



**PROCURE2
INNOVATE**

Description of modus operandi for the network management

procure2innovate
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PROJECT PARTNERS

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2. BBG: FEDERAL PROCUREMENT AGENCY (BUNDESBESCHAFFUNG) (AT)
3. ZENIT: CENTRE FOR INNOVATION AND TECHNOLOGY IN ZENTRUM FUR INNOVATION UND TECHNIK IN NORTH RHINE-WESTPHALIA (DE)
4. ICLEI: ICLEI EUROPEAN SECRETARIAT
5. UHM: NATIONAL AGENCY FOR PUBLIC PROCUREMENT (UPPHANDLINGSMYNDIGHETEN) (SE)
6. LEGAL, FINANCIAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES AGENCY (KAMMARKOLLEGIET) (SE)
7. CONSIP (IT)
8. PIANOO: MINISTRY OF ECONOMIC AFFAIRS AND CLIMATE POLICY (NL)
9. MNEC: MINISTRY OF ECONOMY AND DEVELOPMENT (GR)
10. EAS: ENTERPRISE ESTONIA (ETTEVOTLUSE ARENDAMISE SIHTASUTUS) (EE)
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FACT SHEET

This document will describe the mechanisms for communication and exchange within the procure2innovate project.

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A. Interaction and communication responsibilities of the partners

The procure2innovate project started in 2018. In this project, a network of five existing and five new competence centres on innovation procurement is developed to share knowledge on the daily management of a competence center, the strategic position of the competence center and share information and knowledge on innovation procurement in general. Furthermore, this new network act as an informal platform for public procurers to get in touch with peers from other European member states and to support networking between the competence centers.

The first year the project was in a starting phase. Participating members had to learn and thrust each other and find workable collaboration methods. A key aspect – and in our opinion the most valuable aspect of the project – are the periodical partner meetings. In this note, suggestions are made to increase the quality and the value of these partner meetings. By doing so, we also believe the sustainability of the network can be increased in the future.

Frequency and location

The current frequency is roughly two meetings each year. Additionally, work package specific meetings are organised, regular WP leads phone calls and when necessary phone conferences with the full consortium are held to discuss urgent matters.

To increase the value of the partner meetings and the network, we believe it is better to limit the number of partner meetings. Two meetings each year is for us a sweet spot.

Furthermore, we believe these meetings should be hosted in the participating country of one of the members of the procure2innovate network, such that once every five years a participating county will host a partner meeting (with the current number of participating countries in the procure2innovate network). Would the number participating countries in the procure2innovate network increase due to the addition of new members (during the project or after the project) or decrease (after the project) the hosting schedule would change accordingly. If a country has more than one member in the procure2innovate network; these members will define together which organisation is hosting the partner meeting.

Structure and scope

The current partner meetings have a fairly static setting with a heavy emphasis on project management activities and unstructured group discussions, which often turn towards more thematic discussions. This was necessary at the beginning to get to know the partner and to obtain a shared in depth understanding of the project activities.

Time management of the meetings is an issue we have to improve. So far, there has been limited time and scope for discussions on the daily management of competence centres, good practices, strategic position and information and knowledge on innovation procurement in general.

Hence, in our opinion, the meetings can be more time efficient prepared. We believe, having now build up a good relationship between the competence centres and have a solid understanding of the project scope, we can limit the time on the project management. We can use proven methods to enhance the quality of the discussion, such as: well prepared discussion papers for the meeting, annotated agenda's which points to search agreement on. Furthermore, we believe, we should increase the time on knowledge exchange.

Based on the above we suggest to following basic agenda:

Topic	Duration (indicative)	Structure	Responsible
1. Tour de table	2 hour (each cc 10min max)	Plenary	All
2. Management of the project and network	2 hour	Plenary	Project coordinator together with the work package leads and the host
3. Exchange between the competence centres	1 day	2-3 breakouts sessions in 2-3 rounds	Committee of 3 or 4 competence centres
4. Special interest topics, local examples, local new insights, site visits	1 day	Depending on the program	Host

- Suggested is to start in the afternoon on the first day with topic 1 and 2
- The information on topic 2 shall be communicated in advance. The allocated time at the partner meetings should mainly focus on comments and clarifications.
- Topic 3 includes activities defined in the procure2innovate project such as the buddy system
- Topic 4 is voluntary for all the competence centres, however cc are highly encouraged to participate
- The European Commission is welcome to participate during topic 1 and 4
- Candidate competence centers can join one full partner meeting for orientation purposes (to be agreed on by the network chair)
- Other guests are just welcome to participate during topic 4
- Prior to the opening, between the days there is room for informal networking between in the competence centers

Rotating network chair

To ensure the sustainability of the network; we believe we need to have a rotating network chair that represents the P2I *network* (not the project). The network chair manages together with the project coordinator the P2I. We believe the member who is hosting the next partner meeting is best positioned to take this role. This means that:

- Every half year there is a new network chair
- The network chair represents the P2I network
- The network chair is responsible for the time management of the partner meetings
- The network chair supports informal networking internally within P2I network and externally
- Excluded from the responsibilities of the network chair is the project management within the Horizon2020 scope.

