Time for a New Philosophy in Research Funding Acquisition?
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Tjaša Baloh – Project Manager, Slovenian Forestry Institute
Rolf Klappert – Head of Grants and Tech Transfer Office, Université de Neuchâtel
Introduction: Mylene Joubin & Alexander Nehm (15 min)
  • Time for a New Philosophy in Research Funding Acquisition?
  • Demonstration: RESEARCHconnect International

Case studies: Tjaša Baloh & Rolf Klappert (20 min)
  • Challenges and solutions in research funding acquisition

Group exercise (10 min preparation / 10 min presentation)
  • How to address changes in research funding availability? How to move beyond the funding ‘comfort zone’?

Questions & Answers (5 min)
Introduction

Who we are…

Alexander Nehm
Business Development Manager

Mylene Joubin
Business Development Manager
Success rates overall 20% in FP7 > 14% in Horizon 2020

- University sector = least successful in Horizon 2020

- Private Research (15%), Research Organisation (19%), Public Bodies (27%) and other Entities (19%) = better success

- Newcomers to EU funding: 38% of successful applicants (80% of which are from the Private Sector)
Extending your global reach to alternative international funders

> Researcher awareness of certain high-profile funders within and outside their own country

> However, fierce competition for grants and the complex bureaucracy of applying can deter
Good news!

The wealth of alternative sources of international funding which can be easier to access and apply to
How does RESEARCHconnect address these challenges?
Introduction

> Who we are…

Tjaša Baloh
Project Manager
Slovenian Forestry Institute

Rolf Klappert
Head of Grants and Tech Transfer Office
Université de Neuchâtel
> Public research institute of national importance

> Conducts basic and applied research on forests

> A scientific, professional, and cultural storehouse for Slovenia’s relationship with its forests and the resources and services they provide

Slovenian forests & forestry needs opportunities
Slovenian Forestry Institute – who we are

Financing of SFI (%)

- EU projects: 43%
- SRA: 30%
- CivForest Service: 14%
- MAF (other): 6%
- SEA: 4%
- Mess: 2%
- Other: 1%

Map of Slovenia showing forest coverage and financial distribution.
Slovenian Forestry Institute – who we are

- Annually decreasing national research funding
- Only 10% of national research budget dedicated to Biotechnical sciences
- No stable funding, competitive calls
- Low success rate

Sources: SFI presentation (prof. dr. Hojka Kraigher), SRA, public
We strongly depend on international funding of different shapes and sizes:

- ca 60 different projects currently running

Small institute:

- Annual Budget of €3.5m
- 80 people, 60 researchers
- Project office 2.5 FTE

“Everyone does everything!”

So, we need all the help we can get…
SFI strategies to overcome the challenges

> SFI Individuals:
  - Networking at different scientific and **professional** events
  - Maintaining the networks and partnerships established

> Project office services:
  - Constant search for opportunities: eAlerts, info days
  - Networking at different **professional** events to ensure the capacity building and best practice exchange
  - Mentoring and **sponsoring**
SFI strategies to overcome the challenges

> Project incubator:

- Internal Info days for different programmes
- Open calls overview
- Brainstorming
  - Prep-time: before – *unimaginable*; RESEARCHconnect: half a day
> Individual researcher:

- **Specific (?)** report with relevant calls (manually: 1 full working day or more; RESEARCHconnect: 10 min)
  - Prep-time: manually 1 **full** day or more; RESEARCHconnect: 10 min

- Staying up to date (RESEARCHconnect email alerts, home page news) – set up done by the project office

SFI strategies to overcome the challenges
The best small Swiss university
- 11th in THE World 2016 ranking, less than 5,000 students
- 37th in THE World 2016 ranking for world’s most international universities

Students 4,376

Employees 768 FTE / 1,087 heads
- Professors 114.4 FTE / intermediary staff 413.7 FTE
- Females 48% FTE / 50% heads

Budget €125,000,000
- third party funds 26% (€37m)
Students in our faculties (2014)
University’s research and innovation sector

- Conseiller recherche et innovation (100%)
- Admin (25%)
- Proofreading EN (30%)
- Grants manager (80%)
- Industry liaison and support (80%)
- Technology transfer manager (60%)
- Euresearch office

Total FTE: 3.75
Swiss National Science Foundation

- Grants 2014: €771,800,000 (+3.7%)
  - 3,469 projects; 14,010 researchers (30/06/2014)
  - bottom-up
  - success rate 2014: 52%
  - however, in the future only one grant per main applicant
Our main funding instruments

European RDI programme Horizon H2020

> FP7, annual CH contribution about €230,000,000
  - ‘top-down’ for most of it
  - overall success rate FP7: 21.2% (CH: 24.1%)
  - overall success rate H2020: 15.1% (CH: 17.8%)
Commission for Technology and Innovation CTI (→ Innosuisse)

> Grants R&D projects 2014: €137,000,000
  - in general ‘bottom-up’
  - support to industrial innovation; needs a strong business case
  - success rate 2014: 55%
Do your homework!

- Google
- subscribe to eAlerts if any
- websites of ‘competing’ institutions
- Euraxess national pages
- compendiums of foundations
- foundations of big companies
- etc.

Or you let others do your homework!

> BUT
There is no short-cut; you still need to do your own homework:

> who will do the work for your researchers?
  - Grants Office; on faculty or institute level; individual researchers?
  - automatic searches generating eAlerts; search profiles need to be updated
  - Monthly Bulletin

> how does the information get to the researchers and how to make sure that they ‘notice’ the information?
  - personalised mails
Due diligence

Last but not least:

> check what you get – all that glitters is not gold!
Please consider the below questions and bring together your findings and ideas on the sheets provided

- Time for preparation 10 min, then 2 min per group to power-present

1. How to address changes in research funding availability?
2. How to move beyond the funding ‘comfort zone’?
3. Thinking outside the box
Questions & Answers
Thank you

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