



2018

A Guidebook for the installation of European Project Design and Management Units in the South Mediterranean Region in the framework of the EuNIT project



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This guidebook is developed and validated by all members of the EuNIT consortium. It is based on the needs analysis, the observations performed by the officials of the Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) of the partner countries to the EU project design and management units in the HEIs of the Program countries, and the training sessions which are organized in the HEIs of the Program countries. The guidebook is one of the most important deliverables of the EuNIT project "EU project design and management unit installation in the South Mediterranean region", 5733522-EPP-1-2016-1-FR-EPPKA2-JP.

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Word from the Editorial Board

With the exponential advances and developments in the world at the scientific and technological levels, South Mediterranean universities are facing the challenge of coping with these rapid developments with the objective of meeting the expectations of modern society while reinforcing their actions at the international level. For this purpose, large number of EU funded projects have been awarded and implemented in the South Mediterranean region. However, the effective implementation of such EU projects requires a designated European project design and management units located in the partner countries' HEIs.

To help Mediterranean universities in effectively managing and implementing EU funded projects, Aix-Marseille University, with the support of the EuNIT European and Mediterranean partners, initiated a project aimed at improving the level of involvement of Southern Mediterranean Universities in EU funded projects. This is the Erasmus+ project "EU project design and management unit installation in the South Mediterranean region-EuNIT", co-financed by the European Commission.

These specifications are the result of work and activities conducted as part of the EuNIT project. It presents the main guidelines for creating EU project design and management units to support initiating, monitoring and managing EU-funded projects in South Mediterranean universities. This guidebook will be used internally in order to facilitate setting up EU project design and management units in Partner Country HEIs. It is also intended for use by any south Mediterranean institution (other than the EuNIT partners) official wishing to pursue an effective

approach aimed at strengthening the institution's participation in European projects and programs.

All the statements made in this document come from the different partners of the EuNIT project, and do not reflect the views of the European Commission.

Finally, the Editorial Board sends its heartfelt thanks to all the managers of the EuNIT partner institutions, as well as to all the Jordanian, Libyan, Lebanese and European collaborators.

Haythem Bany Salameh
Yarmouk University, Jordan

Word from the National Erasmus+ Office-Jordan

The National Erasmus+ Office in Jordan is delighted to shed the light on the benefit and impact of EuNIT project as one of CBHE projects funded by the Erasmus+ programme of the EU, among other actions, and we are thankful to the consortium for giving us this opportunity. The Erasmus+ program, which is funded by the European Union, is of great benefit to the Partner Countries. Since Erasmus+ is the EU cooperation programme that supports projects, partnerships, mobility and policy dialogue in education, training, youth and sport, the Erasmus+ programme offers a number of opportunities for higher education institutions, staff and students from across the world. Through its support to this program, the EU is significantly contributing to the development of the higher education sector in Jordan and many other countries. The European Union has funded 91 cooperation projects in which Jordan participated in during the past 15 years: 54 of these projects are under Tempus, and 37 under the Erasmus+ CBHE action. Furthermore, Jordan is grant holder in 16 of these projects. Jordan's share of the funds for implementing these projects exceeds 38 million Euros. Moreover, the International Credit Mobility scheme that was established under Erasmus+ provided exchange opportunities to more than 3,000 students and staff members during 2015-2018 to move between Jordan and the EU for study, training or teaching purposes. Jordan has received a total of 10.1 million Euros of (ICM) budget over that period for 277 partnerships selected involving Jordan, 111 partnerships of which are for 2018. Erasmus+ projects are gaining very high reputation. There is a lot of participation and competition, and the quality of submitted proposals is high. In order to participate in these cooperation projects, HEIs must have dedicated and well-trained staff with skills in project design and management. Due to challenges facing

HEIs in preparing projects' proposals, they often fail to obtain funding for their project ideas. The EuNIT addresses this matter by implementing number of activities to equip the staff in Jordan and other partner countries with the skill set needed for these purposes. In order for HEIs in project partner countries, Jordan, Lebanon and Libya, to increase their participation in EU initiatives and international cooperation projects and benefit from opportunities available to them, they require expertise in project design and management. EuNIT aims to benefit the HEIs with a skill-set that will empower their staff to run an EU project design and management unit and how to manage cooperation and research projects in their HEI. With an operational EU project design and management team in hand; HEIs should be able to develop international projects that target priority areas within their HEIs, engaging and exchanging good practices region-wide and with European partners, therefore reaping benefits for the HEI community. Hence, potentially contribute to the modernization and development of higher education institutions on the targeted partner countries. This is in line with the objectives of the Erasmus+ program and the Erasmus+ office.

We take this opportunity to express our sincere thanks and appreciation to the European Commission and we look forward to strengthening further the collaboration between Jordanian higher education institutions and their European counterparts, through the Erasmus+ and other future programs in higher education and scientific research.

Prof. Ahmad Abu El-Haija

Director, National Erasmus+ Office- Jordan

Preface

The developed guidebook provides the operational and administrative (structural) guidelines to install a European project design and management unit in a Higher Education Institution (HEI) of the Partner Countries. Specifically, this guidebook defines procedures for installing and running the units, resources required in terms of staff and finance, the role of staff members, a sustainability plan for unit activities, and good practices applied in similar EU universities' units. Such units will be responsible for setting up, managing and monitoring international projects within South Mediterranean universities and research institutes. The units represent an important deliverable of the EuNIT project, co-funded by the European program, Erasmus+.