This means that the role of the host will increase the importance and decrease the workload for the project management. Ideally the buddy of the host can assist in the preparation of the project meeting.

B. Mentoring and buddy system

Background and approach

As part of the procure2innovate a mentoring and buddy system has been developed. The system sets up tandems and mentoring mechanisms (including Member States outside the consortium where appropriate), to allow new and existing competence centres to learn from each other. All buddy pairs meet at least two times per year physically and are a partnered for approximately one year. The buddy system is flexible to allow pairings that change more frequently or for buddies to be part of a larger exchange group.

The buddy system aims at supporting the competence centres in their individual needs and thus can be adjusted to changing conditions within the network. Buddies are meeting as part of project meetings or individually where necessary and possible.

At the kick-off meeting partners indicated their preference and the pairs were matched accordingly for the upcoming four years (see table 1). The two expert partners of the consortium (ZENIT, Sara Bedin) were added as flexible buddies, i.e. they offered to be available for requests from any competence centre when necessary and in line with the amount of personnel hours they would be able to spend on the task. Especially, in the case of ZENIT this offer has been taken up by at least three competence centres when they needed support in putting together consortia for Horizon 2020 proposals.

Content and activities

The buddy pairings and their activities are highly individualised as each country and matching has specific needs and challenges they would like to address as part of the mentoring system.

The below activities have been carried out by one or more buddy pairs so far:

- Stakeholder meetings
- Job shadowing/sit-in
- Sharing and adaptation of documents
- Legal advice for the use of personalised data
- Advice on marketing and communication approaches
- Joint supplier searches
- Joint development of Horizon2020 consortia

The following activities are planned:

- Joint events and workshops
- High-level government meetings
- Sharing legal approaches for innovation partnerships vs. PCP
- Workshops on funding mechanisms

Results and lessons learnt so far

- Face-to-face meetings are the most important and effective arena for exchange between the buddies. Hence starting in November 2018 a larger portion of the partner meetings will be allotted as “buddy time”, i.e. 2-3 unscripted hours for the buddy pairs to talk. This also gives the coordinator the chance to get a more individualised picture of the status in each country.
- The existing competence centre assigned to each designated new competence centre helps to give the new institution political weight in their national context.
- The continuous attention from one partner also seems to increase motivation and follow-through for the buddies.
- In all buddy pairs the existing competence centres were able to inform the new competence centres about services which didn't work in their context and were considered by the new competence centres. This in most cases prompted a change or adjustment of the planned service.
- For the second year of the project we will develop a set of questions to guide the first meeting of the new buddy pairs. This should help to overcome some initial awkwardness and get the process going. Once the relationship has been kicked-off feedback from the consortium shows that they would prefer to not have any additional rules/guidelines to follow as each matching is so specific.
- In the second phase we will also include the new associate members of the consortium in the buddy matching.

Conclusion

Even though most members of the consortium have known each other for a while and were familiar, the matching in buddy pairs did increase their connection and openness to share. Just the act of stating officially that they belonged together and giving them a significant amount of time together has positively influenced their relationship. While we previously thought that each member of the consortium could quite easily contact everyone and maybe the buddy pairs were not necessary, it has become clear that the special connections the buddies share is indeed very valuable.

We are still in the first year of the project so these conclusions may still be amended and detailed further. But so far it has proven to be a simple yet effective tool to get partners to deeply connect and exchange about knowledge that normally is not codified or documented

Annex – buddy matching plan

P2I - Buddy Matching							
	Austria	Germany	Netherlands	Sweden	Spain	Sara	ZENIT
Ireland	2021	2019	2018	2020			Co-buddy / permanent
Estonia		2021	2019	2018	2020		
Greece	2020	2018	2021		2019	2018	
Portugal	2018		2020	2019	2021	2020	
Italy	2019	2020		2021	2018	2019	

	Buddy pair
	Additional support (flexible)



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