EARMA — Newsletter

European Association of Research Managers and Administrators

March - May 2016

www.earma.org Contribute | Influence | Change

Content

Open Science

EARMA considers Open Science as one of the emerging hot topics, which will keep research managers and researchers increasingly busy in the years to come. This year's conference programme reflects the growing awareness of this new topic with 3 sessions that will cover different aspects of Open Science. All have been conveniently placed in succession on the same day:

Session: Managing Open Science, case study Finland, WED June 22nd, 11:45

Session: Winning Horizon 2020 with Open Science, WED June 22nd, 14:15

Session: Horizon 2020 Open Data: From pilot to daily work, WED June 22nd, 15:45

Feature: The University as a Developer and Keeper of Open Science - The Role of Research Managers and Administrative Staff.

Vanessa Ravagni, Head of Research Support and Knowledge Transfer Division of the University of Trento & Valentina Moscon, post-doc researcher at University of Trento, Faculty of Law and Legal Advisor at the Research Support and Knowledge Transfer Division of the University of Trento.

The "*Amsterdam Call for Action on Open Science*": this is the main result of the Amsterdam Conference, '*Open Science – From Vision to Action*' that was hosted by the Netherlands' EU Presidency on 4 and 5 April 2016. The document reflects the present state of Open Science (OS)

w

aiming to reach two important pan-European goals for 2020 which were highlighted by the Commissioner Carlos Moedas in his speech: 1) Full open access for all scientific publications and 2) A fundamentally new approach towards optimal reuse of research data.

OS that can be summarized as the abstraction and general implementation of Open Access principles to the entire scientific field is an "unfinished revolution" (see Margoni et al.). Despite a large consent on the benefits of OS in terms of progress of knowledge, innovation, pluralism, transparency and preservation, the OS including Open Access, Open Data and likely Open Patent is still underdeveloped.

Declarations of principle are not enough. Thus, twelve action items have been included in the recent European Call and have been grouped around five crosscutting themes that follow the structure of the European OS Agenda: a) Removing barriers to open science; b) Developing research infrastructures; c) Fostering and creating incentives for open science; d) Mainstreaming and further promoting OS policies; e) Stimulating and embedding open science in science and society.

This may help for a quick-start of the OS Policy Platform that will be established in May 2016. Each action item contains concrete measures that can be implemented immediately by the Member States, the European Commission and all public and private stakeholders, including research funders, publishers, research and educational institutes as well as universities. The more parties are committed in OS the greater is its success. Hence, all stakeholders in the world of science should collaborate to take concrete steps toward the OS transition. Research managers working in universities and research institutions play a key role in this process. They are, *de facto,* at the forefront granting management and preservation of research results as well as the developing new types of services to researchers in support of OS.

The question arising is how to pursue these objectives. First, university offices such libraries, ICT services and technology transfer departments must work together engaging and supporting researchers in OS. To achieve this, administrators need to be trained in OS principles and intellectual property regulations. Furthermore, research managers should be able to involve scientists in compiling tools for research data management and software sustainability that fit their disciplines' requirements and needs; extending the impact of their work to society at large; identifying and acknowledging barriers to career progression at the European level.

In conclusion, OS implies a transition from the traditional paradigm of paying to access, read and use scientific results towards a freedom to find, access and use interoperable research results free of charge by default. In this scenario, universities and research institutions are not only producers of knowledge, but also its curators and communicators. This challenging new role involves both researchers and the supporting research managers.

Useful Links:

https://ec.europa.eu/research/openscience/index.cfm

http://www.openaccess.nl/en/events/amsterdam-call-for-action-on-open-science

http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_SPEECH-16-1225_en.htm

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hMr47Fl24UI&feature=youtu.be

https://goo.gl/N3skMl

Essential References:

Caso, Roberto and Moscon, Valentina, Open Access implementation: from a bottom-up order to a top-down disorder? "The Italian Job", in de Roman Raquel (ed.), La Propiedad Intectual en las Universidades Pùblicas, Editorial Comares, forthcoming.

