



H2020-TWINN-2015

Evaluation experience

WORKSHOP ON LEGAL AND FINANCIAL ASPECTS

Sevilla, 2-3 March 2016

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Specific challenge

The specific challenge is to address networking gaps and deficiencies between the research institutions of the low performing Member States and regions and internationally-leading counterparts at EU level. Driven by the quest for excellence, research intensive institutions tend to collaborate increasingly in closed groups, producing a crowding-out effect for a large number of promising institutions. This is the challenge that a specific Twinning action will try to address.

Scope

Twinning aims at significantly strengthening a defined field of research in a particular knowledge institution (a research active university or a public research organization or a private non-profit research organization) by creating a link between this institution and at least two internationally-leading research institutions in other Member States. Twinning will:

- **Enhance the S&T capacity of the linked institutions;**
- **Help raise staff's research profile as well as the one of the institutions involved.**

Successful Twinning proposals will have **to clearly outline the scientific strategy** for stepping up and stimulating scientific excellence and innovation capacity in a defined area of research as well as the scientific quality of the partners involved in the twinning exercise. They are also encouraged to explain how the Twinning activity will contribute to the overall **Smart Specialisation Strategy** of the specific location of the initiating institution.

Such a strategy should include **a comprehensive set of measures** to be supported. These should include at least a number of the following: **short term staff exchanges; expert visits and short-term on-site or virtual training; workshops; conference attendance; organisation of joint summer school type activities; dissemination and outreach activities.** Twinning activities will provide **no support to infrastructure and equipment and no support for hiring new permanent research staff.**

Expected Impact

There will be **a measurable and significant improvement in the overall scientific and innovation capacity of the initiating institution** in a particular field of research through linking with research intensive counterpart institutions in other Member States and thereby expect positive impacts on the overall research and innovation potential of the Member State or the region the initiating institution is located in. **Such improvement could be measured through an increase of peer-reviewed publications, increased impact factors in terms of citations etc.**

Impact indicators should reflect an increase in relative terms based on the situation before the project compared to the projected situation immediately after the project is completed, as well as within the foreseeable future after completion. These indicators are important for determining the potential regional and national impact, as well as long-term sustainability and viability of the beneficiary organisations.

Evaluation Criteria

1. Proposals are encouraged to identify alignment and complementarity with the national or regional Smart Specialisation Strategies of the Member State or region from which the applicant organisation is coming
2. Proposals will have to clearly outline the scientific strategy for stepping up and stimulating scientific excellence and innovation capacity in a defined area of research as well as the scientific quality of the partners involved in the twinning exercise.
3. Proposals must respond to and provide sufficient details in line with the **Scope** and **Expected Impact** of the Twinning action as described in the specific topic description.
4. Proposals will be expected to illustrate quantitatively and qualitatively the extent of the expected potential impact within the initiating institution and subsequently the potential impact at regional and national level based on the following indicators:
 - Level of potential impact of a project proposal at regional / national level defined in terms of expected publications in peer reviewed journals, successful participation in new national or EU level research and innovation programmes, collaboration agreements with businesses, intellectual property, new innovative products or services.
 - Extent of synergy expected through cooperation with research intensive organisations due to increased research and innovation capacity.

Evaluation Criteria

- **Criterion 1 – Excellence**
 - Clarity and pertinence of the objectives
 - Credibility of the proposed approach
 - Soundness of the concept
 - Quality of the proposed coordination and/or support measures
- **Criterion 2 - Impact**
 - The expected impacts listed in the work programme under the relevant topic
 - Effectiveness of the proposed measures to exploit and disseminate the project results (including management of IPR), to communicate the project, and to manage research data where relevant
- **Criterion 3 - Quality and efficiency of the implementation**
 - Coherence and effectiveness of the work plan, including appropriateness of the allocation of tasks and resources
 - Complementarity of the participants within the consortium (when relevant)
 - Appropriateness of the management structures and procedures, including risk and innovation management

Evaluation at Work

Criterion 1 – Excellence

what evaluators expect from an excellent proposal?