The different activities leading up to this deliverable are part of the Work package "Preparation", whose leader is Yarmouk University (YU). The guidebook is therefore based on:

- The needs analysis report, which was prepared by YU and AMU and validated by all partners. In the need analysis report, the partners identified causes and impacts of the ineffective involvement of Mediterranean universities in EU projects. It also discusses the needs of Mediterranean universities in terms of applying for, implementing and effectively managing international EU projects;
- The observation visits of project design and management units in Program country HEIs by Partner Country HEI officials (each ran over 5 days). The observation visits were used as a foundation on which University officials (after their professional placements in partner countries) submitted

observation reports. These different visits, which took place in 2017, were an opportunity for Mediterranean partners to get a closer look at already-existing European project management units. The observation visits have provided two University officials from each Partner HEI the opportunity to gain knowledge about the existing EU unit in a particular European HEI, its operations, its services and the roles of its members. Consequently, the officials have an opportunity to meet and discuss relevant issues with the respective EU Officials and individuals who are involved in EU units. Subsequently, the submitted reports of the corresponding observation visits by the Partner HEIs have contributed to the development of the Guidebook.

- University officials from Partner Country HEIs were involved in the development of this guidebook for setting up EU project design and management units in their institutions.

The guidebook will be widely distributed nationally in each partner country involved in the EuNIT project after the implementation of the unit in the involved HEIs (second phase of the development- Work Package 3). Furthermore, it will be available as a reference to assist and to support the officials of HEIs, Universities and research centers of the South Mediterranean region in installing such a unit in their respective institutions i.e., to guide, help, review, manage and monitor EU funded projects. This document was validated by all the partners of EuNIT in June 2018. The EuNIT international and EU project consortium expresses its gratitude to the European Commission for the financial support provided to the Erasmus+ project whose activities led to the completion of this guidebook. This document can be viewed and downloaded from the EuNIT project website: <https://www.eunitproject.eu/>.

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EUNIT PROJECT OVERVIEW

The ERASMUS+ project “European project design and management In the South Mediterranean region (EuNIT)” is a European project that aims, over 3 years (2016-2019), to increase international activity in Higher Education Institutions (HEI) in the Southern Mediterranean region. This project involves 16 partners and 6 associated partners from Croatia, France, Italy, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya and Spain and is co-financed by the Erasmus+ program with a budget of 1M Euros. The objective of the EuNIT project is to implement EU project design and management units in the involved partner universities to contribute to the internationalization of HEIs in Jordan, Lebanon and Libya, to develop sustainable international and regional partnerships, and to encourage the creation of networks which enable the HEIs to exchange good practices in EU project design and management units as well as to forge south-south collaboration. Consequently, the project will in turn contribute to the modernization and development of systems of HEIs in the partner countries and the region. The five main contributions of the EuNIT project are:

1) Training the future trainers to develop EU project design and management units

In the framework of the EuNIT project, a team of 24 staff were selected from eight partner universities in Jordan, Libya and Lebanon (three per university).

The selected personnel will be equipped with necessary theoretical and practical skills, the expertise and resources to help in installing and running successfully EU project design and management units in their institutions. In this context, cooperation training sessions, research training sessions as well as practical placements were organized. Consequently, the acquired knowledge will be transferred to other colleagues by performing internal/local and external (national and regional) training sessions which respond to the needs of HEIs in the region.

2) Development of online courses on EU project management

The EuNIT project will develop innovative tools such as Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCS) available to everyone interested in European project management and make them accessible through e-learning platforms. The MOOCS will be based on the recorded training sessions which are developed according to the needs of the involved HEIs from the partner countries.

3) Creation of a regional network of HEIs

In the framework of the EuNIT project, a regional network will be formed by the eight EU Project design and management units in order to raise awareness about the EU Units' activities, to support the participation of South Mediterranean HEIs in European projects, to exchange good practices and experience in project design and management units as well as to perform training sessions to the

individuals whose HEIs are interested in installing such a unit. Besides, the HEIs of the region will be encouraged to join the created regional network. As a result, HEIs in the concerned countries should become more independent in designing and managing EU projects, be able to increase the number of the submitted EU projects that respond to their needs in terms of developing and modernizing their HEIs and to achieve sustainable international partnerships.

4) Development of a guidebook for unit installation

A guidebook for the installation of European project design and management units in the South Mediterranean universities will be developed during the span of the EuNIT project. It will guide and help each university to install and run its own unit.

5) Creation of units in the partner country universities

By the end of the EuNIT project, the involved South Mediterranean universities will create their EU project Design and management units based on the developed Guidebook and through several activities.

The EuNIT project is realized with the help of European professionals experienced in implementing, managing and running international projects. These professionals accompany the units' teams in the involved south Mediterranean universities over the span of the project in the definition of the missions and in

running the EU project design and management units. As part of the dissemination activities of the project's results, the personnel who were trained on various aspects of EU programs will perform internal information/training sessions (in their universities) as well as external information/training sessions to the staff of the South Mediterranean universities that are not partners of the EuNIT project and are interested in installing/implementing European project design and management units.

Finally, the EuNIT project, with the support of the different partners, has an objective to develop and to disseminate the good practices in implementing and running the installed/created project design and management units in the interested universities located in the South Mediterranean region, particularly the universities that are not members of the EuNIT consortium. Actually, the developed guidebook will be widely disseminated nationwide (i.e. in the partner countries of the involved universities) in order to promote and to encourage the setting-up of such units in other Mediterranean universities. A second objective of the EuNIT project is to provide the concerned actors in the involved and interested universities with recommendations to encourage and to strengthen their participation in international European programs and to respond effectively and efficiently to the corresponding EU initiatives, calls and proposals .

