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NET-HERITAGE
EUROPEAN NETWORK ON RESEARCH PROGRAMME APPLIED
TO THE PROTECTION OF TANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE

Instrument: Coordination and support actions (Coordinating type)

Deliverable 4.2

A report examining “The degree of Convergence of European RTD programmes and possibilities for common foresight”, including a set of recommendations on mechanisms to encourage convergence of RTD programmes on the protection of tangible cultural heritage.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

WP 4 is the central WP in the NH project as regards building a sustainable partnership in research coordination and research funding in the field of the protection of tangible cultural heritage.

The central objective of the Task 4.2 is to provide a basis for potential joint call actions among the NH consortium with special emphasis on a common approach to management practices and on identification of key criteria for a common evaluation procedure. This aim was achieved through the close cooperation of WP4 partners. Work on the task was based on the results of WP1 and WP3, as well as on the results of the Task 4.1 questionnaire, which provided a final conceptual orientation and a consensus starting point for the report. Based on extensive analyses of the background material and key references, an overview of ERA-NET and ERA-NET PLUS scheme is presented in detail in order to provide a basis for the NH consortiums' decision on possible future joint action. In addition, two different alternatives of a possible common joint call management and evaluation procedure, based on mixed and virtual common mode financing models, are presented in the report. The report concludes with a set of recommendations, presenting a convergence platform for possible future cooperation among consortium members. The recommendations tackle preparation, management, the funding principle, evaluation procedure and implementation of a potential future joint call.

It is of the utmost importance to stress that the WP4, and more specifically Task 4.2 work, was cumulative with regard to the whole project, and is based on the work and analysis done by the WP1 and WP3, as well as on the outcomes of the questionnaire, which was developed by MMC, Spain. Within this framework, Deliverable 4.2 is focused on the management and evaluation approaches, where elements of each section have to be agreed upon by all partners before launching a call. Therefore, the options presented in the deliverable 4.2 provide a basis and optional recommendations for potential future joint actions among the relevant Member States consortium.

ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

DoW, Description of Work
EC, European Commission
ERA NET, European Research Area Network
EU, European Union
FP, Framework Programme
JPI, Joint Programming Initiative
MFM, Mixed funding mode
MK, Ministrstvo za kulturo (Ministry of Culture, NH partner from Slovenia)
NH, Net-Heritage
R&D, Research and Development
RCP, real common pot
VCP, virtual common pot
WP, Work Package

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 General overview of Task 4.2

WP 4, Task 4.2, aimed at exploring the degree of convergence on possible joint actions of the NH consortium, started to work in Month 22 and built upon results and deliverables of other core WPs; WP1, 2 and 3, in particular. Its work was defined in a series of meetings among WP4 partners, since all WP4 tasks are closely related in conceptual terms. Furthermore, debates and discussions at WP4 meetings have exposed the complexity of WP4 tasks, which must be based on a consensus in the consortium that is as broad as possible, and which must take into consideration a huge variety of elements. As stated in the “EXPERT REPORT related to the MID TERM REVIEW of NET- HERITAGE”: *WP4 is the central WP in the DoW regarding building a sustainable partnership in research coordination and research funding in this field. It is a very time-consuming task, involving long discussions, to agree on joint activities to coordinate national RTD programmes and on the best ways to implement these activities. The consortium has to put a lot of effort into collecting all the basic background information needed for this task (...) to implement the sustainable partnership in research coordination and research funding in this field.*¹

NH DoW gives a further definition of Task 4.2, led by MK, Slovenia:

Actions and developing strategies towards the degree of convergence of RTD programme management and evaluation approaches. This task will investigate special joint activities among members of the Partnership in preparation for the future implementation of the transnational programme “strategic test cases”, which aims to build durable cooperation by developing a common approach to management practices and identifying key criteria for common evaluation. The task will be important for highlighting the steps required to implement transnational research programmes and coordinated joint calls for proposals.

Deliverable 4.2 is a report examining “The degree of Convergence of European RTD programmes and possibilities for common foresight”. It includes a set of recommendations on mechanisms to encourage convergence of RTD programmes on the protection of tangible cultural heritage.

1.2 Explanation of the WP4, Task 4.2 work

The Madrid WP4 meeting in March 2010 defined the starting point for Task 4.2, which was to prepare in the form of expertise the ground for the process/methodology of project evaluation. Due to the different views on processes of evaluation, the partners agreed that Slovenia would start to explore a number of possible evaluation methodologies, and try to define potential positive and negative effects. The ultimate objective of the evaluation methodology is the selection of excellent scientific projects, with the need to establish a balance between the contribution of partners and the quality of projects while ensuring equal opportunities for small and large Member States.

The Brussels internal WP4 meeting in May 2010 was predominately oriented towards further clarification of tasks to be done with respect to ongoing development in the ERA. For Task

¹ EXPERT REPORT related to the MID TERM REVIEW of “NET- HERITAGE”; *Mid Term Review Report of Expert Mrs Eili ERVELÄ-MYREEN, 30 July 2010*

4.2 the conclusion was to proceed as planned, with emphasis on the assessment of current evaluation procedures (on the basis of WP1 and WP3 work) and on preparation of the common evaluation procedure proposal.

The London WP4 meeting in September 2010 and consortium meeting offered some clarifications from the coordinator, who agreed with the interpretation of work as introduced by the WP4 partners and explained that all possibilities for any kind of joint call options are still open. After the presentation of the work, the WP4 partners agreed to continue working in close cooperation, and this was more clearly defined between Spain and Slovenia through a decision to devise a separate WP4 questionnaire.

The Osnabrück internal WP4 meeting in December 2010 gave a more detailed presentation of the work done in all tasks. It was decided that the Slovenian partner should start working on the proposal for a MFM and present it at the next WP4 meeting. However, it was stressed that the results of the WP4 questionnaire will be of a crucial importance for the final methodological approach of Deliverable 4.2, since the exact definition of the call management, submission and evaluation procedure for a joint call all depend on the selection of a funding mode principle. Therefore, Deliverable 4.2 was presented as a draft at the April 2011 NH meeting. A discussion on funding modes was developed, and the management possibilities of a potential joint call were also discussed, especially call management through the central administrative body and its financial aspects. All participants agreed on the fact that precise elaboration of the relevant evaluation procedure is highly demanding and the main task of joint call preparation.

As the meeting follow up, a questionnaire on Task 4.1 was prepared and distributed to the consortium by the Spanish partner.

The Brussels internal WP4 meeting in March 2011 presented the results of the Task 4.1 questionnaire carried out and summarised by Spanish partner. The results of the questionnaire provide the basis and a consensus starting point for Task 4.2 to proceed with its work into its final phase.

The Warsaw WP4 meeting in April 2011 further established that the Slovenian partner will present two different alternatives for a possible common joint call management and evaluation procedure, based on mixed and virtual common mode financing models.

The draft deliverable was sent to the WP4 leader and later to the whole consortium in order to collect amendments, comments and further proposals. Reaction from the consortium to Deliverable 4.2, agreed among WP4 as a consensus platform, was incorporated into the final version of the report, and thus presents a basis for the convergence of potential joint call activities.

2. METHODOLOGICAL BASELINE

Based on the findings of the Task 4.1 questionnaire and extensive debate in the framework of the WP4, the NH meeting in Warsaw (April 2011) established that the form of the potential future joint call was still not defined and that various options were yet to be considered: joint call as an ERA-NET PLUS action, joint pilot call or a pilot call as part of the future JPI². Nevertheless, Task 4.1 questionnaire gave a clear consensus starting point for the funding mode principle, which also defines the joint call management, submission and evaluation procedure. VCP was the funding mode chosen by the majority of the NH partners (see chapter 3)³, and for this reason, the premises of joint call management and evaluation derived from this funding mode are presented in the paper. It has also been pointed out by some partners, however, that MFM could also be a financial mechanism worth considering, especially with regard to the stronger implementation of scientific excellence criteria⁴. Therefore, the WP4 leader and partners decided that Deliverable 4.2 should present both funding modes. Moreover, Deliverable 4.2 leaves open the final decision on the form of potential future joint action. This standpoint was confirmed by the coordinator and a consortium meeting in Warsaw, Poland.

However, in order to be able to present concrete and transparent management and evaluation procedures and their key elements/steps, and to be able to formulate some recommendations on the basis of a thorough analysis, the basic methodological premises needed to be defined by Task 4.2.

On the basis of a background material study (Chapter 3) and various open options for potential future joint action provided at the NH Warsaw meeting (April 2011), the Task 4.2 team decided to present in detail the ERA-NET and ERA-NET PLUS schemes to enable elements for the in-depth understanding of both schemes and therefore an argument-based decision process on potential future joint action (Chapter 4). Two cases were chosen for analysis in the context of the joint action: Ernest ERA-NET as an example of VCP, as an integrated part of the JPI and as a network that has already launched a joint call, and SEE-ERA-NET PLUS as an example of MFM and as an example of ERA-NET project continuation (Chapter 5).

The joint call funding modes that are to be considered and explored in the light of the results of the Task 4.1 questionnaire and WP4 methodological orientation, are presented in Chapter 6 with an emphasis on management and evaluation procedures.

The analysis provided arguments and a solid basis for a platform of a set of recommendations on potential future joint action, which are presented in Chapter 7.

² European Network on Research Programme applied to the Protection of Tangible Cultural Heritage - NET- HERITAGE Contractor Committee, April 5th 2011, Copernicus Science Centre, Warsaw – Minutes of the meeting.

