



Leading and Managing Change in Higher Education (La MANCHE)

1st ONLINE STEERING COMMITTEE CONFERENCE

MINUTES

Date: 25th March 2013

Time: 1 pm CET

Venue: online session at oovoo.com

Attendees: Christina Armutlieva, IUC Bulgaria

Ruben Aghgashyan, SEUA, Armenia

Alexander Markarov, YSU, Armenia

Lyudmila Misnikova, BTEU, Belarus

Angela Niculita, MSU, Moldova

Olesya Gladushyna, EUNU, Ukraine

Ihor Oleksiv, LPNU, Ukraine

Corinne Stewart, Agrosup Dijon, France

1. Project administration and financial management

Christina Armutlieva welcomed the participants at the online meeting. She started the discussion by reporting on the interim reports' submission which was due 15th March 2013. In the first interim report the project partners had to report on the activities carried out at institutional level during the period of 15th October 2012 – 14th March 2013. In addition, they had to provide evidence of all costs incurred in the respective period and to send through email and by post the Staff Conventions along with time sheets and Individual Mobility Reports along with the supporting documentation regarding the kick-off meeting. Based on the information received so far and having taken into account that some of the La MANCHE partners are new to the Tempus programme, it was suggested to discuss project reporting issues in details at the meeting in the UK. Some of the new partners had to report this type of documentation for the first time and they clearly need additional assistance in this process. Christina Armutlieva informed the partners that during the first day of the three-day partner meeting in the UK the project lead organization will lead a session specifically dedicated to the preparation of project documentation and evidence of activities carried out and costs incurred. During the third day of the meeting, in the afternoon of 25th April the IUC team will

hold one-to-one sessions with the La MANCHE partners with the aim of consulting them and helping them to prepare their reports

In terms of project administration Christina Armutlieva encouraged the members of the La MANCHE Steering Committee to enhance their collaboration with the other La MANCHE partners at national level. Such type of cooperation will prove in particular valuable due to the fact that very often the challenges in the process of project administration are country-specific and a more enhanced national approach will definitely contribute to the project success. As an example of a country-specific issue the project manager pointed out the case with the La MANCHE project registration in Belarus. The La MANCHE project has still not been registered in Belarus. This could be explained with the slow procedures at the BSEU where the bilateral partnership agreement between IUC and BSEU is still being observed by the different divisions in the institution. This prevents the other partners from Belarus to register their agreements too at the different national authorities. As a result, none of the La MANCHE institutions from Belarus have been transferred their advanced payment yet.

2. 2nd La MANCHE partner meeting agenda

Christina Armutlieva presented shortly the draft of the agenda for the 2nd La MANCHE partner meeting as suggested by Paul Kitchen from UCB, the host organization. As mentioned above, in the morning of 23rd a session dedicated to project reporting and documentation will be held. In the afternoon of 23rd the project partners will split in groups and start the work in WP 3 and WP4. Angela Niculita will lead WP3. She and Christina will meet online before the upcoming meeting in the UK and will get prepared for the workshop in WP3.

During the second day of the three-day partner meeting a workshop in leadership and change management will be organized by UCB. During the day will be a number of topics related to leadership and change management will be discussed along with issues raised by the Assessment Report on Leadership and Management Skills and Models at Partner Countries higher education institutions, a major deliverable in WP2. UCB has managed to attract for participation in the workshop representatives of a number of high-profile organizations in the UK dealing with leadership and management in higher education and/or change management. Paul Kitchen has sent the draft of the agenda for 24th April which includes the following speakers: i) Gary Wood, the Deputy Vice Chancellor and Richard Riley, the Dean of Business to introduce UCB, its structure and leadership and change management challenges; ii) a representative from the Higher Education Funding Council who has sector expertise on supporting higher education institutions on management of change within the sector; iii) the Director of the Institute of Directors, the representative body for Senior Managers and Directors of Companies nationally; he will talk on change management commercially. Last, but not least, in the afternoon a representative of the Leadership Foundation, the organization that provides leadership and management support to higher education institutions in the UK, will speak about change management. As initially envisaged, the workshop will be live-streamed. Christina Armutlieva asked the partners from the different Partner Countries to start promoting the event at institutional and at national level among other higher education institutions. On the third day of the partner meeting lectures by EU experts in the European Higher Education Modernization Agenda and the recent developments in higher education policies at European level will be organized along with a discussion panel on the same topic.

3. Practical issues related to the 2nd partner meeting

Christina Armutlieva will circulate the draft of the meeting agenda among the members of the Steering Committee by the end of March at the latest. Members of the Steering Committee are invited to share their insights and input. The finalized agenda will be sent away to the consortium in early April. The project manager asked the representatives of the Steering Committee to keep in touch with the other La MANCHE institutions at national level and to support them in the process of visa application. It was stressed that all La MANCHE institutions should have a representative at the 2nd partner meeting and applying for a visa to the UK on time is crucial.

Ruben Aghgashyan asked a question regarding the payment the accommodation and subsistence costs for the 2nd La MANCHE partner meeting. Christina Armutlieva explained that each participant should cover his/her travel costs and costs of stay from the advanced payment IUC has transferred to the partner institutions as stipulated in the bilateral Partnership Agreements. With the exception of one Ukrainian partner which has not provided yet its institutional bank account details and the partner institutions from Belarus, where the La MANCHE partners have not registered yet the Partnership Agreements and therefore are not allowed to receive any direct funding, all other consortium members have received the advanced payment which represents 10 % of the institutional grant. The funding available at the institutions' bank accounts should be enough to cover the participants' travel and subsistence costs for the 2nd partner meeting. The mobility will have a total duration of five days, hence two days for travel and three days on spot. In terms of the amount of the costs of stay to be paid Christina Armutlieva reminded the Steering Committee members that based on the information provided in the Guidelines for Use of the Grant the La MANCHE institutions should act in compliance with their institution's policy and by taking into account the cost of living in the country in which the mobility takes place. In terms of the institutions' internal policies the project manager informed the Steering Committee members that all La MANCHE partners will be requested to submit detailed information on the usual remuneration policies being applied. It is essential that this type of information is provided for every member of the La MANCHE teams at institutional level. Any personal information will be dealt with great sense of confidence on the side of the project lead organization.

At the end of the online meeting all partners present were invited to share their comments and remarks or to ask questions. Corinne Stewart suggested helping the IUC team during the first day of the meeting when project administration and management issues will be discussed. She would contribute to this part of the meeting by bringing in her knowledge and experience with Tempus projects. Christina Armutlieva greeted the idea and thanked Corinne in advance for her contribution. Ruben thanked the project manager for the information provided and suggested that partners should stay in touch through email and skype for the rest of the time before the meeting. Christina Armutlieva thanked the partners for their time and participation in the online Steering Committee meeting.