EuNIT Consortium:

1. Tethys, Aix-Marseille University, **France**
2. UNIMED, **Italy**
3. University of Nice Sophia Antipolis, **France**
4. University of Split, **Croatia**
5. University of Messina, **Italy**
6. University La Sapienza of Rome, **Italy**
7. University of Barcelona, **Spain**
8. University of Santiago de Compostela, **Spain**
9. Princess Sumaya University for Technology, **Jordan**
10. University of Yarmouk, **Jordan**
11. University of Antonine, **Lebanon**
12. University of Balamand, **Lebanon**
13. University of Saint Joseph, **Lebanon**
14. University of Misurata, **Libya**
15. University of Zawia, **Libya**
16. University of Tripoli, **Libya**

CONTEXT

The south Mediterranean universities believe in the significant role of international cooperation in the development of their scientific research and higher education system, and consequently their economic and social growth. Based on this fact, south Mediterranean universities have undertaken several actions aimed at strengthening the participation of their scientific community in international cooperation programs.

In order to further strengthen this cooperation, in particular improving the effectiveness of the implementation of European projects and increasing the South Mediterranean participation, the need to set up dedicated EU project design and management units within the universities of this region has been highlighted. Such units will have an impact on the development of research programs as well as the development of effective training and mobility programs.

Given the challenge of integrating south Mediterranean countries into the European Research and higher education system, interested universities are encouraged to acquire the required knowledge and skills to set-up and install efficient and specialized units in the design and management of international EU projects. These units will contribute to the improvement, enthusiasm, creativity and excellence of research and training while benefiting the most from the funding programs made available by the European Commission.

THE OBJECTIVES OF THE PROJECT DESIGN AND MANAGEMENT UNIT

The European project design and management unit provides support to the faculties' members and staff to respond effectively and efficiently to EU proposals, calls and initiatives as well as to prepare, manage and monitor a project. Having equipped a team of personnel with the needed expertise, skills and tools, the HEI/university will set-up an EU unit to achieve the maximum possible benefits and consequently, to broaden its international reach. The objectives of the unit are:

- Provide awareness to the university community about the importance of participating in EU projects;
- Encourage the university community, to respond to EU calls, initiatives and programs;
- Disseminate call for proposals and associated information to all faculty and staff members within the University;
- Increase the visibility of the University's research structures;
- Establish a permanent communication channel with all university members (teachers-researchers);
- Provide services to support the faculties' members who are, or who will be involved in EU projects by putting in place tools and procedures to support the design and management of projects and thus ensuring the smooth running and implementation of projects;
- Provide administrative support for researchers and project coordinators;
- Provide recommendations to the University about a particular international network i.e., "to join or not to join";
- Introduce new areas of cooperation;

- Prepare Erasmus+ EU and international projects;
- Manage EU mobility projects (administratively and financially).
- Organize and perform training sessions on European project design and management to University staff.

THE MISSIONS & ACTIONS OF THE PROJECT DESIGN & MANAGEMENT UNIT

The main missions of the project design and management unit are as follows:

- Provide information to and raise the awareness of the University community on the available funding opportunities and encourage their participation in cooperation programs;
- Provide support for proposal writing and preparation of cooperation projects;
- Provide support to project monitoring and management;
- Ensure continuous update of staff knowledge and awareness of European project guidelines and procedures.

Each of these missions results in implementing a set of actions to effectively realize the aforementioned unit's objectives.

MISSION I: INFORMATION AND AWARENESS

To effectively perform this mission, the unit should adopt the following actions and implement the associated activities of each action:

Action 1: Information and Awareness on European Programs

Objectives of this action:

- Inform the University academic community in a timely manner about funding opportunities in European cooperation/mobility/research programs;
- Encourage faculty members to collaborate with European partners;
- Increase the University interests in developing and applying for European funding opportunities (Erasmus+, H2020, etc.).
- Motivate the University community on the profits and advantages achieved by participating in European programs and projects.

Activities associated with this action:

- Ensure full awareness and keep an eye on the calls for proposals of international European programs;
- Develop summary sheets on these calls;
- Organize information sessions on open calls for proposals;
- Disseminate information by official means, on the web (units' website, social networks, etc.) and via e-mails to research professors working on themes targeted by open calls;
- Update continuously the published information regarding EU funding opportunities on the portal/website of the unit.

Action 2: Information on the skills of the University**Objectives:**

Increase the visibility of the information regarding the University's skills, competencies, activities, needs and research structures in order to join new consortia and apply for new projects.

Activities:

- Post information about the research structures, capacity and skills of the University via a dedicated unit website (to be used for advanced search function by themes ...);
- Develop documents presenting the University's research skills and structures for different themes;
- Disseminate, via professional social networks and other websites, fact sheets developed to express University interest to join international EU consortia;
- Disseminate periodically an updated University information sheet to the University's partners; to draw their attention to the University interests in participating in the calls for projects.

MISSION II: SUPPORT PROJECT PROPOSALS WRITING AND PREPARATION**Action 1: Continuous training on EU project development**

Objectives:

- Provide support to any member of the University willing to participate in the EU calls for proposals (steps and tips of how to apply to EU projects);

Activities:

- Organize training sessions for research professors and also students in higher education;
- Invite national experts, EU experts and EU grant beneficiaries (professors/researchers from the EU partner universities) to facilitate these sessions and allow a direct exchange of experiences and good practices with program countries.

Action 2: Generating Project Ideas and identification of motivated teacher/researchers in the University**Objectives**

Reach the most motivated teacher/researchers faculty members that have the potential to develop project ideas within the University.