³ The results of the Task 4.1 questionnaire demonstrated the significant interest of NH partners in launching common calls; 9 partners would be interested in launching a call within NH and 12 partners within a continuation of the NH project. Answers to the question “ Which funding mode can be used for your institution?” demonstrated that the preferred funding mode by the NH partners would be VCP while RCP would not be acceptable. See also Chapter 3.

⁴ Deliverable 4.1 and WP4 methodological orientation, stipulated at internal WP meetings.

3. ANALYSIS OF BACKGROUND MATERIAL FOR TASK 4.2

In order to be able to propose joint call recommendations, MK has identified key examples to be studied and analysed the following material:

- *Evaluation and impact assessment of the ERA-NET scheme and the related ERA-NET actions under the 6th Framework Programme*, Matrix-Ramboll, Final Report, December 2009.
- *Rules on submission of proposals, and the related evaluation, selection and award procedures*, Version 3, 21 August 2008, COM(2008)4617.
- *“ERA-NET Actions”. Provisions for the preparation of ERA-NET actions and their practical implementation*. EC, 21. December 2006
- *“ERA-NET Plus Actions”. Provisions for the preparation of ERA-NET PLUS actions and their practical implementation*. EC, October 2009.
- Net-Heritage, European Network on Research Programme applied to the Protection of Tangible Cultural Heritage, DoW, July 2007.
- Net-Heritage, Deliverable 1.1, *Inventory of the key national strategies and research programmes applied to the protection of tangible cultural heritage*, May 2009.
- Net-Heritage, Deliverable 1.2, *Assessment Report of national RTD programmes and synergies between the programmes of participants in terms of management, financial issues and evaluation procedures*, March 2010.
- Net-Heritage, Deliverable 1.3, *Recommendations on common approaches*, October 2010.
- Net-Heritage, Deliverable 4.1, *A list of potential transnational programmes to be implemented by joint action plans*, August 2011.
- EXPERT REPORT related to the MID TERM REVIEW of “NET- HERITAGE”; *Mid Term Review Report of Expert Mrs Eili ERVELÄ-MYREEN*, 30 July 2010
- *Manual for Call Implementation*, NETWATCH Learning Platform, April 2010; www.netwatch.jrc.ec.europa.eu
- *Coordination of National Research Activities*. European Commission, Brussels, 2004.
- *Networking the European Research Area. Coordination of National Programmes*. European Commission, Brussels, 2005.
- Green Paper “*The European Research Area: New Perspectives*” (COM(2007)161)
- Coordination action URBAN-NET; www.urban-net.org
- ERA-NET Plus Action SEE-ERA.NET.PLUS; www.plus.see-era.net
- Coordination action ERNEST ERA-NET; www.ernestproject.eu

- ERA-NET PLUS Action NORFACE Plus; www.norface.org
- ERA-NET PLUS Action HERA JRP; www.heranet.info
- European and Developing Countries Clinical Trials Partnership (EDCTP); www.edctp.org
- www.cordis.europa.eu/fp7

Evaluation and impact assessment of the ERA-NET scheme and the related ERA-NET actions under the 6th Framework Programme, Matrix-Ramboll, Final Report, December 2009.

The analysis is based on the dataset collected through the survey from July to December 2008. The Coordinator survey covered all 71 ERA-NETs, so the study therefore provides a lot of material to be taken into consideration in elaborating a potential joint call evaluation procedure in the framework of the NH project.

The basic aims of the analysis were:

- To evaluate the impact of the ERA-NET scheme and related ERA-NET actions under the FP6.
- To offer a basis and starting-point for evidence-informed strategic planning and policy development with regard to transnational R&D cooperation.

The report identifies three funding mechanisms of the FP6 ERA-NET actions⁵: RCP, VCP and MFM⁶. It is pointed out in the report that most countries that participated in some form of joint call preferred a virtual pot model to a RCP for funding transnational R&D. As a reason, some stakeholders reported political considerations, while others reported that it would be difficult to justify funding non-residents when national R&D budgets were considered too low in the first place.

Extensive questionnaires, on which the outcomes of the report are based, reveal the main activities other than joint calls/programmes that participants were engaged in through joint actions, giving a high percentage to activity oriented towards the elaboration of multinational evaluation procedures, which involved 55% of participants. Other high-scoring activities were: developing an action plan to deal with common strategic issues and to prepare for joint activities (75% of participants); undertaking benchmarking initiatives and putting in place common schemes for monitoring and evaluation (67% of participants) and coordination or clustering of ongoing nationally funded research projects (59% of participants)⁷.

A majority of participants reported the following key benefits of joint actions:

- creation of new networks, as well as deepening and expansion of existing ones;

⁵ Evaluation and impact assessment of the ERA-NET scheme and the related ERA-NET actions under the 6th Framework Programme, Matrix-Ramboll, Final Report, December 2009, page 212.

⁶ Definitions and analysis of the listed funding modes are given in sections 5 and 6 of this report.

⁷ Evaluation and impact assessment of the ERA-NET scheme and the related ERA-NET actions under the 6th Framework Programme, Matrix-Ramboll, Final Report, December 2009, page 22

- new collaboration agreements within and outside the EU;
- greater understanding of R&D procedures in other countries; and
- development and adoption of new evaluation protocols and procedures⁸.

The lessons learned from the FP6 formed part of the basis for the European Commission in conceptualizing FP7:

- Adoption of practices such as the use of international evaluation panels for reviewing proposals that had previously been done domestically.
- Early agreement on common principles, procedures and definitions between participants was paramount for the good functioning of the ERA-NETs as well as their activities. Useful practices included early development of joint guidelines, common application forms, and common evaluation procedures for joint calls or, more generally, joined dissemination strategies or common glossaries of definitions⁹.

Outcomes related to the necessity of early predetermination of call specifics, also correlate with the recommendations on common approaches made in the framework of the NH Deliverable 1.3, which is presented below.

Yet in the summarised analysis, the report pointed out that one of the most strategically important achievements of the FP6 joint actions was the opening up of national programmes (i.e. also to fund non-resident researchers), thus implying that FP6 was an important step towards the basic objectives of the ERA initiative.

An opening up of national programmes might be achieved, as the report suggested, by committing funding contributions to a RCP allowing the best proposals to be funded independently of nationality or place of residence either via VCP, where each national programme funds its national researchers. Aware that a RCP is not very likely to be applied, the authors of the report further developed the VCP implication by stipulating that if the national programme is open for transnational cooperation but is funding only its national researchers and not non-resident researchers, this can be interpreted as a sign of readiness of national programme owners/managers to open up their programmes¹⁰.

However, as may be concluded from the report, national policies and landscapes have often imposed constraints on the opening up of funding to non-residents. Therefore, as the document summarises, whereas the ERA-NET scheme created the conditions for the opening up of national programmes to non-residents, the mutual opening of national programmes on a larger scale may require not only more time but also a behavioural shift by national policy makers. At the national level, however, recognition of the huge value added from national researchers undertaking joint transnational research with researchers abroad, as facilitated via the scheme, was reported. This model of opening up – transnational cooperation but funding only of national researchers - is linked to the idea of a VCP mode of funding and has been largely used in joint calls. This constitutes an innovative form of opening up national programmes, with funding reserved for national researchers¹¹, which still seems to be the predominant view among Member States, as illustrated in subsequent chapters of this deliverable.

⁸ Ibidem, page 29

⁹ Ibidem, page 30

¹⁰ Ibidem, pages 32, 33

¹¹ Ibidem, page 53.

The report also provides several interesting points for consideration, regarding joint evaluation procedure establishment. The most relevant questions of the survey together with comments are presented herein.

Half of the participants responded that their involvement in the ERA-NET had indeed led to new programme assessment and/or evaluation criteria being applied within the national programmes. In Russia, for example, the main benefits reported were the use of evaluation methods, project and financial management tools similar to those of the FP for the Russian Research Development Programme since 2007¹².

One of the most powerful indicators of the opening up of national programmes is the extent to which countries have invested additional resources in ERA-NET joint activities, joint calls and programmes in particular, and the degree to which that funding has been made available with no strings attached, i.e. allowing the best proposals to be funded independently of nationality or place of residence. Slovenia, for example, contributed to five RCPs, which constitutes over a third of Slovenian financial contributions and can be seen as a step towards the opening up of Slovenian R&D programming¹³.

To sum up, the in-depth FP6 report states that a key driver for participating in the ERA-NET was to learn from each other and exchange information about good practices. This was an aspect that most interviewees reported as having materialised and added value. Examples of the immediate effects of this knowledge-transfer are evidenced in the number of case study countries adopting the practice of using international evaluation panels for reviewing proposals, something that had previously been done domestically. Moreover, case studies established that early agreement on common principles, procedures and definitions among participants on issues other than funding was paramount for the effective functioning of the ERA-NETs as well as their activities, including joint calls. Examples included joint guidelines, common evaluation procedures and common application forms for joint calls, or more generally joint dissemination strategies or common glossaries of definitions¹⁴.

The findings of the FP6 report, oriented towards the management and evaluation of joint actions, which is the focus of this deliverable, could well be applied to the consideration of NH potential future joint call activities.

¹² Ibidem, page 98

¹³ Ibidem, page 109

¹⁴ Ibidem, page 119

Rules on submission of proposals, and the related evaluation, selection and award procedures, Version 3, 21 August 2008, COM(2008)4617.