Margoni, Thomas and Caso, Roberto and Ducato, Rossana and Guarda, Paolo and Moscon, Valentina, Open Access, Open Science, Open Society (March 20, 2016). Trento Law and Technology Research Group, Research Paper No. 27. Available at SSRN: http://ssrn.com/abstract=2751741

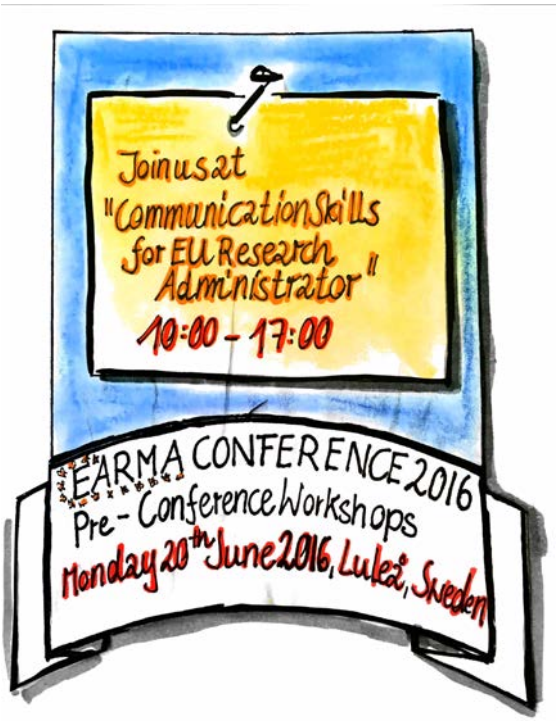
Moscon, Valentina, University Knowledge Transfer: From Fundamental Rights to Open Access within International Law (August 7, 2015). in Bellantuono G., Rezende L. (eds.), Law, Development and Innovation, 2015, Springer. ISBN. Abstract available at SSRN: http://ssrn.com/abstract=2641120

w

To prepare for these challenges and to build up best practice in the OS field, the creation of working groups and the exchange of staff at European level are key instruments to make a reality of the European Research Area. Time for the research managers to get on board and find out what is in it for our institutions.

EARMA Annual Conference 2016

Only few weeks are left until the opening of the EARMA Annual Conference in Luleå. As a teaser for what we have prepared for you, this newsletter features a selection of topics from different tracks of the exiting conference programme that we will soon enjoy. We are looking forward to two days filled with information and discussions on research management and administration under the midnight sun in northern Sweden.



Pre-conference Workshop: Communication Skills for European Research Administrator, MON June 20th 2016, 10 am to 5 pm

Communication Skills for European Research Administrator

Delivering research administration support for EU funded research projects can put communication skills to the test:

The administration of intercultural and often virtual research teams functions as a gateway that defines the quality and efficiency of a project's life-cycle. Therefore, facilitating interactions amongst diverse partners is one of the key issues.

To be a successful Research Administrator, one has to have excellent communication skills to work effectively. To build trust and respect is paramount for Research Administrator in order to maintain effective long-term working relationships. This holds true for the relationship with Principal Investigators as well as for all other stakeholders involved in the project, such as project officers, internal service partners like Finance, HR and PR departments, and the general public.

Success in this highly dynamic work environment is seldom a straight road: it usually involves detours and sometimes even dead ends. That is why being a great Research Administrator also means to have a strong

w

sense of who you are and what it takes to recharge and nurture yourself as a person and as a professional.

The workshop "Communication Skills for European Research Administrator" will equip you with hands-on- knowledge and personal strategies in order to be able to act as an effective communicator and facilitator for large European funded projects and their stakeholders.

Trainer

Rebekka Steinmann, M.Sc. Scienc Marketing, Wirtschaftspsychologin (Organizational Behaviour)

Working in Research Management and Administra Germany since 2001.

By the end of the workshop, participants will:

Understand the scope, rights and responsibilities that build the core of effective communication in Research Administration.

Appreciate the roles that academic, research manager and administrator and institutions play in the communication process.

Gain insight into different aspects of individual work-life-balance.

