

SHORT TERM SCIENTIFIC MISSION (STSM) REPORT

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Host Institution: Fundacio Clinic per a la Recerca Biomedica Barcelona, Spain.

Title: Group STSM to FCRB Exchange of practice of EU and other international funders: research support, financial and project management

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Summary (to be also used for reporting to the COST Office)

Between 27-29 March 2017 the group STSM took place in Fundacio Clinic per a la Recerca Biomedica Barcelona, Spain. Main goal of the STSM is to build networks between research projects administrators. The aim of this visit was exchange of good practices of EU and other international funders: research support, financial and project management. Host institution FCRB is responsible for the management of IDIBAPS and HCB (Hospital Clinic Barcelona) Other participants: Elsy Gonçalves from CRIA (Center for Research Support) Faculty of Psychology and Educational Sciences, University of Porto, Portugal and Maria Gacic from BioIRC Bioengineering Research and Development Center Kragujevac, Serbia. Group STSM was very efficient for us to discuss the implementations of our institutions on pre-award and post-award phase. Sharing of knowledge about strategies and best practices of project applications and management skills were very useful for all of us. Even though we are all in early stage we shared our experiences on proposal and management stages. During our visit we had a chance to visit various offices at FCRB and IDIBAPS.

Purpose of the STSM

I decided to take part in STSM with the aim of sharing experiences, to learn how to increase the volume of our project portfolio and improve our project management skills of EU and international projects.

I reached the targeted information within the group of STSM as below;

- ✓ The other participants also worked in the post award phase of projects and therefore we discussed and compared the project management systems of our own institutions.
- ✓ It was a good opportunity for us to build networks for future collaborations
- ✓ We shared our experiences on pre-award (project application) and post-award (project management) phase.
- ✓ I had the chance to compare institutional practices.
- ✓ We discussed how to develop the proposals with the principal investigators.
- ✓ Shared our experiences on project reporting and audit process.
- ✓ All participants shared their own good practices
- ✓ We discussed about the strategies to gain new partners and how to promote participation in EU and International projects.

Detailed description of the work carried out during the STSM

First of all, we had a meeting with EU and International Projects Office. After the introduction, **Juan Abolafia from FCRB - EU and International Office Project Manager** made a presentation about the institutional description and departments. This presentation was very useful to have an idea about the host institution practices. He also talked about the project size and project number of FCRB as well as the strategy of FCRB for project management.

Head of EU and International Office Maria Carol gave information about their office. We learned how the research system works at FCRB. They support the researchers on project proposals writing for H2020, ERC and other international projects

Afterwards, Everyone participated in the STSM made a presentation about their home institutions and their procedures:

Elsy Gonçalves from Porto University made her presentation. She told CRIA's (Center for Research Support) mission on pre-award and post-award phase. During all presentations we could ask our questions regarding the offices and work structures. I had a chance to compare with our institutions research offices structure. We all have similar implementations on project management but we have also learnt new implementations from their institutions. CRIA have strategies to gain new partners for collaborative projects. They alert their researchers for the opportunities and give information about how to choose the right partners. For Project management they use a calendar system that includes everything about the project. They check everything with the PI monthly. They check all the timesheets monthly. For legal issues University of Porto have a department other than Research Office.

During my presentation I also talked about my home institution Sabanci University. I gave information about the University and more detailed information about Research and Graduate Policies Department where Research Projects Management Office takes place. I also told our strategies on post award phase and the University's strategies on pre-award phase for the Project applications. I shared best practices of project management phase in our University.

Marija's speech was the last one and she introduced Research Institute BioIRC from Serbia. BioIRC's mission is to create innovative software solutions applicable in the various scientific fields. In her speech, after the description of research management and departments she presented us some research project examples of which were very interesting to have an opinion.

To start the day with the presentations was very useful for us to have an idea about each other and their work.

FCRB the European and International Projects Office Visit: After the presentations we visited the European and International Projects Office. We met the other project managers from National and Regional Projects and the Project Office for private contracts, clinical trials and patronages.

Juan told more the details of their work in FCRB. Postdocs don't have experience and most of the time they lost in proposals and Maria and her team help them to write proposals. They read and check the Consortium agreements and also they work with a company for legal aspects of the agreements. The law company has experience on grant agreements, consortium agreements and other specific project agreements.

They use a checklist for aspects in collaborative projects. So they can check everything with the researcher on proposal stage.

Every week FCRB gives information of the project calls to the researchers. They use a standard form for project calls of which includes all information about the call. Every Monday updated form sent to Project Investigators.

At the beginning of the project they organize a meeting with the PI, researchers and post-doc who is involved in the project. Research Management Office and Human Resources Office participate these meetings too.

We had meetings with the other offices according to our STSM schedule. First we met with Research Management Office. Judit Martinez Ponsdomenech, Head of Project Development Unit told us about the office. This department is responsible with the post-award phase of the projects. In our group STSM everyone is on the post award phase for this reason we were more interested in this meeting. She told us the structure of the Office.