This document refers to the FP7 programme and is therefore eligible for the present analysis. It provides general rules, including on the joint evaluation procedures of joint calls. Ever since 2004, when the promotion of ERA in the EU began (FP6), and even before that, documents from the EC stated the need to strengthen ERA with common platforms for call procedures – above all monitoring and evaluation. As emphasised in the EC staff working document, accompanying the Green Paper “*The European Research Area: New Perspectives*” (COM(2007)161), this base invites the development of a more comprehensive approach to evaluation and monitoring in support of ERA, or indeed a European Research Evaluation Area.

The specific characteristics of this initiative would include the following features:

- Sharing the results of evaluation studies and other programme evaluation data;
- Joint development and implementation of common evaluation studies;
- Common standards and good practices for evaluation;
- Sharing of evaluation experts and the promotion of a common pool of highly qualified evaluation expertise;
- Other joint initiatives for the development of tools and approaches, including indicators.

Much has been done in the last few years regarding joint call procedures, and FP7 joint ERA calls are obliged to use FP7 general evaluation criteria principles, while detailed specific evaluation criteria relevant for the specific call are given in the relevant call documents (work programme, for example).

The rules on submission of proposals summarise the joint evaluation principle:

All eligible proposals are evaluated by the EC, assisted by experts where provided for, in order to assess their merit with respect to the evaluation criteria relevant for the call. The detailed evaluation criteria and sub-criteria, and associated weights and thresholds, are set out in the Work Programmes, based on the principles given in the Specific Programmes and on the criteria given in the Rules for Participation. The manner in which they will be applied will be further explained in the call for proposals and associated Guide for Applicants.

The document makes a proposal of scoring that can be applied to the FP7 criteria:

Experts examine the issues to be considered, comprising each evaluation criterion, and score these on a scale from 0 to 5. Half point scores may be given.

For each criterion under examination, score values indicate the following assessments:

- 0 - The proposal fails to address the criterion under examination or cannot be judged due to missing or incomplete information
- 1 - Poor. The criterion is addressed in an inadequate manner, or there are serious inherent weaknesses
- 2 - Fair. While the proposal broadly addresses the criterion, there are significant weaknesses.
- 3 - Good. The proposal addresses the criterion well, although improvements would be necessary.
- 4 - Very Good. The proposal addresses the criterion very well, although certain improvements are still possible.

5 - Excellent. The proposal successfully addresses all relevant aspects of the criterion in question. Any shortcomings are minor¹⁵.

Even though the idea of a European Research Evaluation Area is highly innovative and relevant, it is not likely that it will come into existence during FP7. Yet each joint call is a step towards it, and therefore each joint call preparation phase should pay special attention to the joint call evaluation procedure.

Net-Heritage, Deliverable 1.1, *Inventory of key national strategies and research programmes applied to the protection of tangible cultural heritage*, May 2009

In the first half of 2008, all NH partners filled in extensive questionnaires on the state of national research strategies, programmes and projects applied to the protection of tangible cultural heritage. The report on this survey provided an excellent basis for further NH work, which can also be applied to the elaboration of the joint evaluation procedure.

Table 6 “Evaluation criteria”, reported in Deliverable 1.1 on pages 18 and 19, gives an overview of elements of the evaluation procedure in partnering countries that provided relevant data. All partnering countries evaluate projects according to their scientific quality and/or value, and almost all include criteria on the feasibility of the project (in terms of management, financial plans and references). In many cases compliance with the stated priority areas is an important criterion indicating that the relevant countries do implement their research strategies through those programmes. The conclusion regarding the evaluation procedure, made on the basis of 14 questionnaires filled in by all NH partners, is that evaluation procedures rely in almost all cases on independent peer review and a steering committee making the final judgement. The evaluation criteria set scientific excellence as the focus of concern.

However, this conclusion cannot be simply applied to the joint call evaluation principle. Deliverable 1.1 analysed national programmes, where all available funding was committed to national projects, and therefore scientific excellence criteria did not affect national funding distribution. The joint call, regardless of funding mode, involves the pooling of several national funding elements as well as the participation of numerous research teams from various countries. A well-founded balance between national and transnational principle needs to be reflected in setting up joint call evaluation criteria, or else some bigger Member States may not find such joint calls attractive enough.

Table 7 “Procedures, ex-ante and ex-post evaluation of projects”, reported in Deliverable 1.1 on pages 20 and 21, gives information on ex-ante and ex-post evaluation of projects and the importance of procedures in doing so.

Even though the submission, evaluation and decision procedures cannot be followed in detail on the basis of Table 7, one can draw some conclusions from the selected material:

Almost all programmes have a review phase, done by independent experts (independent peer review, scientific review, expert review, external review). The only exception seems to be Malta, where proposals are evaluated by the programme manager. Slovenia and Spain report a mixed system of internal and external evaluation procedures. It can be assumed that all

¹⁵ Rules on submission of proposals, and the related evaluation, selection and award procedures, Version 3, 21 August 2008, COM(2008)4617, page 14.

programmes have separate eligibility and scientific evaluation procedures, yet one cannot speak of two staged submission procedures. Final decisions on funding are made by programme managers.

In comparison to the ERA joint calls, one can conclude that national calls do not always apply two-staged submission procedures, and that in some cases they omit independent external scientific/expert review. Again, scrutiny of national specifics can be highly illustrative, but joint call preparation requires consideration of the transnational aspect.

Net-Heritage, Deliverable 1.2, *Assessment Report of national RTD programmes and synergies between the programmes of participants in terms of management, financial issues and evaluation procedures*, March 2010

The document describes, on the basis of NH Task 1.1, the best practices of tangible cultural heritage research programmes of NH partners in terms of management, financial issues and evaluation procedures. Best practices related to the evaluation procedures are of crucial importance for Task 4.2, and are therefore one of the basic material references. Among them, special attention of this deliverable is given to:

- ex-ante evaluation best practices for the involvement of external and internal actors,
- criteria for ex-ante evaluation best practices for the necessity of introducing scientific excellence criteria as the central element and of balancing the other criteria regarding the specifics of given call and the general programme,
- evaluation of granted projects best practices for evaluation actors,
- procedure of evaluation best practices for the necessity of mid-term evaluation.

The best practices identified in Deliverable 1.2 match the recommendations on common approaches developed on the basis of the benchmarking analysis of Deliverable 1.3.

Net-Heritage, Deliverable 1.3, *Recommendations on common approaches*, October 2010

Deliverable 1.3 reported on the benchmarking analysis performed on the data sources from Deliverable 1.1 and 1.2. The aim of the analysis was to identify and define the best practice in the field of tangible cultural heritage research programmes in terms of management, financial issues and evaluation procedures.

A set of recommendations as a result of the analysis cannot be applied directly to the joint call preparation level, because it is based on national programmes and thus summarises the identified best practices. However, the context of some recommendations, regarding evaluation and management, can be potentially applied to preparation Phase 1 of the potential ERA-NET Plus action.

Management

The recommendation of Deliverable 1.3 stresses the need to define the aims and orientation of the call in the preparation phase, as well as the need for the call budget to be clearly predefined before the call is launched.

Evaluation

The partners of the call should involve two kinds of experts in the evaluation process: external experts and internal actors. The former will assure independence of the evaluation process and assure the prevalence of scientific excellence criteria; meanwhile the latter will assure the eligibility of the proposals and alignment of projects with national research priorities. All

evaluation experts should be independent and should, above all, promote scientific criteria as a central element for the project itself, as well as for the team presenting the project.

Net-Heritage Deliverable 4.1: A list of potential transnational programmes to be implemented by joint action plans, June 2011

As part of the WP4 Task 4.1, the Spanish partner composed and sent a “Questionnaire on future joint calls” to all NH partners in February 2011 in order to explore a possible cooperation mechanism for potential future joint calls of the consortium. The Spanish partner reported on the results in March 2011 at the internal WP4 meeting in Brussels. The results presented the basis for further work of all WP4 tasks.

With reference to Task 4.2, partners have been asked about the funding mode acceptable and/or preferred. The options given were common pot, VCP or mixed mode, as defined in the Net-Watch “Manual for call implementation”¹⁶:

The table, reported in Deliverable 4.1, summarizes the answers of the partners. In order to rank the options, the following scores have been used: 2, for options marked as preferred; 1 for acceptable; 0 for no answer; -1 for not preferred; and -2 for not acceptable. Partners in green are those who gave a positive answer in Question 1, in red those who gave a negative answer.

Partner	Real common pot	Virtual common pot	Mixed funding mode
MIBAC (IT)	0	2	0
MUR (IT)	0	2	0
PPS SP (BE)			
MES (BL)	2	2	2
MCC (FR)	-2	1	1
DBU (GE)	-2	1	2
HMC (GR)	0	0	0
MCI (IC)			
VKPAI (LT)			
HM (ML)			
MKDN (PL)	-2	2	1
ANCS (RO)	0	2	0
MK (SL)	-1	-2	2

¹⁶ http://netwatch.jrc.ec.europa.eu/nw/index.cfm/static/eralearn/planning/cp_process_5.html

MICINN (SP)	-2	2	-2
AHRC (UK)			
TOTAL	-7	12	6

A clear preference was given to the VCP, while the RCP option is, according to the questionnaire results, not acceptable.