Activities:

- Post well-designed questionnaires online which will allow to identify project ideas and project initiators within the University
- Sort and analyze the information received;
- Organize one-to-one meetings with idea holders to discuss the feasibility of the idea and see how it responds to the call for certain proposals;
- Help researchers to identify the right call for proposals for their ideas.

Action 3: Identifying skills to respond to partner searches**Goal:**

Identify skills within the University to respond to partner research from other institutions with the objective of applying to European projects.

Activities:

- Identify, in the unit database, skills that can respond to the search for a partner from a EU consortium;
- Actively disseminate information to identified skills;

- Organize meetings to discuss the possibility of responding to any EU partner search.

Action 4: Accompanying the research and development of project proposals

Goal:

Assist project idea holders in all stages of writing, developing, and submitting their project proposals: from the idea to the submission of the project proposal.

Activities:

- Assist professors/researchers in turning their ideas into project proposals;
- Provide them with all necessary support in building up consortia;
- Assist them in collecting information to the setting up of their proposals;
- Assist them in distributing the tasks between the consortium members;
- Assist them in planning activities over time;
- Assist them in the preparation of applications: administrative, financial and technical documents and arrangements;
- Review and finalize project proposals;
- Ensure the submitting of project proposals.

Action 5: Ensuring the skills identified when building project proposals

Goal:

Assist in identifying the right personnel/department with needed skills to respond well to partner search.

Activities:

- Put the initiating partners (project coordinators) in touch with the identified University staff;
- Orient the University staff towards the information essential to the editing of the proposals;
- Assist them in choosing their roles;
- Assist them in completing the forms required by the proposal coordinators;
- Submit administrative documents to the proposal coordinators.

MISSION III: PROJECT MONITORING AND ADMINISTRATIVE/FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

Goal:

Assist project leaders in the coordination and implementation of projects.

Activities:

- Assist in project implementation and participate in project coordination;
- Ensure the administrative management of the project (read the contract, set up procedures, use of guideline documents, assist in drafting activity reports, etc);
- Ensure periodical financial management (budget monitoring, financial reporting), final reporting, and support any auditing by the European Commission.

MISSION IV: UPGRADING STAFF KNOWLEDGE ON EUROPEAN PROJECT GUIDELINES

Goal:

Have well-trained and informed staff on the latest developments in cooperation European projects and programs as well as on the implementation of procedures and guidelines of projects.

Activities:

- Participate in national Erasmus+ and H2020 information days on new programs and open calls for proposals;
- Participate in training sessions nationally and internationally;
- Participate in meetings of promoters organized by the European Commission;
- Have all necessary documentation and guidelines to effectively implement the EU funded projects (e.g., eligible costs, travel cost calculation, etc.).

THE STRUCTURE AND ORGANIZATION OF THE MANAGEMENT UNIT

ORGANIZATIONAL CHART

In order to achieve its objectives and accomplish its missions, the unit can be attached to the Vice Presidency in charge of Scientific Research and Cooperation (in case the University has no entity that is designated for managing international cooperation), or integrated within an already existing entity that is designated for managing international cooperation in the University (e.g., International Cooperation Offices). Since different universities have different structures, regulations and rules; each University can decide on how to integrate this unit within its internal structure in order to ensure that the activities of the unit along with other university's activities are managed appropriately. This will strengthen the unit's missions, and achieve a coherent development plan in line with the university's strategy for research and cooperation.

The unit should be composed of a number of staff members at full time or part time basis. The unit can be headed by a director (or coordinator) to supervise the staff members who are directly working on the managed projects. Each project is assigned to a group of two or more members of the EU unit. Each group is responsible to manage the project.

Since the interested universities in setting-up an European project design and management unit have different organizational structures, a suggestion to organize such unit within the university's structure is introduced in the paragraph below and is illustrated in Figure 1.

The structure of the EU cooperation unit should be divided into two main sub-units: (1) Research and Cooperation Programs sub-unit and (2) Cooperative Education Programs sub-unit. The research and cooperation sub-unit has two divisions. First, the International agreement unit, aims at preparing and finalizing international agreements based on its goals for the students of the University and all staff, whereas the second division is steered towards research-oriented types of projects. The cooperative education programs sub-unit consists of three divisions. The first division is the Erasmus+ mobility division that aims to facilitate the procedures of students and staff mobility from and to the University. The second division is the EU capacity-building cooperative projects division which aims to implement and provide assistance to EU capacity-building projects in the University. The third division is the joint educational programs division, which is responsible for implementation of the joint EU academic programs.