Have the opportunity to discuss challenges and issues in their own institutional practice.

w

EARMA — Newsletter
European Association of Research Managers and Administrators
March - May 2016
www.earma.org Contribute | Influence | Change

Session: ERC – High End of Europe's Excellent Research Funding: Lessons learnt, TUE June 21st, 16:45

Get one step closer to the ERC Grant

By: Yoram Bar-Zeev, Managing Director of Beacon Tech

ERC is Europe's most prestigious research grant, supporting excellent researchers in carrying out ground-breaking, high-risk, high-gain, frontier research projects. When a researcher applies for an ERC grant - whether Starting, Consolidator or Advanced funding schemes - it is important to adjust the proposal to the unique ERC requirements by thinking big, shifting the writing style, and ensuring that the idea is conveyed properly.

The sole criterion for evaluating ERC applications is "*Excellence*". But what this ***"Excellence"*** is made of? How can one measure "*Excellence"*? Can we assume that ERC reviewers evaluate ***"Excellence"*** using uniform standards?

The reality is that the *Excellence* that ERC is looking for is rather elusive, and there are various ways of "measuring" it. The way to a successful ERC application is composed of two equally important elements: the researcher and the research, which are evaluated conjointly by the reviewers against the ERC *Excellence* criterion. On the downside, the pathway to the ERC grant is paved with obstacles, numerous "urban legends" and various do's and don'ts. Here are a few starters addressing some of the ERC "*Excellence*" aspects to consider when applying:

Who is 'ERC material'? The Principle Investigator (PI) applying for ERC must have an outstanding CV and a remarkable scientific track record, including high impact publications in top journals. Clearly, the CV and track record are evaluated according to the applicant's career stage.

One of the many ERC "urban legends" tells that the PI should not apply to ERC without having at least one publication in Nature or Science. The truth is that the big picture is more important: applicants which manage to demonstrate scientific leadership in their discipline, supported by well-cited publications in high-impact journals may succeed even without publishing in Nature or Science.

Think big Since ERC is about expanding the scientific horizon, ERC projects are expected to go way beyond the state of the art and present "high risk, high gain" projects. In that sense, and when comparing ERC to other grants and funding agencies, it challenges the applicant to present a project proposal which dramatically expands the scope of research and innovation in his/her field. In many cases, applicants find this requirement counterintuitive and to some extent unrealistic, as they are accustomed to grants which expect feasibility, down-to-earth, low-risk and more modest proposals. This is why the process demands for a substantial shift in the state of mind of the applicant.

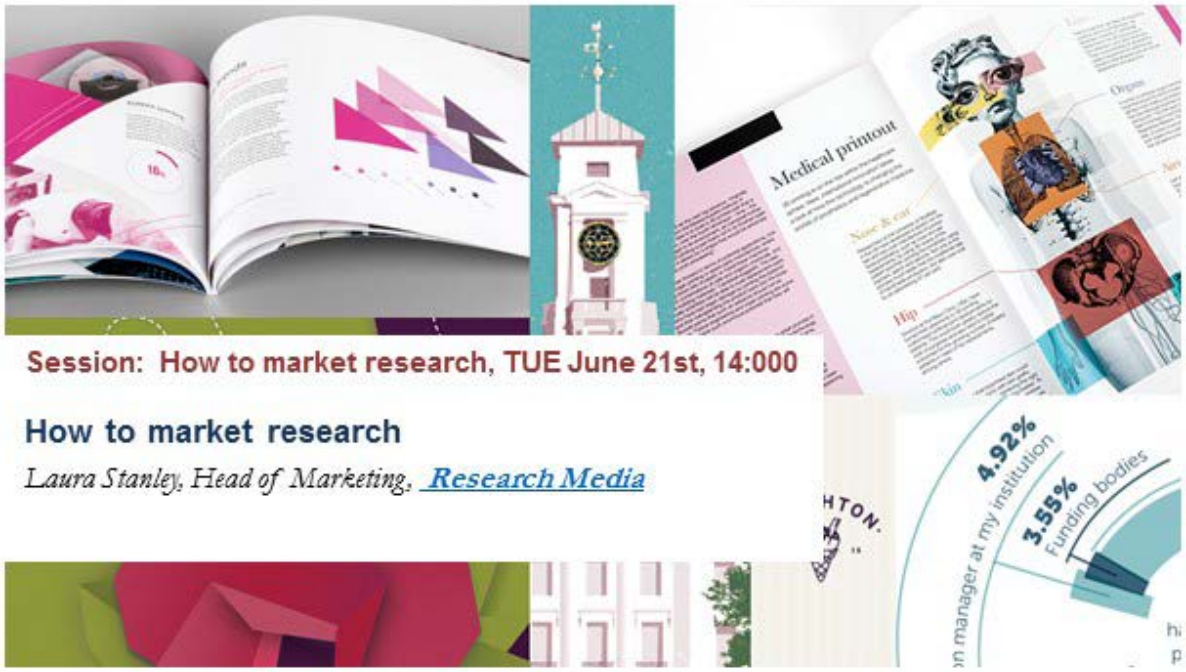
Balancing "High Risk" and Feasibility The ERC assumption is that substantial innovation and major breakthroughs stem from "high risk" projects. Thus, the "high risk" element is the key to a successful ERC. While the applicant must first establish the "high risk" involved in the proposal, it should be backed up by preliminary findings and relevant experience for demonstrating *some feasibility*, in a way that will not diminish the "high risk". Finding this balance

