

NCP_WIDE.NET

WIDESPREAD Calls and lessons learnt

Vassiliki Kalodimou | FORTH/PRAXI Network
NCP for Spreading Excellence & Widening
Participation



Scope of Spreading Excellence & Widening Participation?

- Reduce the **innovation divide** across the regions of the European Union
- **Connect** laggard countries and regions with state-of-the-art knowledge institutions
- Break the **crowding-out effect** (the excellent collaborating only with the best)
- Facilitate the **emergence** of strong knowledge institutions.



Background

- Geographic eligibility criteria determined by the Composite Indicator of Research Excellence:

Threshold: Below 70% of the EU average



"low performing RDI Member States and regions" or
"Widening Countries"

MS: Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia

AC: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Faroe Islands, Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Moldova, Montenegro, Turkey and Ukraine



Teaming - Concept

Establish a partnership between an internationally renowned institution with an institution from a widening country creating or upgrading a Centre of Excellence.

Source: Dimitri Corpakis, Teaming institution building, Brussels, 19 June, 2105



What is a Centre of Excellence?

“A structure where RTD is performed of world-standard in terms of measurable scientific production and technological innovation”

- *Critical mass of scientists and technology developers*
- *Have its own research agenda*
- *Maintain a high rate of exchange of qualified human resources*
- *A dynamic role in the local innovation ecosystem*
- *Sources of funding not solely depended over public funding*



Teaming 1

Minimum eligibility criteria:

1. Coordinator from a “Widening country”.

Organisation type: National, regional authority, research funding agency, university or res. org.

2. At least a university or research organisation with international reputation in R&I other than the country of the coordinator (from all EU28 or AC)

Output: A business plan.



Teaming 1 & 2: Teaming architecture

Phase 1: Through the business plan (**what is usually lacking**)

- Demonstrate the long-term science and innovation strategy of the future Centre
- Outline how this strategy broadly fits with the RIS3 of the Widening country
- Demonstrate that the project is based on a true joint venture between the parties

Phase 2: First steps for the implementation of the centre

Access to Phase 2 is only available to those proposals already supported in Phase 1



The details

Phase 1 Call : Business Plan for a Centre of Excellence (CoE)

Budget: €12 million

Call opening: 11 May 2016

Call deadline: 15 November 2016

Budget/project: €400,000 (eligibility condition)

Project Duration: 12 months (eligibility condition)

Funding for: Business Plan

Implementation: Coordination and Support Action

Phase 2 (Restricted) Call in 2018: Start-up/Implementation of the CoE

Project size & duration: ~ €15 million & 5-7 years

Implementation: Coordination and Support Action

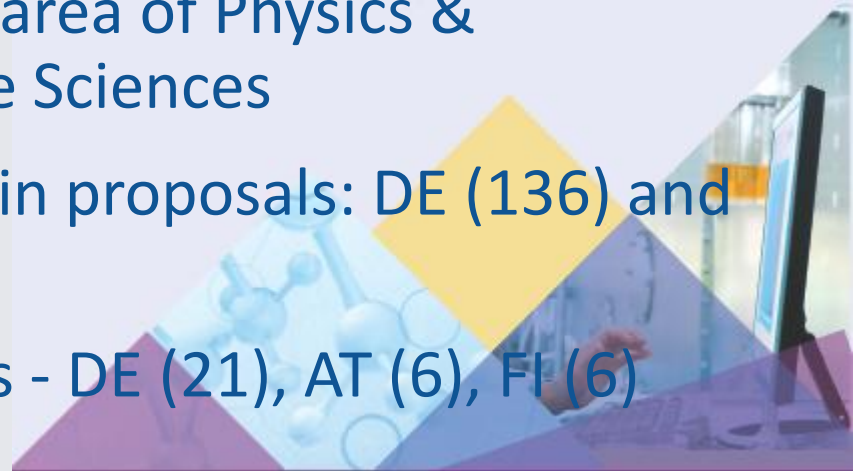
Funding for: Substantial support for the start-up phase of the CoE (administrative, personnel and operational costs as well as very limited support for equipment and consumables)

Caution: No research is funded!!!