- Clarity in the description of the objectives, both at short and long terms.
- *Objectives well defined, pertinent and achievable.*
- *Good knowledge of the state of the art*
- Well elaborated scientific context
- Convincing explanation of the need for further improvement.
- Demonstrated expertise of the consortium to achieve project objectives.
- A realistic SWOT analysis.
- Relevant coordination and support measures according to the objectives.
- Clear alignment of the proposal to the National/Regional Research and Innovation strategy for smart specialisation.
- Well elaborated indicators to measure *the success of the proposal.*
- Proper description of the long term horizon of cooperation and scientific growth.

Evaluation at Work

Criterion 1 – Excellence

(Non excellent proposals may have the following weaknesses)

- Some objectives of the proposal are outside the scope of the call.
- Objectives are not sufficiently related to the main topic of the proposal.
- The approach is not elaborated in a credible way.
- The proposed concept is not sufficiently sound (e.g. recent developments are not adequately taken into account; some techniques have not been sufficiently explained; the state of the art of the proposed scientific area is not presented adequately).
- Some aspects of the SWOT analysis have not been fully addressed.
- Staff exchange is not properly addressed in the proposal.
- The complementarity of scientific activities between the partners has been insufficiently argued.
- The competence of other partners has not been sufficiently demonstrated in relation to the topic of the proposal.

Evaluation at Work

Criterion 2 – Impact

what evaluators expect from an excellent proposal?

- Expected impacts of the project are well aligned with the work programme and national/regional goals, and presented in a credible manner.
- The proposal will significantly impact the scientific and innovation capacity of the coordinating institute, especially in terms of enhancing researchers' profiles and initiating institutions' innovation capacity.
- Impact in strengthening industrial collaborations is expected.
- The plan for exploitation of the project results is excellent and extended further to the project time-line.
- The innovations described have good commercialization potential.
- Comprehensive indicators to measure impact in terms of publications, patent applications and participation/leadership in EU funded projects is provided.
- The dissemination plans toward scientific audiences are very good.
- The proposal presents an excellent analysis of the target groups.
- Suggested communication measures and promotion of the project are appropriate and well planned.

Evaluation at Work

Criterion 2 Impact

(Non excellent proposals may have the following weaknesses)

- The contribution of the project at European and international levels are not presented with sufficient clarity.
- There is a weak description of the impact of the proposal in terms of increasing excellence in research and/or innovation capacity of the coordinating institute.
- The exploitation plan is not sufficiently clear.
- The impact is addressed in a too general manner.
- Measures for management of IPR are not sufficiently described.
- The measurable impacts are focused too narrowly on publicizing the project itself rather than on the expected results.
- An adequate work package of concrete measures for the dissemination, communication and exploitation activities is missing.
- A general strategy for the dissemination and communication of the project results is not sufficiently described.

Evaluation at Work

Criterion 2 – **Quality and efficiency of the implementation** **what evaluators expect from an excellent proposal?**

- *A work plan consistent with the objectives of the proposal, effective and including appropriate allocation of tasks and resources*
- *Well defined responsibilities of the work packages and task leaders.*
- *Detailed description of the major training events (i.e. workshops, summer schools, practical training, suggested topics; estimated number of participants, etc.); number of projected expert visits and staff exchanges.*
- *Appropriate management structure and procedure (adapted to the size and complexity of the proposal).*
- *Well defined decision making and conflict resolution procedures.*
- *High quality and experience of the consortium and excellent complementarity of the participants.*
- *Good gender balance among participating researchers.*

Evaluation at Work

Criterion 2 – Quality and efficiency of the implementation

(Non excellent proposals may have the following weaknesses)

- *The effectiveness of the work plan is not sufficiently demonstrated.*
- *The work plan does not demonstrate coherence and effectiveness towards the improvement of R&D potential of the coordinating institution.*
- *The tasks of each work package are described too widely, and with not enough precision in objectives or organisation.*
- *The role of one of the participants to lead training, knowledge sharing and outreach activities not sufficiently justified.*
- *The topics to be elaborated within the secondments are not clearly presented*
- *Resources and tasks allocation is insufficiently justified.*
- *Staff exchange and secondments is not well elaborated.*
- *The management structure does not fit the needs of the project.*
- *The role of the advisory board is not clearly specified.*
- *Complementarity of partners is not clearly shown.*
- *The milestones are not adequately defined to assess the project's progress.*
- *The risk analysis is not adequate to the specific project. Only general risk mitigation measures are described.*