w

point is crucial.

The interview Starting and Consolidator grants' applicants who reach the 2nd evaluation stage are invited to a personal interview. The interview is known to be a highly stressful and demanding event, as the applicants are requested to present their big, ambitious, high risk project to a set of panel members and answer their questions in a very limited timeframe - in many cases in only 10 minutes. This calls for a thorough and meticulous preparation of the applicant and the presentation, to ensure the delivery of the key messages in the most effective way possible.

An *Excellent* and *Successful* ERC application is eventually a combination of written and unwritten instructions and guidelines. Understanding these gets the applicant a step closer to the desired ERC grant.



Maximum impact can only be achieved through confident promotion so why is it that so many within the research community are still reluctant to employ marketing techniques in order to gain exposure?

In our day-to-day lives we proactively seek information to inform decisions. We employ the many tools and devices at our finger tips in order to self-serve. But without marketing, this information would be far harder to find. In the consumer world, **online reviews influence 67.7% of respondents' purchasing decisions.** How can we learn from this behaviour and apply it to scholarly communications in the digital arena?

Recognising the need to break the mould and self-promote in order to reach a broad, engaged audience could prove to be an invaluable stepping stone to driving impact and influencing change. Whilst it may not come naturally to many and feel egotistical to some, harnessing simple marketing techniques are proving crucial in bringing research to the surface.

w

A **survey** carried out by Nature in 2015 discovered that almost 50% of researchers have a professional presence online and of the subset of scholars that 'regularly visited' social media sites, 37% visited Twitter daily. But are they really making the most of these platforms? An active online profile can open up a wealth of opportunity so why is it that the uptake is slow within the research community?

To the uninitiated, marketing by its varied nature can seem daunting. The phrase 'omni-channel' is bandied about without explanation and without the acknowledgement that it's both impossible and impractical. No matter what the content, product, brand or service, there should always be a target audience in mind and that should, in turn, influence the channels chosen and the activity executed.

So what could this look like within scholarly communications? A visual **lay summary** for example could act as the perfect complement to a journal article, providing an accessible, abridged version that engages a broad audience of key stakeholders. Similarly, an **animated video** could distil the key elements of a research project, aiding discoverability beyond an academic audience. An **infographic** could display crucial facts and figures in a format that is both memorable and easy to grasp. And of course all of these examples are shareable – on the right platforms and channels they offer an untapped opportunity, the chance to reach key targets and explore unchartered territory.

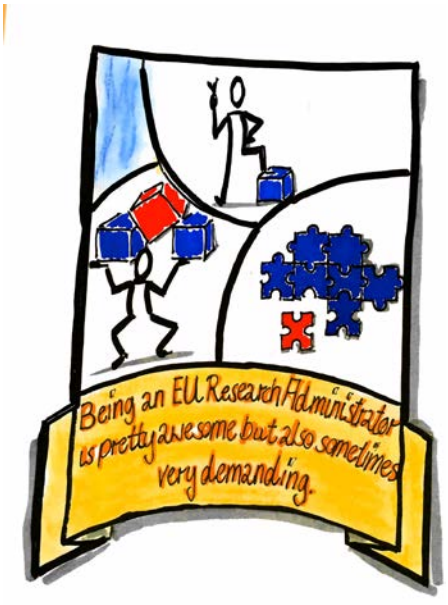
It needn't be complex. Simple, easy-to-understand techniques can serve to maximise the reach of a research project, broaden the audience and drive impact. It needn't cost the earth or take hours to complete. Little and often and the results will speak for themselves.