4. OVERVIEW OF THE ERA-NET AND ERA-NET PLUS SCHEMES

This chapter gives a basis for selecting the appropriate form of potential joint action, illustrating the basic elements of potential future joint calls and establishing the basic contextual premises of potential future joint action, which, in the event of common agreement of the NH consortium, will present a degree of convergence among NH partners.

The first part of the chapter presents a comparative table of the ERA-NET and ERA-NET Plus schemes in order to demonstrate the basic differences.

The second part of the chapter presents an analysis of selected strategic cases of already launched joint calls to illustrate the pros and cons of VCP and the MFM principle. An example of RCP is not presented¹⁷, since the results of Task 4.1 questionnaire show that this option is not to be considered in future potential joint call action implementation.

The table, which presents a comparison of the ERA-NET and ERA-NET Plus schemes, demonstrates their basic stipulations.

Even though ERA-NET does not finance research activities, the rules on ERA-NET schemes offer the possibility of setting-up a common strategy, a joint work programme, common transnational evaluation system, common plan for dissemination of results of experiences and even a common (mutually open) or joint call for proposals. In this case, not necessarily all ERA-NET partners participate. In ERA-NET schemes, projects selected out of a common or joint call for proposals should involve at least two teams from two different countries. A joint call budget by partners participating in a joint call within ERA-NET should be established, where several options are possible:

1. Each country or region would pay for the participation of its own researchers and research activities (joint call with VCP)
2. Countries pool funds in order to finance projects resulting from a joint call for proposals, according to commonly agreed evaluation criteria. This entails transnational flows of national funding (joint call with RCP).
3. MFM
4. Other forms of joint research funding not necessarily based on joint calls might be applied.

ERA-NET PLUS actions do fund research activities, and this also involves a certain percentage of funding from the Commission (up to 33% of cumulative joint call funding) for research projects as well as for joint management and administration (this share is minimal and limited to Phase 1).

¹⁷ See some information on RCP in the Annex 1.

Table comparing the basic elements of ERA-NET and ERA-NET Plus actions with emphasis on evaluation and management procedures¹⁸.

Both schemes aim to strengthen and develop the coordination of national/regional research programmes		ERA NET (FP6, FP7)	ERA NET PLUS (FP7)
PARTICIPANTS		National/regional programme owners and/or programme managers; min 3 partners	National/regional programme owners and/or programme managers; min 5 partners + European Commission
AIMS		Implementing national/regional public research programmes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - by developing joint activities - by mutually supporting joint calls for trans-national proposals 	Organisation of joint calls between national research programmes by “topping-up” joint transnational funding through Commission funding
PREREQUISITE		National/regional research programmes ready to open up and/or be coordinated mutually by participants	Joint actions should demonstrate high EU added value
FIELDS COVERED		Any research topics relevant	Research topics that are better addressed jointly or could not have been addressed independently
FUNDING SCHEME		Coordination and Support Actions funding scheme: 100% of all eligible costs, 20% of all direct costs for overheads, 100% for administrative and financial management (up to 7% Commission contribution)	Coordination and Support Action with special dispositions for ERA-NET Plus actions: EC contribution up to 33% of the total cumulative funding of the joint call budget, based on formal commitment of the participants to finance projects. EC contribution can be: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - proportional contribution to the national funds pooled for financing selected transnational projects - contribution relating to

¹⁸ "ERA-NET Actions". Provisions for the preparation of ERA-NET actions and their practical implementation. EC, 21. December 2006

"ERA-NET Plus Actions". Provisions for the preparation of ERA-NET PLUS actions and their practical implementation. EC, October 2009.

ACTIVITIES		<p>the implementation and management of the joint call (up to 100% of the eligible costs related to the call preparation and publication, the proposals evaluation and the management of the joint call). Only a smaller and limited part of the EC contribution</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Systematic exchange of information and best practices, involving existing evaluation practices and programme management approaches – addressed by NH Deliverables 1.1, 1.2, 1.3 and 4.1 - Common strategic activities, including identification of possible type of cooperation, development of common evaluation systems – addressed by NH Deliverables 4.2 and 4.3 - Implementation of joint activities, including possible project clustering, systematic use of multinational evaluation procedures, which could involve the identification of common evaluation criteria and methods of implementation – addressed by NH deliverables 4.2 and 4.3 - Transnational research activities, including common calls for proposals, transnational evaluation, transnational funding of research 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Phase 1: Launching and managing a joint call (possible minimum EC funding): Strong central coordination recommended (Management by “call coordinator”, joint real or virtual call office...). Two step evaluation procedure mandatory. Results: agreed ranked list of transnational projects selected for funding and the formal funding decision from the participating national/regional programmes. <p>First step:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - “Light” proposals or expressions of interest. - Eligibility and quality criteria of the participating national programmes: first ev. step is open to specific requirements of the participating national programs. - Can be done decentralised, yet coordinated. <p>Second step:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - “Full” proposals

	<p>activities – explored within NH Deliverables 4.1, 4.2 and 4.3.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Criteria are fully predefined - Takes place at transnational level using centralised proposal reception and evaluation, based on joint international independent peer review of each proposal. Focus on excellence criteria (no way to include national interest or geographical return principle). - International peer review panel determines proposals selected for funding. - Use of FP7 criteria compulsory for evaluation by international peer review in step two of the joint call. Each proposal for the second step should be evaluated by at least three independent experts appointed by the consortium. <p>- Phase 2: Topping up of the joint call budget and implementation of selected projects (EC funding limited to the funding of selected transnational projects): Coherent governance and administrative framework recommended for implementing the funding of the projects as well as their follow-up. Management and</p>
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		monitoring in this phase are not eligible for EC funding. Monitoring of transnational projects to be organised and funded jointly by participating funding programme.
ACTIONS	<p>Coordination actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Related to networking and mutual opening of national/regional programmes (this may, for example, cover steps for the coordination and cooperation of overall management of the network) - No research activities financed - Duration: max 5 years - Results: inter alia development of transnational funding solutions and/or agreements (NH WP4) <p>Specific Support Actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Activities supporting the preparation of future ERA-NETs - No research activities financed - Duration: max 1 year 	
EVALUATION PROCESS for schemes	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Submission (proposal content, forms, eligibility; one-step procedure) 2. Individual reading; peer review by independent experts (evaluators addressing criteria) 3. Consensus (evaluators addressing criteria) 4. Panel meetings (evaluators addressing criteria, questions session, proposals in suggested priority order as an outcome) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Submission (proposal content, forms, eligibility; one-step procedure) 2. Individual reading; peer review by independent experts (evaluators addressing criteria) 3. Consensus (evaluators addressing criteria) 4. Panel meetings (evaluators addressing criteria, questions session, proposals in

EVALUATION CRITERIA for schemes	5. Commission follow-up (final ranking list, selection list)	suggested priority order as an outcome) 5. Commission follow-up (final ranking list, selection list)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relevance of the objectives of the programme 3/5 • Quality of the coordination 4/5 • Potential impact 3/5 • Quality of the consortium 3/5 • Quality of management 3/5 • Mobilization of resources 3/5 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relevance of the objectives of the programme 3/5 • Quality of the coordination 4/5 • Potential impact 3/5 • Quality of the consortium 3/5 • Quality of management 3/5 • Mobilization of resources 3/5
EVALUATORS (schemes)	<p>Evaluator lists from calls to individuals and institutions (individuals may also be selected by the EC outside these lists). Qualifications:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Highest level professionals from science and/or industry and from internationally recognized authorities • Highest level expertise in public or private sector in management of national/regional programmes • Ability to appreciate challenges and industrial and socio-economic effects of R&D • Language skills 	<p>Evaluator lists from calls to individuals and institutions (individuals may also be selected by the EC outside these lists). Qualifications:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Highest level professionals from science and/or industry and from internationally recognized authorities • Highest level expertise in public or private sector in management of national/regional programmes • Ability to appreciate challenges and industrial and socio-economic effects of R&D • Language skills
POSSIBLE EVOLUTION OF SCHEMES	<p>ERA-NET schemes started within FP6.</p> <p>New ERA-NET actions can be supported within FP7.</p> <p>Existing ERA-NETs may re-apply to receive Commission</p>	<p>ERA-NET PLUS scheme started within FP7.</p> <p>Each ERA-NET Plus is a stand-alone action.</p> <p>While it is possible that the joint scientific programme from which the joint call</p>

	<p>support to extend and or/reinforce their integration (e.g. broadening their partnership or increasing the type of collaboration).</p> <p>NH interpretation: NH can evolve in the NH PLUS action.</p>	<p>originates could have been developed in an ERA-NET Action, the joint call itself cannot be prepared nor managed through another EC grant agreement/funding scheme (e.g. ERA-NET).</p>
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5. SELECTED STRATEGIC CASE STUDIES (ERNEST ERA-NET Network, SEE-ERA.NET PLUS)

Two selected cases are presented in detail below. MK's first methodological decision was to survey all four ERA-NETs that comprise JPI, however, DC-NET has not launched a joint call yet. Meanwhile the HERA JRP foresaw RCP funding mode in call documents¹⁹. Even though a RCP case study is not presented in this report, because the Task 4.1 questionnaire clearly established that this funding mode is not acceptable, HERA JRP was carefully examined in the framework of the background material analysis, especially because it applied highly elaborated joint call management and evaluation procedures. Therefore, some basic HERA JRP elements are presented in *Annex 1* to this report.

MK therefore additionally reviewed several joint calls²⁰, which can be compared to NH because of their similar content baseline and which have already launched joint calls within the framework of the ERA-NET PLUS actions.

