NCP Experience report

based on a Meet & Exchange workshop “NCP-Systems – Impact of NCP-networks”, organized in the frame of the NCP-Academy, 7th of June 2016, Copenhagen

includes

- Lessons learnt/recommendations
- Workshop agenda (Annex1),
- List of participants (Annex2)
- Power point presentation by EC (Annex3)
1. **Introduction: Why this workshop?**
The reason for this workshop is to meet and exchange views on these four aims:

**Aims for the workshop:**

1) To work towards a collective approach for best practice in NCP networks-projects
2) To work towards joint insights into the impact of running NCP networks-projects
3) To reach mutual ideas for potential synergies and cooperation between the different NCP networks-projects
4) To get a clearer picture of scenarios of the future NCP networks-projects

We came up with these aims after talking informally with NCP colleagues all over Europe and moreover we felt that the timing was right as the aims were very relevant here near the middle of H2020 and they corresponded very well with the NCP Academy’s plan of coordination a NCP-input paper for the interim evaluation of Horizon2020.

**Output of the workshop:**

To enrich the future NCP-input H2020 interim evaluation paper that the NCP Academy is coordination at the moment. The paper needs to be finished by the 15th of September 2016, so the timing of the workshop was very ideal for this purpose and one can argue that the workshop served the purpose of a kickoff event.

**Target group:** NCP network-project coordinators or NCP country coordinators or other NCPs who are work packet leaders or hold a central role in a NCP network-project.

2. **Experiences and lessons learnt**
The workshop was opened by Anne Overgaard Jørgensen from DASTI with a brief welcome and outline of the aims of the workshop day.

**Best practice via market place:**
The workshop was opened by a market place with best practice of NCP networks as focus:

First six speakers from six different NCP Networks gave short presentations by a flip chart on best practice of their networks. Very different issues were highlighted.

The following six NCP network-project gave short presentations on the background, history and development of their NCP network, its aims, members, ways of working together, means and ways of communication, types of events and highlights.

The six networks were:

**COSMOS NCP network, by Adrian Klein, DLR**
**RICH by Monique Bossi, Apre**
**NCP Widenet by Katarzyna Walczyk-Matuszyk, IPPT PAN**
**HNN 2.0 by Marta Barrionuevo, Isciii**
NCP Academy by Imelda Lambkin, Enterprise Ireland

Net4Society by Dominik Klinkenberg, DLR

These six were chosen because they represent both newer and more establish NCP networks and because they cover a broad thematic spectrum. Net4Mobility was also invited but could not take part in the workshop. At the day it worked very well since the six NCP networks of choice highlighted different aspects of best practices. One or two participants would have liked for their NCP network also to present at the market place, whereas other participants expressed that six networks were a suitable number. It is hard to make everyone happy.

They highlighted different best practices such as the importance of:

Feedback to the EC in all forms (and even after each call)
Brokerage events
Database of contacts and profiles from previous brokerage events
Google groups – to ask and answer questions (and afterwards collect them for later use)
Mentoring of new NCPS
Survey of members of NCP networks to accommodate their needs
Social event for networking amongst the NCPS
NCPS gets to know one-another and create their own joint activities
Training on call topics
TAS service
Training on cross-cutting-issues
Training on legal and financial issues
Bringing different thematic NCPS together for workshops and training

Impact via world café:
Then the impacts of NCP network-projects were discussed during at world café at the workshop. We used the world café as we wanted to get access to all the experience of the highly experience participants. After two rounds of world café we had a plenary session to hear what had been discussed around the different tables.

The participants in the workshop agreed that the overarching aim of NCP network-projects is the support to applicants and beneficiaries in submitting high quality proposals to H2020 (by giving initial information and support, reading and commenting proposals and helping to submit them), and in executing and exploiting value added projects.