Session: The Aftermath of an EC Audit TUE June 21st, 15:15

Financial audits in European projects – lessons learnt and forecast

By John Stringer (Berkley Associates) & Bernadette Grabenbauer-Nagl (Fundació Eurecat)

Financial Audits of EU funded projects are common and necessary - as an error rate of >4% in FP7 seems to confirm. Lack of information beyond the general guidelines and different interpretations of rules spiced with rumours of what has happened to other organisations can convert the Letter of Announcement into the launch of a nightmare. The risk of Systematic Errors, extrapolation procedures and recovery payments raise even interest from the organisation's management which usually takes for granted the good work of the project and grant managers and encourages them to intervene when it is not necessarily appropriate.



As most of EARMA's grant and project managers have experienced, audit requirements vary between programs, reference documentation evolves during and even after the implementation of a program and just like managers, also auditors are learning-by-doing: experience makes

them and the Commission richer in options and actions but also in interpretations; and if one is convinced that one has found the only right way to deal with an issue, it's difficult to persuade the auditors to consider other options. Moreover, the less detail is requested in the Financial Statements for the sake of simplification, the more complex become the audits.

The session "The aftermath of an EC audit" at this year's EARMA Conference, aims to de-mystify audits and enable project managers/administrators to face them with confidence and professionalism: Understanding the driving forces behind the audits, the expectations and obligations of the Commission and the external auditors, having a clear view of your position, obligations and rights in this process is key to giving managers confidence. The better prepared you are the better runs the collaboration with the auditors and the Commission in this process. In particular it will give an outlook of what will be expected from grant managers and from auditors for Horizon 2020.

It is perhaps significant that at the moment that the first Horizon 2020 grant agreements are coming to an end, the Commission has just issued a tender for the ex-post financial controls of H2020 projects, the "outsourced audits". The tender documentation describes in detail what will be the audit practice for the next years. It provides insight into the organisation of the future audits, the roles of the auditors, time schedules, the audit methodology and sampling strategy and working tools, etc. This, at the same time, provides you with advance information on what will be requested and expected from the beneficiaries and thus the grant managers.[1]

Just as the auditors "should indicate to the Commission practical issues related to the performance of audits or the interpretation and the practical application of the underlying rules," [2] EARMA and its grant managers should also provide critical and valuable feedback on the implementation of the audits and the way the audits have been conducted to ensure equity in discussion and balanced opinion. This dedicated session at the EARMA Annual Conference could be the starting point to develop initiatives that allow for a constructive dialogue for transparent, practical and fair financial management in Horizon 2020 and future programs.

Session: "Outstanding Support NU2EU" TUE, June 21st, 14:00

Development of Early Stage Researchers through NU2EU

By Janette Gilder, Director of the Project Support Office, and Tatiana Panteli, University of Wolverhampton Brussels Office

Building confidence and connections, the University of Wolverhampton's bespoke researcher development programme NU2EU provides outstanding support to those that are new to working across Europe. It was designed to help early career academics develop transferable skills and an in-depth understanding of the EU research and innovation landscape, enabling them to access vital funding.

Following a successful 2014 pilot project, NU2EU continued with two more successful rounds in 2015 and 2016. So far thirty six 'early stage' and some more experienced researchers were

[1] Framework Contract for Services and Specific Contract for tender 2015/RTD/J2/OP/PP-03181-2015
[2] Tender specifications. Framework contract for services related to ex-post financial controls. Call for tenders Nº2015/RTD/J2/OP/PP-03181-2015

w

given the chance to participate and benefit from a comprehensive training and mentoring.

