



Supervisory Board Meeting, 25th March 2022

Held by Zoom videoconference

Minutes

In attendance:

Board Members: Tony Parsons (Chair), Laura Turnbull-Lloyd (Coordinator and Chair of the Management Board), Vicky Papadopoulou Lesta, Christian Kimmich, Marc Hütt, Louise Bracken, Julia Costescu (ESR Representative), Martin Everett (Chair of the Advisory Board), Jennifer King (Project Manager).

Apologies were received from: Brian Fath and John Wainwright.

1. Minutes of the Last Meeting (8th September 2021)

The Board noted the minutes of the last meeting.

2. Matters Arising

The following matters arising from the minutes of the last meeting were noted:

Action: JK to submit the secondment changes to the Project Officer in Brussels.

This was done and they were approved.

Action: AP and JK to prepare and deliver feedback (from the overview of progress)

This was done.

Action: JK to convene a meeting with the ESRs to discuss the format of future training events if pandemic regulations prohibit full attendance.

This action was overtaken by the easing of pandemic regulations. It was noted that a meeting could be arranged if the pandemic situation regresses.

3. Chair's Update

AP reminded everyone of the possibility for a meeting to discuss future funding in Amsterdam (16th/17th May). It was agreed that future funding could be discussed either at a meeting in May or at

the Annual Workshop in Bremen in June depending on whether any draft proposals are received in the coming few weeks.

Action: JK to obtain the grant proposals for the initial and follow-on ITNs led by Durham.

4. To Discuss the feedback from the Interim Review Meeting and Periodic Report

AP reported that the REA have released the second tranche of i-CONN funding which means that they have approved both the Periodic Report and progress as assessed at the Interim Review Meeting. A formal report has not been received at this stage. Some feedback was given via email in late December.

The Periodic Report and presentations at the Interim Review Meeting were clearly well received. A few small issues had to be addressed before the funding was released. In addition, the Expert Reviewer, Professor Milena Horvat, made some recommendations for the remaining period of i-CONN:

Future Recommendations:

- a) More efforts should be dedicated to exploitation. Strong collaboration with the non-academic partners needs to be assured to facilitate further advancement and applied potential.
- b) It is recommended to extend the soft-skills training into project writing and provide the ESRs with the understanding of the funding possibilities at national and European level after their completion of the PhDs.
- c) IPR issues will need to be addressed in the second part of the project duration.
- d) In addition, wider networking, which was mostly hampered by the pandemic, needs to be strengthened in the remaining period of the project duration.

The Periodic report was rejected until the following amendments were made:

- a) A section on ethics was added to the Periodic Report. The original ethics statement was added with a short update.
- b) Secondments: a table was added indicating for each completed secondment whether it was a remote or face to face secondment.
- c) We provided further evidence that Chris Karittevli, is eligible to be an ESR (because he is a Cypriot based in Cyprus).
- d) Deliverables D5.1, D5.2, D5.9 and D7.1 were put into the same format as the later deliverable reports and some were expanded

The Board discussed the recommendations and noted that IPR training is being planned. It was agreed that training in career management and grant writing should be delivered at the 2023 Annual Workshop.

It was noted that, when discussing future funding, the consortium should think strategically in order to provide possible PDRA opportunities for the ESRs.

The Board also noted that the Project Officer asked for the following documents to be sent to the consortium:

Information about MCSA Individual Fellowships

<https://ec.europa.eu/research/mariecurieactions/actions/postdoctoral-fellowships>

Guidelines for the Supervision of ESRs

<https://ec.europa.eu/research/mariecurieactions/about-msca/msca-guidelines-on-supervision>

The Supervisory Board formally thanked JK for her contribution to preparing the Periodic Report and organising the Interim Review meeting.

Action: JK to approach Emma Bowen, or a similar trainer, to discuss training in grant application preparation.

Action: JK to check the training budget to assess capacity for additional training events.

5. To Approve any changes to the programme

The Board approved the secondment change requests submitted by Yanhua Shi and Harald Waxenecker.

Action: JK to request approval for the secondment changes from the Project Officer.

6. To Receive a report from the Management Board

The chair of the Management Committee, reported the following items:

- There have been two Management Board meetings since the last Supervisory Board meeting, September, and November 2021.
- The ESRs have issued a newsletter that is available on the website. There is another one planned for the early summer. In addition, the ESRs have been very active on Twitter.
- i-CONN seminars were given by Lorien Jasny and Thomas Hein. LT requested suggestions for future seminar speakers.
- The next Annual Workshop in Bremen will be held Monday 20th – Wednesday 22nd June inclusive. The programme will include ESR talks, talks from the Work Package Leaders, a series of seminars from external experts and a transdisciplinary session.
- The TMG are planning the Transdisciplinary session and it will include the ESRs giving short TEDx style talks that will be filmed and put on the website. Training is being organised for late April/early May. The ESRs will have an opportunity to practice these talks in Bremen before the Annual Workshop starts.

7. To Receive a report from the Training Board

There was no report from the Training Board due to strike action.

8. To Receive a report from the ESR Representative

Julia Costescu represented the ESRs at this meeting as the ESR representative and deputy were both taking annual leave.

Three points were reported:

- The Advanced Course in Connectivity methods for the Environmental Sciences was well received. Some ESRs thought it was too short and that more time in the field to provide context and more time for the group projects would have been beneficial.
- The ESRs were confused about the reimbursement of expenses and which expenses would be provided centrally or should be claimed from their institution.
- The ESRs asked for further details about the final i-CONN meeting that is planned for autumn 2023.

Action: JK to send clarification about expenses to the ESRs immediately.

Action: JK to notify the ESRs about the 2023 Final Meeting as soon as information is available.

9. To Agree date of next meeting

It was agreed that a meeting should either be held in Bremen at the workshop or shortly afterwards by Zoom.

Action: JK to discuss the possibility of holding a Board meeting in the evening or to set up a Doodle to assess availability for an in-person meeting on the morning of Thursday 23rd June.

10. Any Other Business

The Board thanked the organisers of the Datathon and the Advanced Course in Connectivity for the Environmental Sciences.