Statistics

- **167** eligible proposals submitted from 20 countries (15 MS & 5 AC) vs **31** selected for funding from 14 "Widening" countries
- Requested budget: **€73.8M** vs **€11.85M** foreseen in the WP
- Most funded proposals in the area of Physics & Chemistry and Medicine & Life Sciences
- Frequent 'advanced' partners in proposals: DE (136) and UK (67)
- Successful 'advanced' partners - DE (21), AT (6), FI (6)



What is expected

- ✓ A TRUE joint venture (partnership) between the strategic partners not just another CSA project.
- ✓ Have the long-term commitment and support authorities, beyond the life-cycle of H2020 project.
- ✓ Emergence of a truly NEW institution that will claim its position in the (inter)national S&T scene.
- ✓ Firmly placed in the growth strategy of its region & alignment with RIS3 (smart specialisation strategy)
- ✓ The new CoE to be a beacon for scientific and innovation excellence creating a “spill-over” effect.



Twinning

Aim: Strengthen the capacity of a university or research organisation in a given area of research located in a “widening” country

The consortium: One coordinator (widening) from EU MS or AC

Minimum of two additional partners from two different MS or AC other than the country of the coordinator



Twinning

Activities: Short term staff exchanges; expert visits and short-term training; workshops; conference attendance; dissemination and outreach activities.

Impact (measured in KPIs):

- ✓ Enhanced reputation, visibility of the “focus” institution attractiveness and networking.
- ✓ Increased publications in scientific journals
- ✓ Improved capability to succeed in competitive research funding.



The details

Twinning Call 2017:

Budget: €20 million
Call opening: 11 May 2017
Call deadline: 15 November 2017
Budget/project: up to €1 million (eligibility condition)
Project Duration: up to 3 years (eligibility condition)
Implementation: Coordination and Support Action

Caution: Infrastructure, equipment & research costs will NOT be funded!!

Eligible Costs: Coordination and networking, dissemination and outreach activities.

Statistics of 2015 call: 546 proposals evaluated vs 65 funded.

Most successful widening countries: PT, RO, EE, PT.



Lessons learnt

- ✓ Clear definition of the scientific strategy towards excellence in the relevant research field.
- ✓ Better illustration of the scientific qualities of "advanced" partners and their added value to the project.
- ✓ Outline the expected impact of the twinning exercise on the institution in the Widening country (and even at the national/regional level) based on specific indicators.

Source: Telemachos Telemachou, Policy officer, DG RTD/B5, NCP Meeting, Brussels, 17.11.2015



ERA Chairs

Objectives: Attract **outstanding** researchers and their team to universities or research centres from “Widening” countries in order to make structural changes and raise the scientific capacity of the focus institution.

In return, the focus institution should **mobilise** support from different **funding** sources, including **European Structural and Investment Funds**, to invest in facilities and infrastructures in the context of **Smart Specialisation Strategies** and **commit** to institutional **change** and a broader support to innovation.





ERA Chairs

The consortium: Mono-beneficiary institution from widening country.

The ERA-Chair: Any nationality with proven leadership skills.

Position: Mainly full-time with **autonomy** from the beneficiary institution.

Recruitment process: Open and monitored by the European Commission.



ERA Chairs

Proposals should:

Include a plan to increase the research capacity in the field to be covered by the ERA-Chair.

Combine where possible other sources of funding such as structural funds

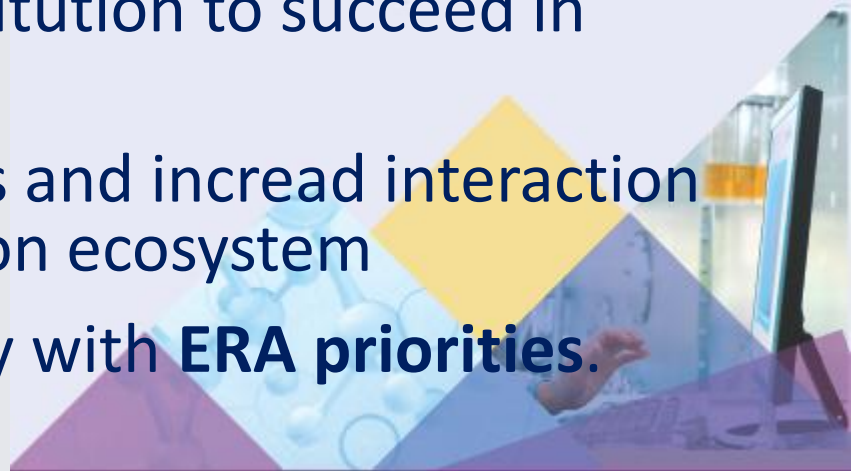
Include a plan to foster the ERA priorities such as open recruitment, gender balance, Charter and code, peer reviews, etc).