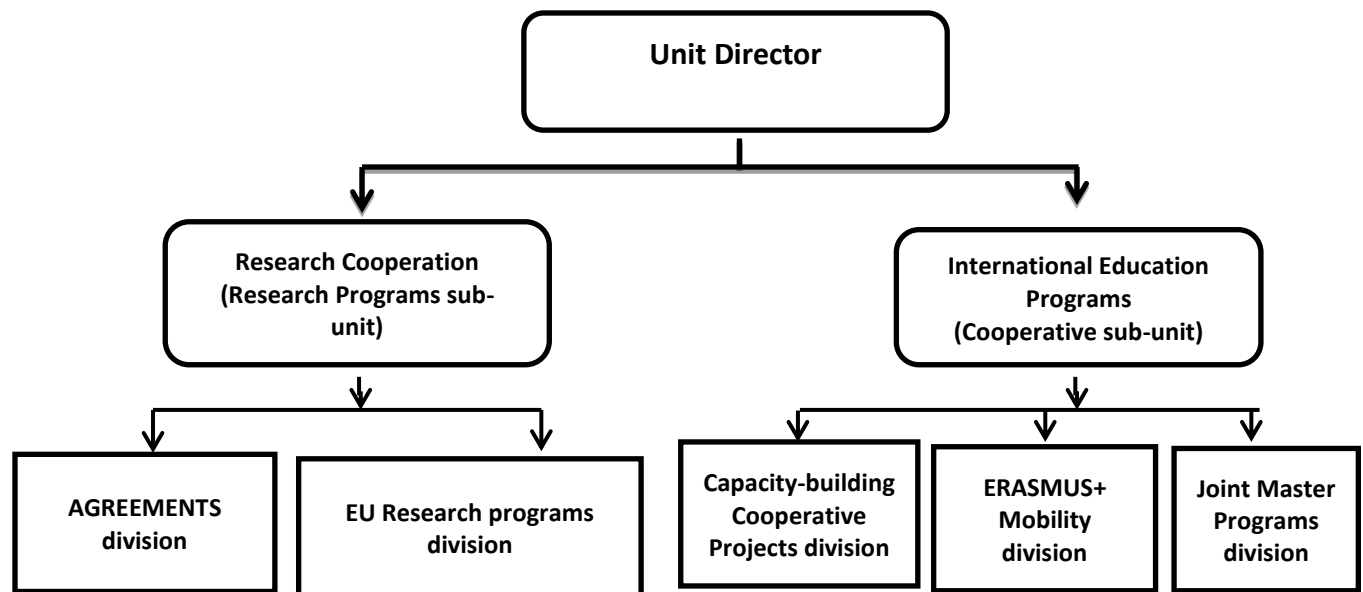


Figure 1: A suggestion of a hierarchical structure to set-up an e European project design and management unit.

INTERNAL ORGANIZATION OF THE UNIT

The unit will accomplish its missions by relying on team work coordinated by a director (coordinator). Its staff should have the required qualifications to manage and run the unit. The qualifications are presented in the human resources' section of this guidebook (page 30). It should be highlighted that each staff of the Unit is capable of carrying out the administrative and financial responsibilities of managing a project.

ROLE AND RELATIONSHIP OF THE UNIT WITH UNIVERSITY ADMINISTRATION AND THIRD PARTIES

Being a Common Service, the project design and management unit will act as an internal information hub for all information on calls for projects and rules for participation in cooperation/research/mobility programs. The unit will also play this role externally when it comes to information on skills, research, and existing capacity in the University.

In carrying out its day-to-day functions, the unit will work on coordinating its efforts with the different departments and services at the University such as the services of Scientific Research, Cooperation, Academic Affairs, IT and Financial Services. It is also responsible with the help of the designated department (if any) in the University, for collaborating at a national level with the national ministry of higher education, the existing network of universities as the one that will be developed under the framework of the EuNIT project.

A good practice that can be of benefit for both cooperation and research departments is the fact that the members of each department (at least the director of the unit) should be in contact with the members of the various faculties of the

University and their laboratories in order to understand their needs, their competences and consequently encourage them to submit applications to European projects while providing the needed support and help. This will greatly help the team to disseminate the right calls for proposals to the appropriate members.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF EACH DIVISION OF THE UNIT

Research Projects Department

- Management of Research projects that are financed by the European Commission.
- Support the financial management (budget control, expense payments, and financial reports) for the Research projects, in accordance with the provided guidelines.
- Support the preparation of the project application (application forms and budget).
- Design and management of the research information system that is related to the units' activities. If the stated responsibility in the University is under the control of another department/center, upon receiving a request, the unit will contact the corresponding faculties/departments and consequently, the appropriate faculties' members.

- Production and dissemination of information regarding European research grant calls and programs.
- Assessment of incoming research personnel to the University with the help of the hosted faculty or research center.
- Provision of assessment to research units on guidelines, working procedures and the use of research databases.
- Delivery of reports and studies associated with the different projects using the database.
- Submitting an annual report about the activities of the unit.
- Maintaining strong relations with EU institutions with the help of other designated entities in the University.
- Prepare the agreements with European partners.

EU Education and Mobility Project's Department

- Coordinate International Credit Mobility programs (Erasmus+, Bilateral...).
- Coordinate Joint programs (Erasmus+ Capacity Building, Bilateral agreements...).
- Enquiring periodic project assessment from the corresponding faculty/department, in which the joint program is implemented.

- Support to the University administration, teaching staff, administrative units and services in the assessment of different areas of international interest.
- Support to centers, faculties and departments in matters relating to the arrangement of student exchange programs and European learning agreements.
- Coordinate the administrative and financial aspects of European grants, programs and projects.
- Responsible for representing the University in activities conducted with EU commission and partners that are related to the mission of the unit without interfering with the responsibilities of other entities inside the University.
- Disseminate information about EU cooperative and educational projects
- Assume the responsibility of economic management (budget control, expense payments) of EU projects
- Elaboration of economic reports of the cooperative projects.
- Production and publication of information regarding capacity-building and mobility grant calls.

- Delivery of reports and studies associated with the different projects using the units' database.
- Responsibility of the maintenance of relations with EU institutions and regional networks.
- Management of the budget for the cooperative and mobility projects, in accordance with the guidelines of the EU regulations.
- Management of incoming/outgoing students' and researchers' mobility.

THE OPERATION AND FUNCTIONING OF THE UNIT

AREAS OF COMPETENCE OF THE UNIT

The unit will provide assistance and expertise to support the University community in the development and management of all types of EU cooperation/mobility/capacity-building projects: bilateral or multilateral. Thus, the unit will support the following types of projects:

- Research and development projects and innovation;
- Mobility and training projects;
- Capacity building projects;
- Development cooperation projects.