The programme design involved a unique collaboration between the private sector and the University's Project Support Office, Brussels Office, and all four Faculties to meet researcher developmental needs. There was greater awareness of EU research opportunities and enhanced career potential; more than five strong collaboration opportunities in development with these participants worth 10M Euros. Partnerships in several proposals, numerous Marie Sklodowska-Curie Individual Fellowships applications and lead applicants on bids worth in total 998,936 Euros.

To name but two examples, Professor Kristina Neidderer worked on two projects under NU2EU. Her first was ***Traditional Arts and Craftsmanship in Transition*** **(TACIT)** to examine the viability of traditional craft skills in Europe as an intangible cultural heritage that could safeguard growth needs and provide economic advantage. Her second bid was **Designing for People with Dementia: designing for mindful self-empowerment and social engagement (MinD).** As a further example, Professor George Metsios prepared a project to support the training of researchers in aspects of Lunasin enriched food products and to create new knowledge about the markets for these products.

Measuring research effectiveness

NU2EU was also monitored as a small scale research project to measure effectiveness in terms of post-doctoral career development. Research, enterprise and leadership skillsets were mapped and measured in relation to the Vitae researcher development framework, which is part of our concordat strategy.

The key learning outcomes for NU2EU are building skills in producing competitive funding proposals; proposal submissions; successfully completing EU bid applications; and progress towards research publications.

A bridge to Brussels

Delegates also travelled to Brussels to understand more about building consortia and establishing partners through a lead by the University of Wolverhampton Proposal Development Events. They were given the chance to learn from international collaborations and exploring inter-cultural competence. They were able to engage with like-minded individuals in the areas of Economics, ICT, Technology, Health and Social Sciences. Furthermore, they also received direct help in developing collaborative networks across Europe and taking part in, or leading bids for European funding.

Janette Gilder, Director of the Project Support Office, said "We are looking at new approaches to enable researchers to reach their potential and make powerful career choices. NU2EU is a successful example of how increased knowledge and confidence can help secure funding and connections in support of addressing societal challenges."

w

Session: Universities' position in contract negotiations, WED June 22nd, 10:15

Universities as contract negotiators, innovators and research organisations

Maria Vyatkina, Deputy Head of Innovation Office, Luleå University of Technology

It is often difficult for Universities to negotiate contracts at an arm's length with other partners. Part of this stems from the fact that Universities frequently find themselves in an inferior position as towards commercial entities, especially larger multinational enterprises, and feel obliged to agree to conditions not beneficial to them in order to secure financing. Often, this comes with other conditions set out by the commercial entities, including the actual research to be conducted. Of course, contract research is an inherent part of any university-activity, but unfortunately, we see similar behaviour arising in collaborative research as well. In a society driven by money (and power stemming out of it), we should hardly be surprised that such behaviour occurs. However, this does not facilitate responsible research and innovation.

A lot of this happens due to poor education of our researchers and administrators in relation to the value of their University's intellectual assets. In Sweden, it is fair to say that only a few Universities have made a considerable investment into a suitable platform/system, whether centralised or decentralised, to identify and manage intellectual assets in an appropriate way.

We have to understand that, as Universities, we possess a vast amount of multidisciplinary knowledge and expertise (which is not possessed by industrial partners) and we have to be willing and able to take care of it to the extent it deserves. This means that we have to see a shift in University administrators', researchers' and central managements' (and possibly, governments') mentality to take due account of the actual value of our knowledge. When collaborating with other partners, especially industrial partners, Universities have to take control of what intellectual assets they will be bringing into a project and have concrete and workable plans on how they will be utilising the results.

Moreover, it is important to think strategically. The unfortunate situation is that money dictates a lot of the research that we do. Considerations as to the actual value of that research to the researcher, the research group, University, and society, are often secondary. It is important that Universities have well-functioning bottom-up and top-down approaches when it comes to strategic thinking, and be able to make decisions in an informed and timely manner. It is important to not be vague and oblivious to such issues. Only then will we be able to boost our much needed confidence in contract negotiations, increase the quality of University's research output, and be responsible researchers and innovators.

w

Session: Dragon Star Plus, WED June 22nd, 11:45

Increasing International STI co-operation

By: Epaminondas Christofilopoulos, Head of International Cooperation, PRAXI Network, Foundation for Research and Technology Hellas (FORTH) & Elli B. Tzatzanis-Stepanovic, Senior project manager, Expert for international cooperation, European and International Programmes (EIP), Austrian Research Promotion Agency (FFG)