Eight people are working at Research Management Office. Four of them are working for National Projects and four of them are working for international projects. After receiving the project contract they have a meeting with PI and his team and they do the following:

- ✓ Planning the use of budget and provide the project team the necessary information (spending rules, timesheets...).
- ✓ Clarify the third parties situation before the project start.
- ✓ Check person months with PI and the researchers.
- ✓ Organize a meeting after 6 months from the project start date. On this meeting they talk about how the project is going on.
- ✓ Inform the project personnel about time recording. Every month all project personnel need to send their completed timesheets. The timesheets are signed every two months. They are working on a software program for timesheets. When they started to use this program it will be mandatory for the researchers to fill the timesheets daily. Researchers fill separate timesheets for different projects. They check the timesheets with human resources. They have to fill the hours correctly according to their working hours. They use SAP for financial reporting system.

We had the second meeting with Project Manager Gemma Pascual from Institutional Actions Office in IDIBAPS. They are working with Project Development Unit. They develop the strategies of IDIBAPS. They follow up the project calls.

She gave information on the current institutional actions. There are three ongoing projects.

1- H20202 MSCA Project (COFUND) BITRECS

2- Second project SIMPACT is funded by Spanish Ministry of Competitiveness and Economy. The Project is for 3 years and the subject is international management and promotion activities. Working for objectives and more internalization.

3- Third one is for HR excellence in research. 2015-2018 IDIBAPS HRS4R Action Plan

Meeting with Scientific Coordination Office, Dr Gemma Llaverias from IDIBAPS made a presentation:

- ✓ They manage the institutional HR programs. Scientific Coordination Office organizes the evaluations. This office is responsible with the publications and papers
- ✓ Every three year SCO prepare an evaluation report. And they organize the research seminars of IDIBAPS.
- ✓ Stepping Stone Training Program organized by Scientific Coordination Office. This program is for the students to give information about;
- ✓ How to write project applications? Have an idea about the research career. How to write a paper? Job searching after PhD.
- ✓ Research Career Strategy at IDIBAPS
- ✓ There are several researchers from hospital, university and IDIBAPS. They have a researchers map for different positions.

Knowledge and Technology Transfer Office (KTT) : Director of KTT Dr Elisenda Vendrell made a presentation to introduce the KTT Office.

IDIBAPS have many different research groups. There are approximately 550 active projects. More than 50 of these active projects funded by EU. There are more than 480 project Investigators and every year they publish more than 1.000 articles. There are 40 signed licenses. KTT promotes Academics – Industry relationship. 5 People working in KTT and they report to the Strategy Director.

From 2006 to 2016 KTT applied with 364 ideas. There are 9 spin-off companies.

According to IPR policy in IDIBAPS, profit distribution between IDIBAPS and inventors is 1/3 for Inventor, research group and IDIBAPS

They are also working for Other Activities; Review the IPR clause in any agreement, Collaborations with Public/Private companies (contract research), Material Transfer Agreement (MTA), License Agreements (+ future collaborations), Competitive Calls (international /national) They help PIs to write the project in terms of translational research, business focus, future steps, budgeting, etc.

Contribution to the goals of the COST Targeted Network

- ✓ We shared our experiences with the host institution and with the other participants. Each of us told the best practices in own institution implementations on project applications and project management.
- ✓ Main target of BESTPRAC is to establish a network for the administrative finance and legal services in universities and research institutions. I believe that we have archived this goal effectively.
- ✓ We learned new strategies from each other how to promote Project applications and how to find new partners for collaborative EU projects.
- ✓ It was an important step for potential future collaboration.
- ✓ STSM group participation is a change for the participants not only for work networks also it is good to have new colleagues from different countries and different institutions.

Description of the main results obtained

I had a meeting with my manager about the good practices and shared what I learned for better implementations for international, H2020 and other EU projects:

- ✓ FCRB is planning to use software system for timesheets. The projects team have to fill the timesheets daily; the project administrators will be able to follow up and calculate the man months easily.
- ✓ Although there are several offices and many people working in FCRB for research support, all of the offices are working in the same goal-oriented cooperation.
- ✓ FCRB is working with an experienced legal company for H2020, EU projects grant agreements, consortium agreements and other international agreements. This is a good practice to avoid mistakes and to gain more time.
- ✓ Having a meeting before the project start date with the PI, the project team and the other research support offices is useful to avoid mistakes during the project.
- ✓ Research management office organizes a meeting every six months with PI during the project to discuss the situation of the project.
- ✓ FCRB update a form for all project calls every week and send it to all researchers.

It is mandatory to describe which of the best practices / tools / systems from the host institution will be (tried to be) implemented by you within your institute.

Like FCRB we can work with an experienced professional law company for legal aspects for the agreements.

I think we have to change the timesheet collecting system. We can improve our system and PI's can fill the forms daily.

In our university we have the meetings with PI during the project not regularly. We have a kick-off meeting and meetings during the reporting periods. We also get together with the PI's when they ask for a meeting or there is a problem. Meeting with the PI's on scheduled bases for long term projects will be definitely important to prevent the mistakes.

Future collaboration with host institution (if applicable)

We will be in contact with all participants and with FCRB. We will share this information within our Research Directorate and with the offices responsible for the project proposals

If there is a potential project we can contact each other. We can give information to the researchers who are working in the same field of research.

Confirmation by the host institution of the successful execution of the STSM (see Annex III