PROPOSAL SUBMISSION AND REVIEWING PROCESS

The procedure to submit the EU project proposals includes the review of the proposals by the EU unit i.e. the proposal should be read in order to identify any required modifications to be done or any suggestions to be given. All project

proposals must be signed by the University President before they are submitted. At this point, the unit plays a role of help and support. The members of the EU unit make sure that all criteria are respected and satisfactory in order to pass the primary selection: the partnership and related documents, the form, general objectives, annexes, signatures, description of the University, the dissemination component, exploitation component, etc... Any technical components will be the responsibility of the members who are submitting the project (ex. faculty members submitting a project about a joint master program).

The preparation, the writing and the submission of a project's proposal will be performed in different stages. In this context, Figure 2 illustrates the main steps to be performed in the preparation before the writing phase begins. The main elements to be considered when the project is developed are presented in Figure 3. The steps that will be performed once the project's proposal is complete are shown in Figure 4.

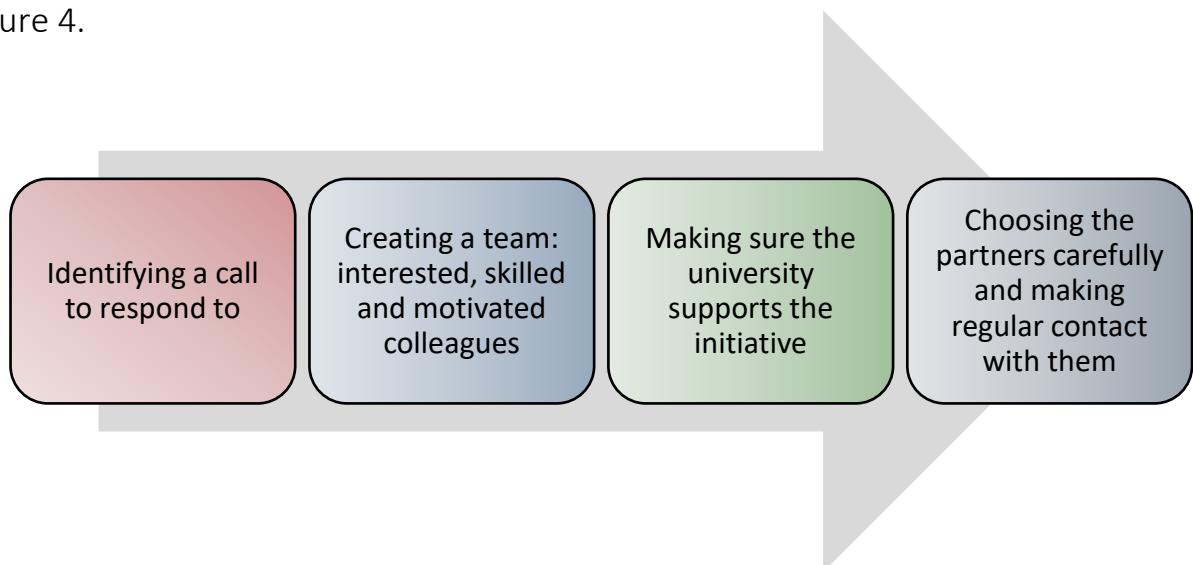


Figure 2: Main steps to identify and prepare a project’s proposal

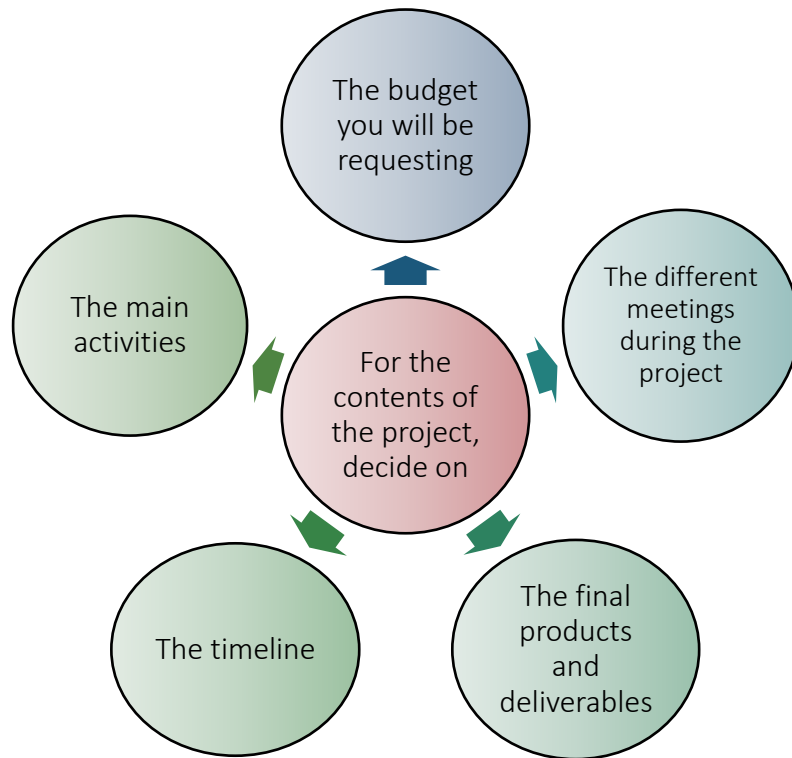


Figure 3: Main elements to be considered when a project’s proposal is developed

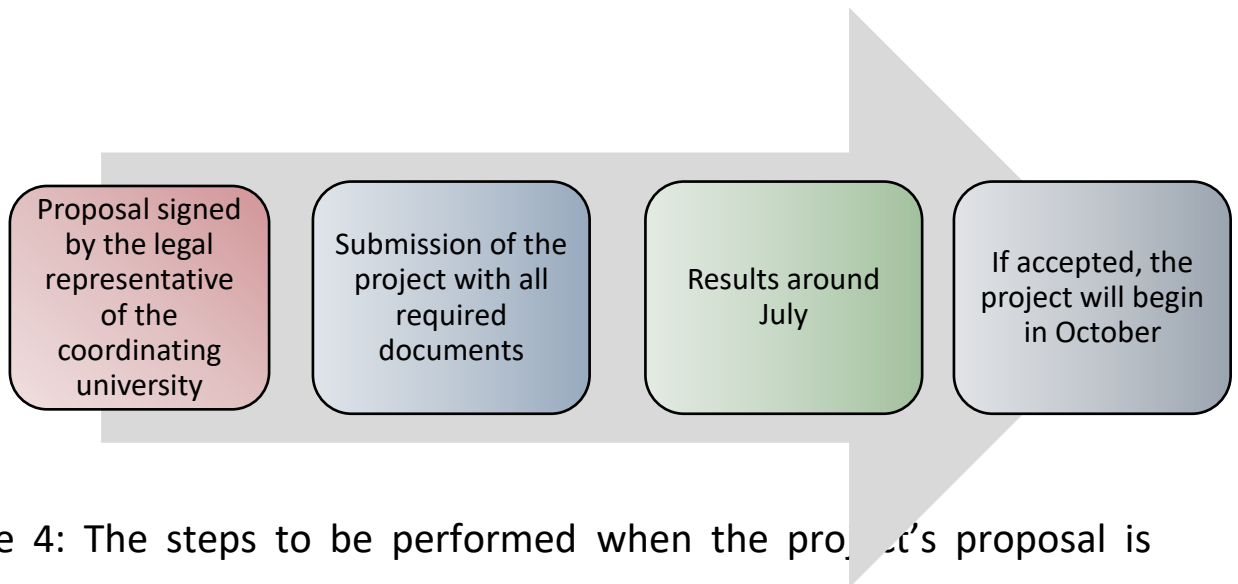


Figure 4: The steps to be performed when the project’s proposal is drafted

WORKFLOW OF GRANTED EUROPEAN PROJECTS

GRANTED PROJECT MANAGEMENT AND OPERATION IN THE UNIT

The workflow and management style is simple. The key element is to allocate designated persons from the unit to each project to help and support the faculties' members (or group(s)) involved in the preparation of the project. This group can run the project autonomously and manage it at both an administrative and financial level with the help of the project coordinator. The faculty's member (or the group, project coordinator, project contact person) involved in writing the project is responsible of managing the project technically as well as to a certain extent administratively. Thus, the project coordinator along with his team with the help of the unit will take the responsibility to complete successfully the project during its implementation.

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT OF GRANTED PROJECTS

When a project is granted to the University, a grant agreement will be signed by the involved parties, the University (represented by the President) and the European Commission.

Below are steps that should be followed once the grant agreement has been signed between the European Commission and the coordinating University:

- The agreement will be transferred to the financial service or department. The financial service will open an account specific to the project under the supervision of the EU design and management unit. Any payment from the project should be initiated by the project coordinator directed to the EU project design and management unit based on the performed/planned activities.