International Science Technology and Innovation (STI) co-operation between the European Union and non-European countries (third countries) dates back to the 1990ies when the first Science and Technology Agreements were signed with Australia, Canada, South Africa, the USA and China. Main purpose then was to identify common interests and priorities as well as suitable tools for S&T collaboration. In the next decade Strategic Partnerships followed with e.g. China, Japan, South Korea and India to facilitate dialogue and build trust. The third wave of advancing international STI collaboration is embracing Innovation Cooperation Dialogues following the principles of mutual benefit and alignment of innovation strategies as well as the agreement on co-funding mechanisms between the European Union and non-European countries.

The European Framework Programmes for Research and Technological Development were playing an important role in promoting international STI cooperation. The opening up of FP6 with its specific International Cooperation (INCO) Programme welcomed third country participation and the possibilities within FP7 were even widened through a strategic approach and targeted implementation of international cooperation actions.

But when it came to evaluating the success and monitoring the impact of these international co-operation activities the results demonstrated that co-operation activities at EU level need compensation, being more often top-down driven and more bureaucratic compared to STI co-operation at Member State (MS) level being in most MS easier and more specific. Regardless of the fact that international STI co-operation at MS level, multilateral and EU level should ideally complement each other, the lack of co-funding for joint STI activities at EU level was the main hurdle for research consortia involving EU and non-EU participants from developed countries.

Useful Links:

EC information on co-funding and support mechanisms

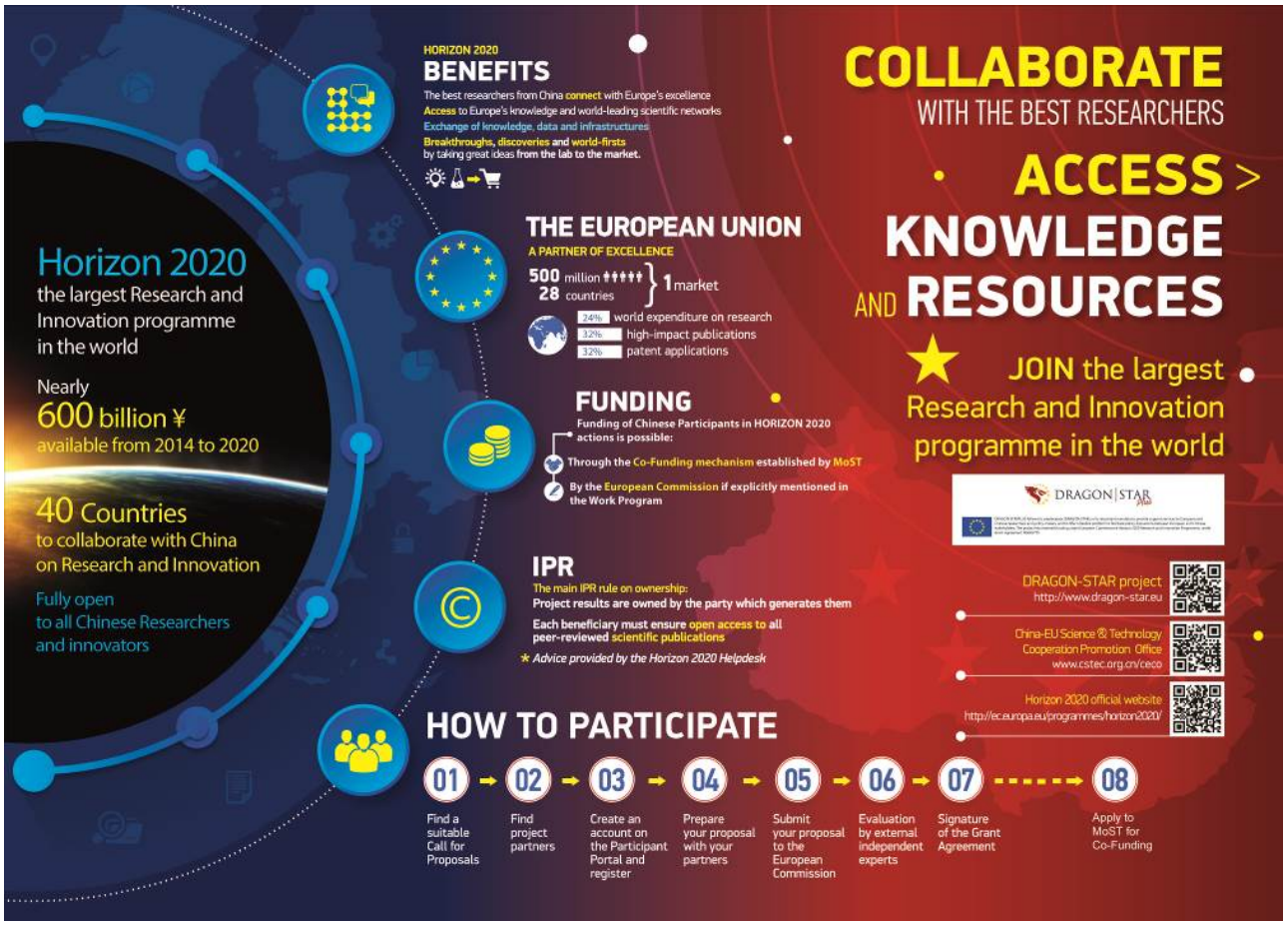
H2020 International Cooperation Opportunities in the Work Programme 2016-2017

