The voice of research administrators: BESTPRAC – a network of administrative excellence

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BESTPRAC Core Group 2014-2017
BESTPRAC – COST TN1302

- **COST Targeted Network** initially funded for 2013-2017 and extended until October 2019.

- The main objective of BESTPRAC is to establish a network for the administrative, finance and legal services in universities, research organisations 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.
WHY IS BESTPRAC A SUCCESS?

- Output based training
- Practical approach
- Equality

OUTPUT BASED TRAINING

- Speak in English
- Give a presentation
- See a new place
- Talk to a stranger
- Present your own experiences
- Speaking in front of an audience
- Prepare training
WHY IS BESTPRAC A SUCCESS?

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- Output based training
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BESTPRAC SUPPORTS EUROPEAN RESEARCH

- Networking
- Breaking barriers
- Know-how
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COST TN BESTPRAC key messages

For Europe
Excellent research requires top research support

For funders & policy makers
Research support networks enable capacity building which strengthens European R&I cohesion

For funders
Professional research support increases value for money in the ERA
BESTPRAC FIGURES

A network of 670 research administrators in 39 COST countries + 1 NNC + 1 IPC
- 7 Training Schools
- 11 WG meetings
- 7 MC meetings (incl. 3 virtual ones)
- 67 Short Term Scientific Missions

**Key Figures:**
- 50-100 % ESAs
- 30-90 % involvement of ITCs
- 80-90 % females

**COST Innovations:**
- Group STSM fellows
- Group STSM hosting
- Virtual MC meetings
WG1: Definition of profession research administrator

**Why**
- No clear job profiles
- No uniformity in Europe
- Poor recognition and career development opportunities

**Impact**
- Better understanding of research support
- Basis for setting up research support office
- Improved positioning and career perspectives

**How**

Research Support Staff Framework

*Sustainable Wiki prototype on tasks, skills and competences*

Prototype available at www.bestprac-wiki.eu
WG1: Capacity building by training and exchanging best practices and experiences

**Creation of guides**
Support tools on preparation of proposals and implementation of projects publicly available for all research administrators

**Knowledge transfer**
Know-how and best practices on support of European applications and projects exchanged between all COST countries

**Personal development**
WG1 participants trained in relevant competences and skills (e.g. how to communicate, provide comfort, write, present)
WG2: Financial capacity building

Practice-based and practice-focused guidelines
- Financial management of FP7 and H2020 projects
- Financial management of MSCA Actions
- Financial FAQs
- Coordinator’s Survival Kit

Workshops and presentations
- Active engagement by all participants in WG meetings
- Focus on the practitioner's needs, contributions from all over Europe

Training school
- Practical solution-oriented approach
- Hands-on training and active participant engagement

Knowledge transfer
- Sharing of practices and knowledge from all parts of Europe
- Mutual learning about the organizational and national context in which EU projects are managed

Error-free financial management of EU grants
Based on BESTPRAC Members’ Experience

- Legal Framework
- Eligible and ineligible costs
  - Personnel | other costs |
  - infrastructure | internal invoicing |
  - third parties | indirect costs
- Budgeting
- Financial monitoring & reporting
- Financial Audits
- Synergies between H2020, ESIF & others

Financial Management of Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions (MSCA) in Horizon 2020

- Financial considerations regarding
  - Proposal
  - Grant Agreement
  - Implementation
- with ITN, IF, RISE specifics
WG3: Legal aspects

- Highly specialized discussion and networking forum on selected challenging legal issues in the R&I programmes for early stage and experienced lawyers from all over Europe

- European Charter & Code (HR Excellence in Research Logo)
- GDPR

- Targeted training for non-legals responsible for advising on legal issues of the EU R&I programmes

- Targeted transfer of knowledge and exchange of best practices among legals and to the non-legals advising on legal aspects of the EU R&I programmes and beyond (Mini-Guides: “Alone at the grant office” – Survival Kits)
“Alone at the grant office” - Survival Kit – LEGAL - PART 1

Checklist and tips for a Non-Disclosure Agreement for Horizon 2020 Actions

WORKING GROUP LEGAL (WG3)
BESTPRAC Meeting, Ljubljana
March 5, 2015 (updated on September 2016)

Niina Mikkonen, Aalto University, Finland
Diana Pustula, University of Warsaw, Poland

Project life-cycle

Pre-proposal stage
“Alone at the grant office” - Survival Kit – LEGAL - PART 2

Checklist and recommendations for legal issues in the proposals for Horizon 2020 Actions
(Version 1.2.1, April 2016)

WORKING GROUP LEGAL (WG3)
BESTPRAC Meeting, Budapest
September 15, 2015

Niina Mikkonen, Aalto University
Diana Pustula, University of Bucharest
Carmen Gascó, Universidad Politecnica de Madrid, Spain

Project life-cycle
“Alone at the grant office” - Survival Kit – LEGAL - PART 3

PRACTICAL COMMENTS FOR
DESCA MODEL CONSORTIUM AGREEMENT for HORIZON 2020
(Version 1.3.1, March 2016)