- The EU management unit will perform all the paper work and budget checks according to the EU grants' regulations.

- All the financial activities (expenses ...) are accomplished through the financial office in the University. For example, if the unit has to purchase certain equipment for a project, the project manager will provide all the relevant information to the unit with the appropriate project's number.
- The unit in collaboration with the financial department will validate that the amount is within the corresponding budget for that particular project and in accordance with the project proposal.
- On the University financial software, the University financial department will provide a clearance to proceed with the intended activity.
- The responsible department in the University will proceed with the purchase of the equipment.
- As soon as the responsible member receives the equipment from the company, an invoice is sent from the same company to the accounting office.
- The responsible member looks at the equipment and makes sure that all equipment is received and is in good order. Subsequently, he/she will indicate on the requested item that he/she has received the equipment.
- The financial department will proceed with the payment to the company from which the equipment is purchased. It is to be noted that the project coordinator of a particular project and the management unit should keep track of all financial aspects for comparison purposes with the financial office.

PROJECT PROGRESS MONITORING AND GOOD PRACTICES IN THE UNIT

- Meetings for the entire unit should be regularly organized. This will provide an opportunity to present/discuss new rules, policies and regulations of the

corresponding EU program, address common problems, and identify the appropriate solutions. Furthermore, these meetings will allow for an efficient learning and work environment for the unit staff.

- Each project should be assigned a minimum of two staff members to work on and to manage the same granted project. Some large projects could be assigned to three persons or more due to the large amount of work involved. This will enable a smooth continuation of the project in case a staff member is away.
- An “initial” meeting between the EU management unit, the financial department and the human resources department should be organized for the good implementation of each newly funded project
- Regular meetings should be organized for each project. This is important in order to discuss the current status of the project, the problems that are faced and are required to be tackled, the solutions to be adopted, the activities that are achieved and the activities to be performed.

NEEDED RESOURCES FOR THE PROJECT MANAGEMENT UNIT

HUMAN RESOURCES

NUMBER OF STAFF IN CHARGE OF THE UNIT:

The factors that determine the size of the unit's staff are mainly:

- The missions and activities of the unit;
- The size of the University and the number of active projects in the University.