Within the NCP network-projects this is achieved through direct actions (targeting applicants/beneficiaries via tailor-made information for instance) and indirect actions (targeting NCPs so that they can serve applicants/beneficiaries better):

- Provide partner matching opportunities to (potential) applicants through brokerage events, thematic partner search platforms
- Enhanced expertise and skills of NCPS through trainings, meet & exchange workshops, creative thinking to develop new approaches and services
The impact and added value of the NCP networks is manifold. During the world café sessions at the workshop participants identified the following impact:

- Create cross border services
- Interact with EC
- Enhance knowledge and skills of NCPs (both new and experienced)
- Create better proposals and projects
- Improve national NCP services
- Do some of the work for EC (pre-proposal check etc.)
- Knowledge transfer between NCPs
- Networking between NCPs
- Better feedback to applicants
- Networks give 1st hand experience on projects coordination
- Development of tools
- Contribute to increasing the overall quality of proposals submitted and reducing the number of ineligible proposals
- Reduce entrance barriers and stimulate newcomers applications
- Be ambassadors of H2020 key messages and policy framework, including promoting Responsible Research & Innovation, multi-disciplinary approaches, cross-cutting aspects (gender, ethics, open access, open science, open to the world)
- Facilitate the work of EC by providing local first-line answers to applicants and beneficiaries
- Ensure high quality services in all MS and AC (and beyond) and for all 22 NCP configurations.

This impact is fully in line with the objectives of H2020 and follows the guiding principles imposed on all NCPs by the EC. They are shared by all 22 thematic NCPs. Insofar as the 22 themes of H2020 and respective NCPs have been deemed necessary to the R&I programme, so is each NCP-network and their impact.

**How the EC sees NCP project-networks via a presentation by EC:**

Please see annex 4 for the slides from the EC.

The EC used a power point presentation to tell how they view NCP systems under H2020, how they define minimum requirements of NCPs, what they see as guiding principles and standards, core tasks of NCPs. Furthermore, the EC underlined what impact they expect of NCPs across Europe and beyond and they told what they see as a NCP network success. After the presentation some questions were raised and there was time for debate and the EC elaborated on its presentation.

After this presentation a group work session followed:

**Three different themes via group work. It centered on:**

1) Synergies between NCP network-projects,
2) working with the EC and
3) impact of NCP network-projects:

The different groups answered the same four questions: 1) What is the current situation? 2) What could be a future scenario or aim? 3) What do you have to do in order to reach the aim/future scenario? Any quick wins? 4) What could hinder the solution?
In the text below future scenario or aim, as identified by the group work, is listed:

1) Synergies between NCP networks:

A future scenario or aim:
The aim here is to strive for a more structured level of synergy by coordinate more between
NCP networks
Do joint papers, do more NCP network coordinator meetings
Create a one-stop-shop
Have more general information
Develop a common it-tool to share information
Use the NCP Academy to create more joint activities.

2) Working with the EC (from the point of view of NCPs):

A future scenario or aim:
To create a new identity/new vision for NCPs.
NCP should adapt to the challenges in the research and innovation policy (regionally,
nationally, at EU level)
KIC, JPI, flagships → a new role for NCPs in this context
Minimum requirements for PO (commitment and level of knowledge)
The EC is responsible of the NCPs instead of the MS.
NCPs get a more broad strategic approach to H2020.

3) Impact of NCP network-projects:

A future scenario or aim:
Establish some kind of benchmark
Reduce duplications of work between NCP networks
Increasing synergies between projects
Central website with all NCP networks listed
Ensure coordination of the network to increase their impact
Create a central webpage for NCP networks

3. Recommendations:

Form of the day and methods used: We created a day with only one power point presentation (the
one by the EC); this format was very successful and gave all participants a platform for exchange
knowledge and we felt that the day had a nice atmosphere (this was also reflected in the feedback
forms). This will be a recommendation for future meet and exchange workshops.

Output of the day: At the workshop we learn the importance of NCP network-projects and how much
impact they have created so far and the importance of them in the future and that the NCP
community and NCP project-networks need certainly on this issue soon. If there is no funding from
the EC there will be no NCP network-projects in the future, this will of course have severe
consequences for the NCP communities but equally important in the end also for future applicants,
who will not get the needed information, support and help when the apply for funding from the EU. This will of course result in lower success rates.

The NCP project-networks urge the EC to consider the following structural propositions to:

- **Support the continuation of NCP-networks in all themes to the end of H2020**
- **Envisage a mechanism to cover the transition period** (such as using Framework Grant Agreements, taking into account the transition from old NCP nominees to new nominees). Knowledge and knowhow should not be lost and adequate support should also be provided during the fragile period of changing to new a framework programme
- Based on the interim evaluation of NCP-networks, **ensure that least-performing NCP-networks are offered the opportunity to implement corrective action rapidly**, with support of other networks
- **Explicitly encourage the responsible DGs of all thematic budget lines** supporting NCP-networks to find additional sources of financing if necessary (making first use of remaining budgets from the current Grant Agreements). The decision on the continuation of NCP-networks should not depend on the willingness / financial capacities of the thematic DG but should be **streamlined for all themes** based on above-mentioned principles.