ERNEST ERA-NET, as an example of VCP, was chosen because it is one of the four ERA-NETs joined in the JPI and it already launched a joint call in 2010, which allows an early analysis of its approach. Besides, it has clear predetermined funding mode principles, as well as a highly elaborated call management structure.

SEE-ERA.NET PLUS was chosen as an example of MFM, and it is a clear example of collaboration, derived from and upgraded on ERA-NET, and is a continuation of SEE-ERA.NET (1.9.2004 – 31.8.2009). The partnership, called SEE-ERA.NET, implemented a first joint funding initiative in the framework of the ERA-NET project: the SEE-ERA.NET Pilot Joint Call in 2006/2007 resulted in the funding of 20 excellent project applications (proposals were from 14 SEE-ERA.NET countries). After this experimental phase, the partnership launched a call for joint European research projects on 1 September 2009 in the framework of the SEE-ERA.NET PLUS scheme (1.4.2009 - 31.1.2013).

¹⁹ HERA foresaw a RCP model in call documents, yet in reality the results demonstrated that VCP was applied.

²⁰ Ernest JCP, SEE-ERA-NET, HERA JRP, URBAN-NET, NORFACE Plus, EDCTP. This last one covers different research topics from NH, but it was surveyed because it is listed as a good case study by the European Commission, yet its implementation is not applicable to NH.

5.1 ERNEST ERA-NET NETWORK

TITLE	ERNEST; European Research Network on Sustainable Tourism
Time frame	(21.9.2008 – 1.9.2012); Joint call launched in 2010 within the ERA-NET
Web page	http://www.ernestproject.eu , http://www.ernestproject.eu/coalap/pagesernest/joint_call.jsf
Scope	<p>ERNEST – European Research Network on Sustainable Tourism; the critical issues to be addressed by the ERNEST consortium include the impact of transport on the quality of life of the regions' residents, widening the relations between the geographical and seasonal concentration of tourism, as well as promoting the active conservation of cultural heritage, environmental heritage, and the distinctive identities of these destinations. ERNEST addresses the issue of sustainable development of the tourism sector through coordination and collaboration among regional research programmes. It plans joint activities in experience exchange, resource pooling and coordinated research actions.</p> <p>The ERNEST Network launched a Joint Call for Proposals (JCP) in 2010 to fund interregional Collaborative Research Projects (CRPs) in the field of sustainable tourism through the participating regions and their respective funding bodies. The organisations involved in the JCP are thus called ERNEST JCP funding bodies with the corresponding geographical areas. The funding bodies have committed themselves to participate in the JCP by signing the “Memorandum of Understanding” on international cooperation in research funding within the framework of the ERA-NET ERNEST (ERNEST Joint Call for Proposals).</p>
Partnering regions in the 2010 call	Tuscany Region, Basque Country, Catalonia, Emilia Romagna (ERNEST ERA-NET partners are regions from France - 2, Spain - 2, Greece, Romania, Spain, Hungary, United Kingdom, Denmark and Italy)
Budget of the 2010 call	ca EUR 980,000 based on funding commitment by the regions
Funding mode of the 2010 call	VCP
Management/administration of the 2010 call	<p>The responsibility for the overall vision, governance, management, monitoring and dissemination of the Joint Call for Proposals and of the progresses of transnational Collaborative Research Projects lies with the “ERNEST Joint Call Steering Committee - JCSC”, whose membership is formed of one representative (plus one proxy) designated from each participating partner and funding agency.</p> <p>The operational steps involved in the JCP administration are</p>

	<p>carried out by the “call secretariat”, set up within the CCU (Central Coordination Unit) located in the offices of the Region of Tuscany, Coordinator of the ERNEST project and head of the “WP 4 - Trans-National/Regional Joint Call Implementation”, assisted by representatives from funding partners that are participating in the call. All ERNEST JCP partners are involved in the evaluation and decision-making process. Each partner is responsible for overseeing the activities carried out in their own region.</p> <p>The call secretariat will be in charge of overseeing all activities, of ensuring that the correct level of interregional activity is maintained, and it will be responsible for collecting final reports and for using them to prepare the report on Lessons Learned from Joint Projects (deliverable 4.2) which will describe and analyse each project and present some lessons learned, including possibilities for continued cooperation.</p>
Submission of proposals for the 2010 call	One-step submission procedure
Evaluation methodology and criteria of the 2010 call	<p>The first step of the evaluation methodology is a formal eligibility check of each project proposal, carried out by the regional funding agencies (eligibility check on separate regional full proposals), and by the JC Secretariat (eligibility check on transnational full proposals).</p> <p>Once a PP is eligible, decentralized assessment and evaluation is carried out by the regional funding agencies involved in the call in cooperation with the Joint Call Steering Committee; JCSC and the JC Secretariat. The “decentralized evaluation” implies that the regional funding agencies involved have to integrate the evaluation of ERA NET level proposals and evaluation of regional funding applications. After the assessment and evaluation have been performed according to programme regulations, each regional/ funding body involved produces a provisional ranking list. The JC Secretariat collects the outcome of the regional assessments and communicates the result to all call partners. A consensus meeting of the ERNEST JCSC is scheduled, in which the funding agencies agree whether a proposal should be rejected or recommended for funding. The outcome is a list of recommendations, where proposals are categorized by means of a colour code:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • green – recommended for funding • yellow – recommended with prescriptions • red – not recommended for funding <p>The list of proposals that are recommended for funding is transmitted by the JC Secretariat to all call partners which,</p>

<p>COMMENT</p>	<p>taking into account both the results of the provisional regional ranking list and the list of recommendations for funding produced by the JCSC, take the ultimate regional funding decisions. Separate contracts to proceed with a project are then concluded directly between the consortia and their relevant regional/national funding agencies. However, in the event of diverging regional level decisions versus joint evaluation, it is up to the funding agencies to decide whether or not to proceed with the separate funding of their regional part of the proposal.</p> <p>Evaluation Criteria</p> <p>The general criteria to evaluate transnational PPs include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • technical relevance; • added value of interregional cooperation; • quality of partnership; • relevance to the theme of sustainable tourism; • expected impact; • addressing of ethical issues; • dissemination activities; • management structure; • potential sustainability. <p>In the evaluation process priority points are assigned to PPs that put into practice one or more of the following approaches:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integration & Interdisciplinarity • Innovation in practice/Modelling • Tourist product/clustering & Replicability • Research beyond academia <p>The list of proposals that are recommended for funding and recommended for funding with prescriptions is transmitted by the JC Secretariat to the ERNEST JCP Partners which, taking into account both the results of the provisional regional ranking list and the list produced by the JCSC as an outcome to Step 2 of the evaluation process, take the ultimate national/regional funding decisions.</p> <p>COMMENT: The joint call provides clear call rules, defined before the call is launched. Only a limited number of ERNEST partners participate in the call. The evaluation procedure is based on a decentralised eligibility check and evaluation done by regional bodies, and does not include joint independent peer review. The entire selection procedure therefore implies quite a high influence of the regional interests of call partners. As for the funding mode, it seems that the clear definition and rules agreed upon in the Memorandum of Understanding were of crucial importance.</p>
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	However, given that the whole evaluation process of the VCP funding mode is strongly influenced by regional funding bodies, there is a potential threat that return principle funding could outweigh scientific excellence criteria.
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5.2 SEE-ERA.NET PLUS Project

TITLE	SEE-ERA.NET PLUS; South East European ERA-NET Plus; joint call for European Research Projects in September 2009 in order to enhance the integration of the Western Balkan Countries into the European Research Area
Time frame	1.4.2009 – 31.1.2013
Web page	http://plus.see-era.net/start.html , http://plus.see-era.net/pjc/calltext.html
Scope	<p>SEE-ERA.NET – The Southeast European Era-Net was a networking project aimed at integrating EU member states and Southeast European countries in the European Research Area (ERA) by linking research activities within existing national, bilateral and regional RTD programmes. SEE-ERA-NET PLUS is the next step in further integrating the Western Balkan countries and its key research communities into the European Research Area (ERA).</p> <p>The Call for Joint European Research Projects (JERPs) launched by SEE-ERA.NET PLUS will engage scientists and key stakeholders in R&D policy-making in the countries participating in the broad SEE ERA.NET PLUS consortium, including EU Member States, associated countries and the Western Balkan countries. SEE-ERA.NET PLUS is based on the SEE-ERA.NET project and its Regional Programme for Cooperation with South-East Europe (ReP-SEE), which was developed to enhance S&T cooperation with the Western Balkan Countries (WBC).</p>
Partnering countries	All 14 countries in the SEE-ERA-NET PLUS project have declared that they will give national financial contributions to the SEE-ERA.NET PLUS Call for Joint European Research Projects: Albania, Austria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, France, Germany, Greece, FYR Macedonia, Montenegro, Romania, Slovenia, Serbia, Turkey
Budget	EUR 2,563,525 partners, EUR 943,000 EC = EUR 3,506,522
Funding mode	MFM
Management/administration	The overall management and coordination of the call is carried out by the International Bureau of the Federal Ministry of Education and Research at the German Aerospace Center (DLR), which is responsible for the administration of the Coordinated Common Pot with contributions from the SEE-ERA.NET PLUS partner countries.
Submission of proposals	The call had a two-stage submission procedure – Expression of Interest (EoI) and Full Proposal – each followed by an independent evaluation by international experts. Only

Evaluation methodology and criteria

proposals selected at the first stage were invited to submit a full proposal. The rules and procedures for submission of EoIs and Full Proposals are described in a separate document, “SEE-ERA.NET PLUS Joint Call: Guide for Applicants”.