European Added Value of EU Science, Technology and Innovation actions and EU-Member State Partnership in international cooperation, Main Report, European Commission, 2014

To address this obstacle, with the start of Horizon 2020 the EU commenced to negotiate Co-Funding Mechanisms (CFMs) for Research and Innovation Cooperation, either covering all thematic areas of Horizon 2020 with the Republic of Korea, Mexico, Russia, and Taiwan, either covering selected thematic areas of Horizon 2020 with Australia, China, Hong Kong & Macao, India, and Japan, either covering specific regions in Brazil and Canada. In addition, most of the third countries, but also New Zealand and the USA offer National Contact Point (NCP) support to their scientists for Horizon 2020 participation.

w

Besides the overall positive effect of the established support mechanisms, special attention is required on the different program characteristics and peculiarities. A close look at the CFM regulations and proposal deadlines as well as timely contact to the responsible national authorities is wise in order to overcome additional application for co-funding and evaluation deadlines in the third country not matching with the Horizon 2020 ones.



w

Open Calls

Are you interested in joining the team that runs EARMA? Exciting opportunities are available in the Board and different special interest groups. Calls are open for your application as

- **An EARMA Board member**
- **An EARMA Internal Auditor**
- **A member of the Annual Conference Committee**
- **A member of the Professional Development Working Group (PDWG)**
- **A member of the European Research Area (ERA) Working Group**

Along with a Call for institutions to express their interest to become EARMA Annual Conference Host 2019

Please check the AGENDA for the EARMA General Assembly 2016 for the details HERE .

Deadline for all applications is 27th May 2016

Research management, funding, and policy in the news

Under this headline, you will find links to RMA-related issues—for example, research funding, management and administration, ethics and data management, etc.—that have recently received attention in the media, whether it is positive, negative, or neutral. Do you have a suggestion for this section? Please mail the **newsletter editor**.

Open Science

Open Data is a very hot topic in science policy but not (yet) consulted extensively with researchers. Here is **a scientist's opinion** on the issue.

Implementation of Horizon 2020

The **first monitoring report on H2020** provides ample data on Key Performance Indicators, participation trends and success rates. It reconfirms an apparent "inequality" with roughly ¾ of the funding awarded to the large EU countries UK, Germany, Netherlands, France, Spain and Italy. Interestingly, **a re-analysis of the data performed by Peter Fisch, the former EC Head of Unit for Evaluation** reveals a very different picture when relating the data to population size (funds per capita).

The European Innovation Council

Since the inception of the basic idea of a European Innovation Council (EIC) by research commissioner Carlos Moedas that is hoped to complement the success of the ERC in the innovation field, its potential structure and tools are much debated. An **EARTO position paper** on the EIC concept was published on April 19.

w