In view of improving further the situation in the future framework programme, we also suggest that the EC provide the current NCP-networks Coordinators and Partners with

- A global overview on what is perceived by the EC as **duplication of work**, if any
- Clear guidance on the future NCP-network applicants on the **expected duration of each NCP-network** action, so that all networks are treated in same way (contrarily to the current situation where the duration of NCP-networks varies, none having a 7 years duration)

We consider that this would be best achieved centrally (DG RTD policy coordination unit), so that both the (future) NCP networks-projects and the respective units involved in NCP network-projects actions have a clear view on the coherence and core missions of these networks.
Annex 1 – Agenda

AGENDA
9.30-10.00 Coffee/tea and buffet breakfast

10.00 Opening of the workshop
Anne Overgaard Jørgensen and Melanie Buscher, DASTI

Presentation of different NCP networks/projects - best practice and impact:
COSMOS NCP network, by Adrian Klein, DLR

RICH by Monique Bossi, Apre

NCP Widenet by Katarzyna Walczyk-Matuszyk, IPPT PAN

HNN 2.0 by Marta Barrionuevo, Isclii

NCP Academy by Imelda Lambkin, Enterprise Ireland

Net4Society by Dominik Klinkenberg, DLR

World Café contributions of all participants

12.30 Lunch

Presentation by the European Commission on how they see NCP networks and their impact by Sandra Almeida, Policy Officer, DG R&I

Coffee/tea Break

Group work, plenum debate and exchange of experience contributions of all participants

16.00 Concluding remarks and the end of the workshop
# List of Participants

**Meet and Exchange Workshop**

June 7th 2016 – Hotel Scandic, Copenhagen

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<thead>
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<th>Name</th>
<th>Institution</th>
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Thank you for your attention!

Find out more:

www.ec.europa/research/horizon2020
Introduction

What do I do?
Horizon 2020
The NCP System Under
Commissioner facilitates work of the network and coordinates where necessary

- Transparency and equal access to underpin all NCP work
- A professionalised service, building on achievements of the past
- New sorts of action
- Industrial players
- New stakeholders alongside more familiar academic and

H2020, because:

- NCPs needed to adapt and rise to the challenge of
- Informative, in local language
- Spreading awareness, on-the-ground guidance and

NCPs are an essential part of the EU R&I programmes

Focus under Horizon 2020
- No closed clubs!
- Outreach to all sectors and potential stakeholders
- Avoiding conflicts of interest
- Respecting confidentiality
- Liaison with other services, including EEN
- Communication skills
- Knowledge
- Availability
- Resources

**Expectations spelled out for each NCP:**

Minimum Standards & Guiding Principles (1)
Core tasks

- Informing and awareness-raising of H2020 opportunities
- Assisting, advising, training
- Signposting and cooperation

Minimum Standards & Guiding Principles (2)
Network Projects

National Monitoring

Meetings of the different NCP configurations

Measures to maintain & improve quality of service

Exchange of information

Contact persons identified

Interactions with the Commission

Minimum Standards & Guiding Principles (3)
Questions
needs to be made generally available, and further enhanced. Know-how is already held by the NCPS themselves, which
learned, and as newcomers join the NCP network. A body of
continuous concern, as the programme evolves, lessons are
involved. In running an NCP service itself, this is a
They also need to be proficient in the processes
provide high quality services to potential applicants,
the rules and procedures of Horizon 2020. If they are to
National Contact Points need to be fully cognisant with

quality standards and horizontal issues

GARRI.8.2014 - National Contact Points for
Expected Impact:

GARRI.8.2014 - National Contact Points for European Standards and Horitzontal Issues
A project that:

NCP NETWORK SUCCESS

Ensures that training addresses needs of NCPs and is accessible by a broad audience.

Develops a system for supporting less well-performing NCPs and newcomers.

Creates a shared knowledge base for NCPs.

Assesses the effectiveness of its deliverables.
Looking ahead