A two-stage process with independent referees. Peer reviewers with a high level of professional experience in the public or private R&D sector assessed the proposals and applied the evaluation criteria that are set out in the call text. A Scientific Council – which is composed of senior scientists nominated by each participating country – provided support in the evaluation procedure: it reviews the ranking lists of the Expressions of Interest (EoIs) and Full Proposals (FPs).

a. Evaluation of Expressions of Interest (EoIs)

In the first phase, the Expressions of Interest (EoIs) were collected and underwent external remote evaluation. Two peer reviewers were assigned to each EoI. The peer reviewers scored the EoIs according to the two criteria set out below.

- Scientific and/or technological excellence – (maximum 10 points, no threshold)
 - o Sound concept, quality of objectives
 - o Innovativeness of the project idea
 - o Progress beyond the state-of-the-art
 - o Quality and effectiveness of the scientific and technological methodology
 - o Sustainability of the project results
 - o Qualification and relevant experience of the coordinator and the individual participants
- Potential impact (maximum 10 points, no threshold)
 - o Contribution to the development of the research field in question
 - o Impact of the project towards solving significant regional research problems
- Based on the evaluation results, a ranking list of EoIs will be drawn up and reviewed by the Scientific Council. The Scientific Council has two tasks: the first is to review the evaluation reports prepared by the peer reviewers. If the Scientific Council identifies an unsound evaluation report, it has the right to discard it. The second task is the prioritization of proposals that have attained the same score in order to ensure a coherent ranking list. Only the top-ranking EoIs will be invited to submit a full proposal. The number of EoIs to be invited for full proposal will depend on the total available call budget, taking into account a success rate for full proposals of approximately 35%.

<p>COMMENT</p>	<p>b. Evaluation of full proposals (FPs)</p> <p>Full Proposals underwent a remote evaluation. Each full proposal was evaluated by at least three peer reviewers according to the following three criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Scientific and/or technological excellence – (threshold 6/10) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Sound concept, quality of objectives o Innovativeness of the project idea o Progress beyond the state-of-the-art o Quality and effectiveness of the scientific and technological methodology o Sustainability of the project results • Quality and effectiveness of the implementation and management (threshold 6/10) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Appropriateness of the management structure and procedures o Quality and effectiveness of the work plan and the distribution of tasks o Qualification and relevant experience of the coordinator and individual participants o Quality of the consortium as a whole (including complementarities, balance) o Appropriate allocation and justification of the resources to be committed (budget, staff, equipment) • Potential impact (threshold 6/10) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Contribution or relevance, at the European and/or international level, to the expected impacts listed in the FP7 under the themes ICT and AgroFood o Contribution to the development of the research field in question o Impact of the project towards solving significant regional research problems o Appropriateness of measures for the dissemination and/or exploitation of trans-national projects results, and management of intellectual property o Prospects for establishing effective and sustainable partnership within the network, including transfer of know-how and experience <p>Based on the evaluation results, a ranking list of Full Proposals was drawn up. Once again, the Scientific Council had the task of reviewing it, as was the case with the EoIs. The outcome is a final ranking list which was given to the SEE-ERA.NET PLUS Steering Board as a funding recommendation.</p> <p>MFM and joint management are most probably the reason that all 14 partnering countries decided to take part in the</p>
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	<p>joint call, which implies that MFM would in general probably assure greater participation of partnering countries. But the complex and lengthy management, submission and evaluation procedure, which is the necessary consequence of the MFM choice, lasts 5 years and thus reduces the flexibility of managing the call on the one hand, and requires long-term strategic planning of the research and development programmes on the other hand.</p>
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6. COMPARATIVE OVERVIEW OF THE VIRTUAL AND MIXED FUNDING MODES WITH EMPHASIS ON CALL MANAGEMENT AND EVALUATION PROCEDURE²¹

The NH Task 4.1 questionnaire demonstrated the priority of the VCP mode among NH partners with regard to the potential joint call action. In order to assure the consistency of NH discourse on potential joint calls, descriptions of VCP and MFM, as they are presented on the Netwatch portal (www.netwatch.jrc.ec.europa.eu), are given below.

VIRTUAL COMMON POT

Virtual common pot (or distributed common pot), in which countries and regions pay for their own participants. The VCP does not involve transnational flows of national funding.

Management: This type of common pot does not actually establish a joint budget to finance the selected individual projects, but is based on national/regional contributions. Even though the virtual common pot involves a jointly coordinated call, this call must be accompanied by national/regional calls for proposals and/or is based on an open national/regional programme. Each country will fund its own national project partners in successful proposals, and covers its own administrative effort. Funding will not be available from one participating funding organisation for successful participants from other participating funding organisations. The advantage of this funding scheme is that programme owners agree far more easily to contribute call budgets and the often observed willingness to raise national/regional budget limits, if the initially committed funding is not sufficient to fund the successful proposals.

Evaluation principle: Evaluation of proposals is undertaken by an international expert committee, whereas funding decisions and funding is undertaken by individual national organisations, in accordance with their own standard rules and procedures. A range of evaluation outcomes is possible, e.g. funding categories (fund – fund if budget available – do not fund) up to a joint ranking list.

Suitability: For participating national funding programmes that wish to engage in a transnational joint call with an agreed research theme, with evaluation undertaken by an international expert committee/evaluation panel, but which also wish to retain control of funding decisions and funding, in accordance with their own standard rules and procedures. This funding mode enables national funding organisations to retain autonomy and control of their own national budget and of their own funding decisions, and does not entail funding of non-nationals and/or non-residents.

Benefits: Participating funding programmes will benefit from expert international evaluation of joint call proposals.

Commitment: National funds will have to be earmarked to guarantee effective participation in joint calls.

²¹ Source: www.netwatch.jrc.ec.europa.eu

The national funding organisation will fund its own nationals or residents, where both international expert committee evaluation and subsequent national funding decisions retain these proposals for funding. Even if the contribution of a guaranteed budget is essential for the virtual common pot, national funds may be selectively increased according to the national/regional demand of the evaluation result.

Administrative efforts will be necessary for the operation of national funding decisions and funding, in accordance with individual standard rules and procedures. No cross-border funding is involved. Administrative coordination with other national funding organisations will be necessary to establish joint call and international evaluation procedures.

MIXED FUNDING MODE

This mixed funding model is a minimum condition for implementing an ERA-NET PLUS action, but can be used in the ERA NET scheme as well.

Management: The mixed mode is a blend of the real and virtual common pot types of funding and requires a joint ranking list as the evaluation result. It aims to ensure that the selection of proposals can follow the ranking list while maintaining to a large extent the 'fair return' principle. This funding mode is most common with ERA-NET PLUS actions. The countries/regions participating in a joint call contribute national/regional funds to a centrally coordinated budget in keeping with the funding requirements of their own national applicants who have been successful in the call. Generally, an agreement must be reached regarding the administrative procedures (e.g. cost of the secretariat). Each funding mode requires an adequate distribution of funding. Usually, the real common pot is distributed centrally and the virtual common pot by the individual partners. The same applies for the two separate shares of the mixed common pot. ERA-NET plus actions have to use at least a mixed mode that complies with the requirements for joint proposals evaluation, ranking and selection in order to be able to benefit from the top-up funding of the EU. The topping up from the EU may reach 33% of the total cumulative funding of the joint call budget provided by the ERA-NET plus partners.

Evaluation principle: Joint evaluation and selection of proposals is based on a two-step procedure, with step two being based on an independent international peer review and on scientific excellence criteria.

Suitability: For ERA-NETs wishing to engage in a transnational joint call with a pre-defined research theme, with evaluation undertaken through independent international peer review, and with financial topping up from the EU. The participating funding organisation accepts that funding decisions are made to ensure funding of the best quality proposals, irrespective of nationality, in accordance with joint standard rules and procedures. The participating funding organisations must agree on a joint selection list for funding of projects, and must formally commit to finance the successful projects. The participating funding organisations must meet the minimum requirements of an ERA-NET PLUS action (source: ERA-NET PLUS actions: Provisions for the Preparation of ERA-NET PLUS actions and their practical implementation):

- *a single joint call for transnational projects adhering to the competition rules,*
- *participation of at least five Member States or Associated States in the single joint call,*

- minimum total financial volume of the single joint call: EUR 5 million incl. the EU contribution,
- joint evaluation and selection of proposals based on a two-step procedure, with step two being based on an independent international peer review and on excellence criteria,
- the duration of an ERA-NET PLUS cannot exceed five years.

Benefits: Participating funding programmes will benefit from the international expert evaluation of joint call proposals. Participation in an ERA PLUS action will enable national funding organisations to jointly fund the best quality proposals and excellent non-resident researchers. Participating funding programmes will benefit from an independent international expert peer review of joint call proposals.

Commitment: The national funding organisation must formally commit funds to finance the successful projects of the agreed joint ranking list according to the funding committed to this call. National funding organisations will, through their contribution to the ERA NET PLUS action, fund the best quality proposals, irrespective of nationality, where international peer review evaluation and subsequent joint funding decisions by a designated joint decision-making body retain these proposals for funding. National funding organisations do not retain control of funding decisions and funding, and may fund non-national and non-resident researchers (from the share of contributions committed to the real common pot). Administrative effort is necessary for the operation of joint call decisions and funding, in accordance with joint standard rules and procedures. Cross-border funding may be involved. National legal provisions may in some countries restrict or disallow cross-border funding. Administrative coordination with other national funding organisations is necessary to establish joint call procedures.