Based on
"COMMENTS FOR
DESCA MODEL CONSORTIUM AGREEMENT FOR FP7"
shared by Universidad Carlos III de Madrid, ES

Document updated, elaborated and adjusted to Horizon 2020
by WORKING GROUP LEGAL (WG3)
BESTPRAC Meeting, Bratislava
March 5, 2015 (revised September 2016)

Sarah Dello, Ghent University, Belgium, Diana Pustula, University of Warsaw, Poland

PROJECT LIFE-CYCLE

- Pre-proposal stage
- Proposal stage
- Grant agreement preparation stage
“Alone at the grant office” - SURVIVAL KITS

CHECKLIST AND TIPS FOR FOR HORIZON 2020 ACTIVITIES

WORKING GROUP LEGAL (WG3)
BESTPRAC MEETING, LJUBLJAR
MARCH 5, 2015

Niina Mikkonen, Aalto Unive
diana Pustula, University of
Carmen Gascó, Universidade

PRE-PREPROPOSAL STAGE

PROPOSAL STAGE

GRANT AGREEMENT PREPARATION STAGE

IMPLEMENTATION/MANAGEMENT STAGE

PROJECT LIFE-CYCLE
Training Schools

- Understanding the EC Grant and Consortium Agreement – legal affairs for non-legals (Warsaw | October 2014)

- Engaging Stakeholders throughout the Project Lifecycle – Personal Communication Skills for European Research Administrators (Nuremberg | May 2015)

- How to manage key financial tasks for FP7 and H2020 European research and innovation projects: Finance for Beginners (Verona | April 2016)

- Administration of research funding: dealing with several funding sources (for non-university research organisations in inclusiveness targeted countries) (Vienna | September 2016)
Training Schools

• How to manage key financial tasks for H2020 European research and innovation projects: **Finance for Beginners** (Belgrade | June 2018)

• How to support **successful grant proposals in FP9**: from Cross-cutting Issues to Grant Writing (Lisbon | December 2018)

• **Leadership for the future**: knowledgeable and successful leaders in Research Administration (Ljubljana | February 2019)

• **to be organized**: How to support **successful grant proposals in FP9**: from Cross-cutting Issues to Grant Writing (June 2019)
Webpage of Targeted Network: http://www.bestprac.eu

Welcome to BESTPRAC!

BESTPRAC is a COST Targeted Network that gathers administrative, financial and legal staff at universities and research-driven institutions who are carrying out different tasks to support transnational external competition based (in particular EU funded) research projects.

The network serves as a platform for exchanging experiences, sharing and developing best practices, encouraging knowledge sharing, knowledge transfer and increasing efficiency in these fields.

BESTPRAC activities can be divided into three groups: Working groups, Training schools and Short-term mobilities. If you want to know more about the network, watch the video from our last meeting!

What is COST?

COST - European Cooperation in the field of Scientific and Technical Research - is one of the longest-running European instruments supporting cooperation among scientists and researchers across Europe. COST is also the first and widest European intergovernmental network for coordination of nationally funded research activities.
Output – Learning Materials | FAQs | Literature

Overview: Learning Materials

Listed below are all best practices (presentations, FAQs, survey results etc.), which were made by members of the BESTPRAC network and shared during the joint meetings. The list is being continually updated. Reports from BESTPRAC meetings, training schools and STSMs can be found under their respective tabs (Events, Exchange or Training).

- Ethics
- Financial Matters
- Legal Aspects
- Open Data / Open Access
- Project Management
- Proposal Writing
- Synergies
- Third Parties
- Miscellaneous

Horizon 2020 FAQ

Literature
Channel: @BestPracEU

Page: Bestprac

Group (internal communication): BESTPRAC group

Group: BESTPRAC

Channel: BESTPRAC

Mailing list: register by email to cost-tn1302@tuwien.ac.at
European Landscape of RA networks

European networks
- **EARMA** ([www.earma.org](http://www.earma.org))
- **BESTPRAC** ([www.bestprac.eu](http://www.bestprac.eu))
- **EUA** ([www.eua.eu](http://www.eua.eu))

National networks
- **ARMA** (UK, [www arma.ac.uk](http://www arma.ac.uk))
- **ARMA-NL** (NL, [www.armanl.nl](http://www.armanl.nl))
- **DARMA** (DK, [www.darma.dk](http://www.darma.dk))
- **FINN-ARMA** (FI, [www.finn-arma.fi](http://www.finn-arma.fi))
- **FORTRAMA** (DE, [www.fortrama.net](http://www.fortrama.net))
- **ICEARMA** (IS, [www.icearma.is](http://www.icearma.is))
- **NARMA** (NO, [www.narma.no](http://www.narma.no))

Informal networks
In Austria, Belgium, Poland, Portugal, Sweden, any many more
- **Leiden group** – mailing list of all associations and networks. Meet during the annual EARMA conferences in the ‘Leiden group meeting’.
Thanks for your attention!

If you are interested in further details, please do not hesitate to contact me.

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