

SHORT TERM SCIENTIFIC MISSION (STSM) REPORT

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Host institution: Vrije Universiteit Brussel (VUB)
University of Leuven (KU Leuven)
Ghent University (UGhent)
Title of the STSM: „Group STSM to Flanders“
STSM dates: 03/10/2016 to 06/10/2016, Belgium
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Summary

During four days STSM to Flanders, Belgium, four institutions were visited (UKRO office in Brussels, Vrije Universiteit Brussel, University of Leuven, Ghent University) aiming to share best existing practices for institutional research management which covers administrative, financial and legal aspects in higher education field. STSM group was introduced to a variety of topics related to the institutional research policies, organisation of Research Offices and support services (HR positions required for the tasks to be accomplished efficiently), internal and external cooperation strategies, emerged business development centres and spin-offs, as well as educational and industrial networks.

Shared and developed knowledge on existing efficient practices for scientific research administration will definitely contribute to both the improvement of tasks being accomplished by the Project Management Office at Vytautas Magnus University as well as the development of institutional research management strategy considering relevant research management procedures and processes which could facilitate new initiatives for institutional qualified research support services.

Personal engagement in STSM is considered as a great opportunity to develop and improve research management competencies as it provided the real insights on the best practices for carrying out research administration in higher education institutions. Learning from the real experts of the field representing both hosting and visiting institutions has encouraged personal incentives to explore and apply the experience gained.

Purpose of the STSM

The purpose of STSM referred to introducing existing practices of research administration of three hosting institutions (Vrije Universiteit Brussel, University of Leuven, Ghent University) and sharing experience for the efficient research project management between all the STSM participants (Aalto University, University College London, Central European University and Vytautas Magnus University).

Contribution to the goals of the COST Targeted Network

As COST BESTPRAC network encourages networking and exchanging financial, legal, and administrative experience by sharing and transferring knowledge for the efficient project management, the current STSM has productively corresponded to these aims. While implementing the specific tasks of institutional research administrator it is very important to

constantly develop competences, therefore it was rewarding to become small part of research administration community networking perceiving where and how to exchange experience on financial, legal and administrative issues with other institutes/universities.

Description of the main results obtained

VMU seeks to develop solid scientific knowledge in a sustainable way, and strengthen the capacity and impact of research and education towards the progress of economic and cultural environment by networking in the international context. Yet, the challenges are faced to engage in the European research area under the EU research and innovation priorities. Consequently, the networking would build up the capacities on research management procedures and processes on the expert level which could facilitate new initiatives for improving institutional research strategy and research services, implementing relevant research projects, organizing scientific exchanges, events.

The gained valuable experience during „Group STSM to Flanders“ refers to the knowledge transferred on the best practices and tools implemented in Research Offices referring to knowledge brokers involvement in research projects' initiatives, assisting and supervision of research staff, as well as facilitating their project writing competence, promoting institutional (internal) research strategy, engaging stakeholders in the project lifecycle. The knowledge obtained during STSM has already been contributed to the colleagues at Vytautas Magnus University enabling to improve certain pre-award and post-award research projects' management procedures.