Each of the funding modes has its special requirements which must be taken into consideration regarding the **common approach to management practices of potential joint action**, which are shown in the table below.

	VIRTUAL COMMON POT	MIXED FUNDING MODE
BUDGET	Virtual pot funding mode based on national/regional contributions; does not involve transnational flows of national funding (no joint budget)	Mixed pot funding mode Joint budget based on written financial commitments (ERA NET PLUS)
TIME FRAME	5 years	5 years
ADMINISTRATION	Optional central joint call secretariat	Joint call secretariat
SELECTION AND NOMINATION OF REVIEWERS	Criteria and rules for selection must be clearly determined before call is launched	Criteria and rules for selection must be clearly determined before call is launched
SUBMISSION OF PROPOSALS	Optional 1 or 2 stage call	2 stage call if ERA NET PLUS
EVALUATION	Decentralised evaluation carried out by national programmes + common	Centralised evaluation by independent

RANKING LIST	expert international evaluation of joint call proposals	international expert panel
CONSENSUS NEEDED	All call partners jointly agree on list of proposals that are recommended for funding by evaluation panel (focus on project viability)	Joint ranking list (focus on scientific excellence) by evaluation panel (focus on project viability)
KEY DOCUMENTS	How to integrate assessment against national rules into overall evaluation? Which criteria cannot be assessed by external evaluations? How can they be assessed?	How to integrate assessment against national rules into overall evaluation? Which criteria cannot be assessed by external evaluations? How can they be assessed?
	Memorandum of Understanding, Work programme, Call text	Memorandum of Understanding, Work programme, Call text

Each funding mode also has special premises regarding the **establishment of relevant key criteria for common evaluation**, as presented in the table below.

	VIRTUAL COMMON POT	MIXED MODE
Submission	Depending on selected workflow (1 or 2 stage procedure)	Evaluation of expression of interest and Evaluation of Full Proposals
Ev. criteria	Combination of national/regional as well as transnational views	FP7 criteria if ERA NET PLUS
	Different sets of criteria may be applied at different stages	Three main FP7 criteria: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Scientific and technical quality - Implementation - Impact
	Sub criteria that depend on the respective call	Sub criteria that depend on the respective call
	Criteria for transnational benefit	Criteria for transitional benefit
Key documents	Guidelines for applicants, Proposal forms, Evaluation guidelines/checklist, FAQ	Guidelines for applicants, Proposal forms, Evaluation guidelines/checklist, FAQ

Regardless of the chosen funding mode, the steps listed below need to be taken when implementing a joint call. Certain differences between VCP and MFM are highlighted at the relevant point.

In April 2010 the “Manual for Call Implementation” was published on the NETWATCH webpage. The Deliverable follows the structure proposed by the manual. However, the consortium needs to discuss, consider and agree upon each single point of the call.

Phases of joint call implementation	To be considered/done
1. Call planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Call launched by ERA-NET, ERA-NET PLUS, OTHER ✓ Decision on funding mode ✓ Call administration: joint call secretariat (optional for VCP) ✓ Criteria for management and administration <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Who is responsible for <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ administration of the money ▪ administrating the call ▪ management of the evaluators-database, statistics ▪ legal issues: appeals ▪ monitoring of the project and assistance ▪ accounts and closing of project²². ✓ Outcome of evaluation: common funding or joint recommendation ✓ How to include national requirements ✓ One common proposal form or separate national funding application ✓ Prepare the necessary call documents ✓ Provide the required programme information and promote the call ✓ Provide a system for submission of proposals and distribution to funding organisations ✓ Coordinate the evaluation of proposals ✓ Prepare a system for monitoring the call implementation ✓ Prepare the system for monitoring the funded projects. <p>Overall time frame: 5 years (18 months call preparation, submission, evaluation, funding decision; 3 years project duration; 6 month monitoring, dissemination, impact assessment)</p>
2. Call preparation	<p>Supporting call documents, REGARDING EVALUATION:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Evaluation checklist and reporting forms: the list of criteria must be mutually agreed among partners! ✓ Guidelines for evaluation: document providing evaluators and experts with the necessary information (criteria, thresholds, dates, deadlines...) = depending on the evaluation process ✓ Description of evaluation meetings in line with

<p>3. Call submission</p> <p>4. Evaluation (depends in part on chosen funding mode)</p>	<p>the evaluation process (plan and describe how the meeting is organised).</p> <p>✓ Submission of pre-/full proposals – 2-STAGE PROCEDURES (optional for VCP)</p> <p>To be considered <u>before</u> the procedure is defined:</p> <p>✓ Criteria for evaluation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Selection of scientific criteria such as: innovation of the project proposed and the idea, publications, patents, participation of SME's, number of project partners, gender issue ○ Do research project proposals have to be made anonymous? ○ Evaluation of the projects: one-step or two-steps? Consultation of evaluators: do they give their evaluation remotely or do they visit the laboratories? Will there be a consensus meeting? ○ How many evaluators per project? ○ How to choose evaluators? ○ From which countries do evaluators come? Only from countries that are participating in the research programme, or also from other countries? ○ How to choose evaluators? ○ How long do evaluators stay in the evaluator panel? ○ Further scientific and political assessment of the proposed projects <p>✓ Appropriate evaluation meetings</p> <p>✓ Alignment of evaluation with available budget</p> <p>✓ Centralised evaluation carried out by common expert panel for reaching a joint ranking list based on scientific excellence (external peers) = appropriate for the real pot models (mixed mode, as well)</p> <p>✓ Appointment of evaluators, methods for the selection of experts (joint expert data-base, definition of conflict of interest, costs and payment of evaluators, availability for ev. meetings, evaluation reports, monitoring)</p> <p>✓ Constitution of a panel of experts (call partners have to agree on the composition of panel with respect to representation of countries, experience of evaluators, thematic or interdisciplinary expertise, gender aspects)</p> <p><u>Pre-proposal stage (stage 1):</u></p> <p>✓ Assessment of pre-proposals (eligibility check, evaluation of proposed quality); centrally or</p>
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5. Funding decision

decentralised, depends on funding mode, always coordinated by call secretariat

- ✓ Consensus meeting
- ✓ Feedback to applicants and invitation to stage 2

Full proposal stage (stage 2):

- ✓ Assessment of full proposals (and national funding applications, if applicable): assigned to evaluators/external peer reviewers according to their specific expertise. Evaluation follows strictly the evaluation criteria contained in the call text (example SEE-ERA-NET), coordinated by call secretariat
- ✓ Consensus (panel) meeting compiling results of full proposal assessment
- ✓ The call partners (decision makers) will agree on the final binding list of projects suggested for funding according to the ranking and available budget.

Evaluation criteria

- Based on standard criteria used by participating national funding programmes of other transnational instruments (such as FP7)
- Call partners have to decide which criteria to use at which stage
- A list of criteria should be a basic part of “guidelines for applicants”
- ERA-NET PLUS calls: use of FP7 criteria is obligatory.

Most common sets of criteria:

- Main FP7 criteria (scientific and technical quality, implementation, impact)
- Sub criteria that depend on the respective call
- Criteria for transnational benefit.

Forms: guidelines for evaluators, NDA, Checklist of evaluation criteria, Individual evaluation reporting form, Summary report, Consensus report

VCP involves decentralised evaluation, yet the funding decision has to be made with the consensus of all participating partners.

The mixed mode is operated by a call secretariat, the decision on funding is the result of the panel meeting and no further coordination of decisions are necessary. In the mixed mode, programme managers provide the financial contribution directly to the successful project partners from their respective countries plus the maximum funding contribution of joint funds agreed among partners to the call secretariat.

6. After the call	How and by whom will the the topping-up from the EC be managed? Monitoring, dissemination, impact assessment
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7. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

As stated in the introductory chapters to this report, various options for the form of potential future joint calls are still open: a joint call as an ERA-NET PLUS action or a pilot call within the framework of the future JPI. Given that recommendations as an outcome of the Task 4.2 analysis should be focused on mechanisms to encourage convergence of RTD programmes on the protection of tangible cultural heritage (DoW), recommendations are prepared as general elements to be considered when approaching a joint call action. Subsequently, recommendations are focused on the management and evaluation procedures of the potential future joint call action of the relevant consortium.

The recommendations listed below were formed on the basis of the Task 4.2 analysis, as well as of the outcomes of the WP1 deliverables. They were sent to all NH partners for consideration and comment, and represent a common platform of the NH consortium with regard to the general starting points of the common joint activities.

