

REPORT

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TN1302: BESTPRAC

COST-ONLINE STSM-TN1302-27689

The voice of research administrators

Building a network of administrative excellence

SUMMARY (to be also used for reporting to the COST office)

The STSM BESTPRAC is aimed at supporting individual mobility, strengthening the existing networks and fostering collaborations by allowing - in particular - early stage administrators to visit an institution in another participating COST Country. My STSM to Universidad Carlos III de Madrid, Universidad Politécnica de Madrid and Universidad de Murcia met this criteria as I am from an Inclusiveness Target Country, Hungary, and I have been working as a research grants coordinator for nearly four years at Central European University.

The visit took place between 21 and 25 September, 2015. During my visit I followed the three universities' preplanned programme to meet their professionals working in their pre- and post-award management offices. I learned about their institutions in general and the operation of their European Project Offices. I had the opportunity to learn about UPM's Technology Transfer Office, the IT tool for EU project management, the Technology Transfer Office and the MSCA actions. I became familiar with UC3M's European project management IT tool, Office of Scientific Information, Alliance of 4 Universities and Research Program. I learned about UMU's TEMPUS and COFUND projects.

Purpose of the STSM

The purpose of my visit was to learn about the three Spanish universities' general operation in their European Project Offices, the tools and practices they use and to learn from their work. I hoped to find new professional contacts and future collaborators between our institutions and I also wished to strengthen the already existing relationships with our Spanish colleagues. I intended to gain a deeper understanding of the operation of these universities in order to ease the cooperation and communication with them and with other similar institutions.

Detailed description of the work carried out during the STSM

Date	Program
Monday, 21.9.2015	<p>Universidad Politecnica de Madrid</p> <p>9.30 – 10.00 Introduction of the participants</p> <p>10.00 – 11.00 Presentation of UPM's European Project Office</p> <p>11.00 – 11.30 Coffee break</p> <p>11.30 – 12.30 Pre and post award phases</p> <p>12.30 – 13.30 IT tool for UPM's EU projects management</p> <p>13.30 – 15.00 Lunch time</p> <p>15.00 – 16.00 Presentation of UPM's Technology Transfer Office</p>
Tuesday, 22.9.2015	<p>9.30 – 10.30 Presentation of UPM's MSCA actions (IF-ITN-RISE-COFUND)</p> <p>10.30 – 11.00 Coffee break</p> <p>11.00 – 12.00 Individual agenda for Meetings with UPM's research groups.</p> <p>Universidad Carlos III de Madrid</p> <p>13.00 – 13.30 Introduction of the participants</p> <p>13.30 – 14.30 Lunch time</p> <p>14.30 – 15.00 Presentation of UC3M's European Project Office and Research Service</p> <p>15.00 – 16.30 European projects Office (EPO): Getting to know the daily activities and tasks in the EPO</p>
Wednesday, 23.9.2015	<p>9.30 – 11.00 European projects management (IT tool, Web site)</p> <p>11.00 – 11.30 Coffee break</p> <p>11.30 – 12.30 OIC – the Office of Scientific Information</p> <p>12.30 – 13.30 Alliance of 4 Universities (A-4U): An strategic partnership_ OPERA: Office for the Promotion of European Research Activities (Brussels)</p> <p>13.30 – 14.30 Lunch time</p> <p>14.30 – 15.30 UC3M Research Program: Increasing and improving the quality of research proposals</p>

	15.30 – 16.30 Individual agenda for special administrative issue of interest to be deal with the UC3M EPO
Thursday, 24.9.2015	<p>Universidad de Murcia</p> <p>10.00-10.30 Introduction of the participants</p> <p>10.30-11.30 Presentation of OPERUM (European Project Office)</p> <p>11.30-12.00 Coffee break</p> <p>12.00-13.00 Presentation of Research AREA</p> <p>13.00-14.30 Pre and post award phases. Getting to know our daily activities and tasks in management.</p> <p>14.30-15.30 Lunch time</p> <p>15.30-17.00 Administrative Issues: How do we manage an EU project</p>
Friday, 25.9.2015	<p>10.00-11.30 Presentation of UMU International Office. TEMPUS projects</p> <p>11.30-12.00 Coffee break</p> <p>12.00-13.30 Presentation UMU COFUND grant (Guidelines, tools...)</p> <p>18.00 -22.00 Research´s Night 2015</p>

CONTRIBUTION TO THE GOALS OF THE COST TARGET NETWORK

My training week at the three Spanish universities was very useful and it perfectly matched the BESTPRAC goals. Throughout the presentations and discussions I gained invaluable insight into how proposal development, contract signing and grant management are handled at three very different institutions which have a vast amount of experience with research projects. We had discussions and made plans about future collaborations and knowledge exchange.

DESCRIPTION OF THE MAIN RESULTS OBTAINED

During our meetings I had the opportunity to share some of our practices and my experience in the discussed fields and compare different management processes of the four institutions. There were lots of similarities but the differences were still considerable. We are a small university where all the proposals and all the project-related tasks are taken care of within one office while the visited Spanish universities had different units and offices to handle these same tasks while the procedures were split into different phases. I have gained a great insight into different research grant management systems which will prove to be useful in the optimizations of my future work. While some of the practices would only work at my host universities or at similar sized institutions, it was still very interesting to learn about them as there were practices relevant to small universities like Central European University as well. Seeing the big picture of how grant management is organized on a larger scale is going to help me with my work with EU and other internationally funded projects and in advising and interacting with the researchers. I also can understand better how our partners and potential partners work and this understanding makes cooperation, communication and collaboration easier.

BEST PRACTISES

- The Promotion Services for EU grant calls at the Universidad Politécnica de Madrid are very advanced and we are planning to improve our services based on their practices. They help the researchers to define strategies for participating in EU programs and their information and training services to prepare the applications to grant calls are much more extensive.
- The Universidad Politécnica de Madrid's IT Tool has a very useful and advanced Research Tracking System which gathers all relevant information like research structures, researchers, research projects, license exploitation, patents, software, brands and cooperation grants. This is something which we could very much use at Central European University so I am going to suggest the development of something similar for our office.
- The Universidad Carlos III de Madrid has financial grants to encourage participation in international research projects. I find this a very good idea which makes sense to me. We could introduce such incentive, too.
- In the Universidad de Murcia we took part in a presentation where they talked about their previous experience of audits of FP7 projects. I found this very interesting and useful as I have never taken part in an audit. They had very useful tips on how to prepare for the audit and they also had great tips on the items which were most closely looked at.

FUTURE COLLABORATION WITH THE HOST INSTITUTIONS

With the Universidad Politécnica de Madrid we talked about possible collaborations for our researchers in Horizon2020 projects. For the University of Carlos III de Madrid we promised some collegial help if any problem or questions come up in their new ERC project as we have more experience in this area.

I would like to say thank you to all three universities for looking after us and for introducing us to so much useful knowledge.