ERA Chairs

The impact:

- ✓ Increased **attractiveness** of institution and region for excellent researchers;
- ✓ Research **excellence** in the fields covered by the ERA Chair;
- ✓ Improved capability of the institution to succeed in **competitive** research funding;
- ✓ Contribution to RIS3 strategies and increased interaction with main actors of the innovation ecosystem
- ✓ Institutional changes to comply with **ERA priorities**.



Details

ERA Chairs Call 2017:

Budget: €33.91 million

Call opening: 12 April 2017 | Call deadline: 5 October 2017

Budget/project: up to €2.5 million (eligibility condition)

Duration: up to 5 years (eligibility condition)

Implementation: Coordination and Support Action

Eligible costs: Salaries of the Chair-holder and his/her team

Plus: Training, meetings, publication and patenting costs, equipment (minor part of budget and duly justified)

Caution: No research costs or infrastructures covered

Success rate: 85 submitted vs 13 funded

Most successful country: Poland



Lessons learnt

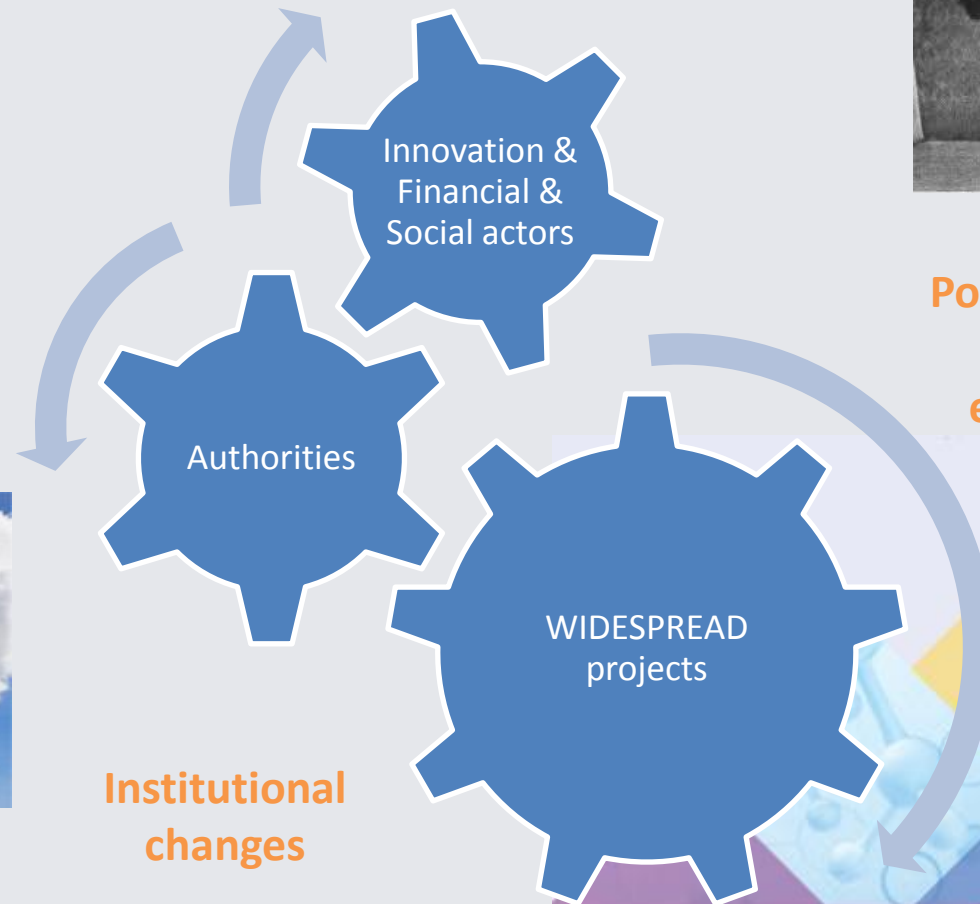
- Clearly define objectives towards **institutional changes**
- Demonstrate the role and **autonomy** of the ERA Chair holder
- Overcome **rigidity** the structural changes to take place.



Conclusions

Joint venture

Sustainable
funding



Institutional
changes



Position in the
national
ecosystem



Thank you!!

Vassiliki Kalodimou, NCP for Greece
vkalodimou@help-forward.gr