- Based on the material studied, the degree of convergence among joint call consortium partners should be explored before the call is launched, and commonly agreed procedures should be clearly defined in an early consortium agreement; management and evaluation procedures need to be key elements of this. A Memorandum of Understanding, a Work Programme and a Call Text with a Guide for Applicants and Evaluators should be developed in this early stage.
- Based on the results of the Task 4.1 Questionnaire, VCP is the chosen funding mode of the potential joint call.
- Even though VCP does not necessarily involve a joint call secretariat, common coordination of the joint call is recommended to avoid fragmentation of the procedure and to assure smooth time flow of the call. The costs of joint coordination should be agreed upon before the call is launched. The ERA-NET PLUS scheme offers a potential model for joint budget distribution.
- Even though VCP does not stipulate a 1 or 2-stage submission procedure, based on the study of background material, the 2-stage procedure should be introduced (submission of pre- and full proposals) in order to assure a balance of specific call criteria, of criteria for involved R&D programmes and in order to ensure that scientific excellence criteria are the first priority criteria.
- Based on the “lessons-learned” perspective, gained from the background material study, the evaluation procedure should implement FP7 evaluation criteria with an emphasis on scientific excellence criteria and European added value.
- Based on NH WP1 outcomes, the evaluation procedure should involve external expert independent peer review to ensure scientific excellence criteria as well as an internal actors review (i.e. Steering Committee) to assure the eligibility of proposals. The first step of the evaluation procedure can be done in a decentralised way.

- Joint call implementation should follow the steps elaborated and defined on the basis of the extensive FP6 and FP7 review in the *Manual for Call Implementation*, NETWATCH Learning Platform, April 2010; www.netwatch.jrc.ec.europa.eu

Based on the clearly indicated positive effects of joint transnational actions (FP6 programme assessment), each potential call partner should be encouraged to take part in the potential joint call and thus open up the national programme on the one hand and benefit from, above all, international evaluation panels, procedures and methods, as well as from project management praxis. National programme holders can thus apply joint action elements to national initiatives and thereby potentially increase the competitiveness and excellence of their R&D programmes.

Annex 1

TITLE	HERA JRP; Humanities in the European Research Area - Joint Research Programme
Time frame	1.1. 2009 – 1.7.2013
Web page	http://www.heranet.info , http://www.heranet.info/hera-joint-research-programme
Scope	<p>HERA – Humanities in the European Research Area - is a partnership between 15 Humanities Research Councils across Europe and the European Science Foundation, with the objective of firmly establishing the humanities in the European Research Area and in the 6/7th FP.</p> <p>HERA Joint Research Programme (HERA JRP) partners launched a joint call for transnational Collaborative Research Projects (CRPs) in two humanities research topics: “Cultural Dynamics: Inheritance and Identity” and “Humanities as a Source of Creativity and Innovation”. By launching the first HERA JRP call for proposals, 13 national funding organisations wanted to create collaborative, transnational research opportunities that will derive new insights from humanities research addressing major social, cultural, and political challenges facing Europe. In consultation with their national researcher communities, they have defined and developed common research priority themes, and created a new transnational funding mechanism.</p>
Partnering countries of 2009 joint call	Austria, Croatia, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Ireland, Iceland, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Norway, Slovenia, Sweden, United Kingdom.
Budget of 2009 joint call	<p>EUR 13.865 million partners, EUR 2.635 million EC = EUR 16.500 million</p> <p>Results: 2009 call, two topics, 19 projects financed (55 full proposals reviewed).</p> <p><i>Example HERA JRP call secretariat:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4% of the total HERA JRP budget for operating costs (financial/legal management, peer review process, evaluation) + another 4% of the total HERA JRP budget for implementation phase (coordination, research networking, dissemination, knowledge transfer).
Funding mode of 2009 joint call	<p>In call documents defined as a RCP financing mode.</p> <p>Funding on the basis of joint ranking list according to the criteria of scientific excellence.</p>
Management/administration of 2009 joint call	Centrally administered call (administrative agency JRP HANDLING AGENCY) and management board JRP BOARD (final decision on financing).
Submission of proposals of 2009 joint call	Two-stage submission procedure (outline proposal, full proposal), both stages: independent review panel of experts.

Evaluation methodology and criteria of 2009 joint call

All partners cooperate in eligibility check according to their national legislation.

The proposal evaluation is organised in two steps: the call for outline proposals and the call for full proposals. In order to ensure optimal quality control in project evaluation, the two steps of proposal evaluation are organised centrally by the H.A. The proposal evaluation involves the organisation of the peer review for the two steps of evaluation, selection of the independent Review Panel members and external referees. The most important deliverable of this WP is the list of projects to be financed within the framework of HERA JRP. Funding decisions will be taken by the JRP Board on the basis of the ranking list produced by the Review Panels. All partners will be involved in conducting the eligibility check of proposals according to national eligibility criteria and by providing quality assurance control through a Quality Assurance Committee.

Evaluation of proposals:

- Proposal evaluation by two international, independent HERA JRP Review Panels (RPs) appointed by the HERA JRP Board (two topics called)
- Composition of RPs published on the HERA website
- Two-stage procedure:
 - Outline proposals
 - Full proposals

Outline Proposal criteria:

- Research excellence
- Relevance to the Call for Proposals
- Novelty and originality
- European added value
- Qualification of the applicants

Outline Proposal assessment:

- Each proposal assessed by two rapporteurs from appropriate Review Panel
- Each proposal and rapporteur's report discussed by Review Panel: decision made either "to invite to submit full proposal" or not to invite
- Written "consensus report" provided to each proposal

Full Proposal criteria (based on FP7 requirements):

Research excellence (Threshold 3/5):

- sound concept and quality of objectives
- progress beyond state-of-the-art
- quality and effectiveness of the methodology and

- work plan.

Quality and effectiveness of the implementation and management (Threshold 3/5) :

- appropriateness of management structure and procedures
- quality and individual experience of the individual participants
- quality of the consortium as a whole
- appropriate allocation and justification of the resources to be committed

Potential impact (Threshold 3/5):

- relevance to EU and FP7 objectives (see esp. FP7 Work Programme sections 8.5.2 and 8.3.3)
- appropriateness of measures for dissemination
- and/or exploitation of transnational coordinated research project results, and
- management of intellectual property

Full Proposal assessment:

- Each proposal assessed by 3 external expert referees selected from a pool nominated by participating funding organisations
- Referee reports will be made available to applicants for comment
- Review Panels will rank all full proposals based on their assessment, the referees' reports, the applicants responses to these, and rapporteurss' consensus reports
- The Review Panels will create a joint ranked list consisting of the best Full Proposals under the two HERA JRP themes and will subsequently make recommendations to the HERA JRP Board for the funding of these proposals
- Contract negotiations for successful proposals.

The whole procedure lasts 18 months.

HERA launched a Call for Proposals under two themes "Cultural Dynamics: Inheritance and Identity" and "Humanities as a Source of Creativity and Innovation" on 9 January 2009. The Call for Outline Proposals was closed on 7 April 2009. Under the "Cultural Dynamics" theme, 173 proposals were submitted, out of which 168 were found eligible. The eligible proposals were evaluated by the international review panel, which selected 34 proposals for the second round. Under the "Creativity and Innovation" theme, 61 proposals were submitted, out of which 59 were found eligible. The eligible proposals were evaluated by the international review panel, which selected 23 proposals for

COMMENT	<p>the second round. In the 2nd round 55 proposals with a total budget of EUR 49.6 million were reviewed and 19 projects with a total budget EUR 16.5 million were selected.</p> <p>Even though the call applied the so-called RCP model, one can see from the selected projects that the correlation between input of budget and output of projects with certain partners is relatively high, implying that the RCP is not operational when it comes to the actual implementation phase.</p>
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RCP definition from the Netwatch portal (example of HERA):

The real common pot, in which countries pool their national contributions into a common and centrally administered call budget. This provides funding for successful proposals irrespective of the applicant's nationality and results in transnational flows of funding (funding crosses borders). Funding for the positively evaluated projects is ensured within the framework of the agreed overall budget. The individual projects to be funded are evaluated and selected by experts nominated by the consortium (the required outcome of the evaluation is a joint ranking list). Mostly used in ERA-NETs focused on basic science, where the sole criterion for evaluation is scientific excellence, but if necessary supplemented by additional criteria, for example for knowledge transfer-related projects. This funding mode allows adherence to the ranking list by avoiding the risk of any mismatch between national funding contributions and requested budgets for successful proposals. The real common pot requires a system to administer the distribution of funds at the ERA-NET level.

Suitability: This funding mode is suitable for participating funding organisations which wish to engage in a transnational joint call with an agreed research theme, with evaluation undertaken by an international expert committee, and where funding decisions are based on a joint ranking list.

The participating funding organisation accepts that funding decisions are made by the designated joint decision-making body to ensure funding of the best quality proposals, in accordance with joint standard rules and procedures, and irrespective of nationality or place of residence.

Benefit for participating funding programmes: Participation in a real common pot will enable national funding organisations to jointly fund the best quality proposals, and the excellent resident and non-resident researchers taking part in these proposals.

Participating funding programmes will benefit from expert international evaluation of joint call proposals, from the development and operation of transnational rules and procedures.

Commitment: Funds will have to be earmarked and committed to participation in transnational calls through a jointly agreed common budget, irrespective of the national /regional affiliation of applicants.

The national/regional funding organisation will, through contribution to the real common pot, fund the best quality proposals irrespective of nationality, whereby international expert committee evaluation and subsequent funding decisions by the designated decision-making body (e.g. Steering Committee) retain these proposals for funding.

The national/regional funding organisation does not retain control of funding decisions and funding, and will, depending on the funding decisions, be funding non-national and non-resident researchers according to the committed budget.

Administrative efforts and benefits: *Administrative coordination with other national funding organisations will be necessary to establish joint call procedures, and administrative effort is needed in order to ensure efficient operation of joint call decisions and joint funding, in accordance with joint standard rules and procedures.*

Cross-border funding is involved. National legal provisions may in some countries restrict or disallow cross-border funding.