to pay the invoices related to all the EU grants, financial reporting and auditing, but at CEU EU projects officers doing the financial reporting and auditing.
- B. At KU Leuven (DOC) AND (LRD) giving lots of support in proposal writing, promoting the EU funding opportunities, training courses, advice ... and that is the reason of KU success in attracting the EU funds.
- C. KU Leuven (LRD) transfer knowledge, collaboration with company and industry.
- D. KU Leuven has decentralize project managers in the departments to promote cooperation with industries, to attract external funds.
- E. KU Leuven: Coordination of ethical committee.
- F. KU Leuven has travel grants for PI so that they can find collaborations.
- G. At VUB they are making contracts with consultancy companies to support their proposal for EU projects.
- H. At VUB they are giving bonus to PI so that they can bring them back to their institution.
- I. UGent has a very good system for communications, PI will be automatically subscribe they can select daily or weekly alert for funding opportunities.
- J. At UGent they have bibliometric system in their library so that they can identify candidates for ERC projects.

I would like to say thank you to all three universities for looking after us and for Sharing so much useful and interesting knowledge and practices, when I came back from Brussels we had “Staff retreat meeting” I showed my engagement and I had over view almost about everything regarding the research projects administration.

Thank you once again for the opportunity!
Omar Sharifullah.