

SUPERVISORY BOARD (SB) MEETING

AND EXECUTIVE BOARD (EB) MEETING

MINUTES

Date: 13th January 2020

The meeting took place at Cardiff University (Cardiff, UK), during the 2nd PARACAT Training School.

The meeting was organized by Prof. Damien Murphy and **chaired** by Coordinator Prof. Mario Chiesa.

The meeting was attended by the following representatives of beneficiaries:

1. Mario Chiesa (UNIVERSITA DEGLI STUDI DI TORINO, Coordinator)
2. Valeria Enrica Vasario (UNIVERSITA DEGLI STUDI DI TORINO, Project Manager; connected via skype)
3. Sabine Van Doorslaer (UNIVERSITEIT ANTWERPEN)
4. Ines Garcia-Rubio (UNIVERSIDAD DE ZARAGOZA)
5. Andreas Pöppel (UNIVERSITAET LEIPZIG)
6. Damien Murphy (CARDIFF UNIVERSITY)
7. David Fioco (CARDIFF UNIVERSITY, ESR representative)
8. Leonora Podvorica (UNIVERSITA DEGLI STUDI DI TORINO, ESR representative).

The other members of the SB, who could not attend the meeting, had been consulted previously and had agreed on the agenda.

The meeting started at 4:00 p.m. (UK Time).

Session 1: Project Management

Session 1 began with a formal welcome of the **newly-recruited Project Manager** (Valeria Enrica Vasario, UNITO, who attended the meeting via skype) and with a description of the **amendment procedure** formally opened on SYGMA on 15/10/2019 and still in course.

Then, **financial management** was dealt with: in particular, a thorough explanation was given on the way the **Network-Wide Fund** is being used.





It was noted that the Fund was set up to cover:

- a) Travel costs of Partner Organizations;
- b) Costs incurred by Partner Organizations hosting secondments (covered through a flat rate of 500€ per Person Month)
- c) the costs incurred by those Beneficiaries organizing more than one Network-Wide meeting or training event (costs for the additional event).

Up to now, the Fund has been used for purposes a) and b).

It was remarked that out of the total 72.600 Euro of the Fund (14.520 Euro per Party), the Consortium has used 3102 Euro (recorded at 31/12/2019).

Afterwards, the **state of the agreements to establish double doctoral degrees** was discussed.

PARACAT enrolled 10 ESRs, each one of which will receive a double doctoral degree from two of the five beneficiaries. To do so, 7 bilateral doctoral degree agreements are being implemented, but some are not finalised yet. All ESRs are regularly enrolled in the PhD programmes of their main host universities and 6 out of the 10 ESRs are regularly enrolled as PhD students at two universities.

A crucial issue, on which Damien Murphy reported during this session of the meeting, is the establishment of the bilateral doctoral degree agreements involving Cardiff University, which is proving particularly slow and difficult. Prof. Murphy attested that the Administrative offices of Cardiff University had been working full time to finalize this commitment, however a realistic time for signing the agreements was foreseen not earlier than spring 2020.

Then, the draft of the **Mid-Term Report** (D1.7, due by 31 January 2020, M13), which had been circulated via e-mail among all partners before this Board meeting, was discussed in detail. This meeting was an excellent opportunity to request the still-missing information to the parties concerned and to agree on the needed level of detail.

It is agreed that the Project Manager V. E. Vasario **will send to all the Informal guidelines for the Mid-Term Check**, already circulated via e-mail, so as to prepare at best for the **Mid-Term Meeting** (to be held in Antwerp, on 16 March 2020).

Session 2: Training

The status of ECTS awarding for the Cardiff PARACAT School is discussed. Prof. Murphy pointed out that at the present stage ECTS award is unfeasible for this event. The Coordinator stresses that all PARACT training schools, even if not formally recognising ECTS, present the same structure, ensuring a homogeneous and high quality training.

Afterwards, the need was pointed out to update the **Fellows' PCDPs** in light of the Amendment (which, when approved, would formally change the secondment planning). Prof. Chiesa





remarked that update of PCDPs would be possible only after formal submission of the Amendment (submission foreseen in the second half of January).

The **Post-Secondment Questionnaires** received so far were analysed, so as to **assess the first secondments completed in project life**. Prof. Chiesa highlighted that all secondments got a general positive evaluation. In particular, ESRs received in general high scores by the tutors for all the points under evaluation: 4 to 5 mostly, and 3 (satisfactory) in some cases. Secondments have been a good opportunity to improve their skills; only very few ESRs reported to have had problems in the experimental activity during the secondment, however they solved them: so, the Fellows confronting these problems had the opportunity to experience how research activity (all the more if it is challenging) may present issues to be solved step by step. This is part of the lab research activity. Lower scores (<3) were recorded by ESRs for external factors, such as ease to find accommodation (in rare cases). In general, the planned activities have been performed as agreed.

Finally, ESRs were encouraged to take advantage of the various soft skills courses available at their own institutes.

Session 3 (EB MEETING): Research

A recap was made of the progress in research (Scientific WPs: WP3, WP4, WP5), also in light of the oral presentations and poster presentations held during the morning and the first part of the afternoon

The overall impression of the EB is that the project is well on track and the results achieved so far are good, considering the comparatively little time passed after recruitment of the ESRs.

The Coordinator emphasized the **obligation to acknowledge EU funding in the correct way in all dissemination of results** (in any form, including electronic) and to make any publication freely available in open access mode.

Considering the amount of knowledge already generated, he thought essential **to make the general public aware of PARACAT results**, also – but not only – **taking advantage of social media**, so he encouraged updates on Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and Instagram PARACAT profiles. All ESRs and Partners were asked to think proactively on the way to make project social media more live and to attract citizens' attention better.

The meeting ended at 6:00 pm (UK Time).