Each staff member of the unit should be able to work with autonomy, define his/her list of tasks to be performed in the framework of a certain project, follow up his/her activities, can manage his/her work, identify his/her priorities and accomplish his/her tasks. In addition, each member should be able to manage a project or multiple projects at the same time and should be able to work on new calls to prepare new projects. The skills, expertise and competencies that are required by the staff members of the unit should be highlighted and defined in order to accomplish their work. This will be crucial at the time of recruitment or hiring staff for the unit.

REQUIRED SKILLS AND COMPETENCIES:

To effectively perform the activities and responsibilities of the unit, the staff of the units should have the following skills, expertise and competencies:

- a University academic level of a minimum of three years.
- a good proficiency of the English language and excellent writing skills (oral and written expression skills);
- a good knowledge of computer tools and software required to fulfill successfully his/her tasks (e.g., excel, word, PowerPoint, ...);

- good managerial skills in terms of communicating (easily) with the team internally (always keeps them in CC.), of sharing information and documents, of preserving the documents (archive), of sharing any financial aspect in the framework of the project (budget, expenses,..), etc...
- experience and good knowledge in international European cooperation programs, their rules, guidelines , application forms etc.;
- general knowledge of the project design methodology in response to European cooperation calls for proposals;
- the ability to administratively and financially manage the different types of European projects.

General qualities are also required, namely:

- Be honest and guarantee the confidentiality of the different projects;
- Be able to communicate easily with the public as well as external groups with whom he/she is working with;
- Be responsive to any opportunities for cooperation;
- Has interpersonal relationship skills, problem solving and critical thinking skills, and ability to analyze and synthesize;
- Has the ability and flexibility to work within a team or independently based on the nature of the managed project.

The following requirement is a plus for hiring purpose:

Has general knowledge of the activities of their University in terms of research, training, infrastructure, and existing programs. Note that this knowledge can be gained quickly for new hired individuals in the university, so, it is stated as a plus.

EQUIPMENT AND MATERIAL RESOURCES

In order to allow the unit to carry out its missions effectively, it should have a workspace equipped with office furniture, computer equipment, internet

connection, printers and means of back up storage. Other types of equipment can be identified and purchased when needed.

COMMUNICATION AND DISSEMINATION TOOLS FOR THE UNIT

Communication is one of the most important actions of the unit. It mainly concerns the three following aspects:

- Communication internally and externally about the unit itself: its missions, its activities ...;
- Internal communication about the different funding programs, calls for projects and partner searches;
- External communication around the skills, needs, competencies, and activities of the University.

The tools enabling the unit to ensure effective communication can be grouped into three different categories:

THE DIGITAL CHANNELS

1. PORTAL OF THE UNIT:

The setting up of the portal of the unit is a must for effective operation. It will serve as the main internal and external communication tool for the unit (The content of the portal should be made searchable through a search engine or similar functionality). On the one hand, the University community will be informed about new programs and funding opportunities through this portal (If possible, the information about calls and open projects can be also linked to the personal profile of each user at the University Intranet environment. In addition, those external to the University will have more visibility on the skills, capacities and activities of the University. The portal will be dedicated to:

- The collection and dissemination of international European calls for projects with their guidelines for applications, deadlines, and all associated information;

- Disseminating partner research through an interactive partner search system by theme and keywords;
 - Information on the profiles of the University community, research centers, faculties, etc;
 - The participation of the University in international European programs.
 - Calls for available mobility opportunities within the framework of ERASMUS+ Programs, the required documents, and possibility of applying through the portal.
- The portal will also include a discussion platform that will facilitate the exchange of comments, experiences and recommendations.

2. EMAIL (E-MAIL) AND MAILING LIST:

For effective and targeted internal communication, mailing lists (including academic staff list, student list, and administrative staff list) will be established for the topics related to calls for projects, urgent updates and alerts. They will be used for e-mailing calls and finding partners. In addition, an internal newsletter that is addressed to all the scientific community of the University can be sent periodically.

3. PROFESSIONAL SOCIAL NETWORKS:

The unit should seek joining the different existing EU networks and consortium. Like any user of these EU networks, the unit can use them for networking purposes and increase the visibility of the University's skills, competencies and activities which will help to attract other universities and consortia seeking new partnerships.

The unit will be able to publish the University's interest in participating in European projects on specific themes onto the social network platforms.

PUBLICATION AND DISSEMINATION MATERIAL

Among the communication tools of the unit, written documents are of great importance. Thus, the unit will have to develop and distribute the following documents:

- **Brochure of the unit:** presentation of its missions, its activities...
- **Detailed description of project funding opportunities.**
- **Newsletter:** review of the activities of the units, achievements...

These documents will also be downloadable on the portal of the unit.

EVENT ORGANIZATION

The organization and participation in certain types of events are also essential for the communication actions of the unit. These actions include:

- **Organization of seminars / information days:** the unit will be responsible of organizing these events and disseminate the agendas on its portal;
- **Organization of training seminars for researchers and PhD students:** the unit could organize such seminars with the support of national and international experts;
- **Participation in meetings and scientific events organized by the laboratories:** the unit can take part in such events for closer proximity to the researchers of its institution;
- **Participation in partnership / brokerage event events:** the unit will represent its institution in order to present its skills and activities in relation to the theme of the event;
- **Participation in seminars / national ERASMUS+ information days on cooperation programs;**
- **Participation in the activities of national networks of universities and that of the unit for assistance with editing, monitoring and project management.**

EVALUATION AND QUALITY CONTROL

In order to ensure the assessment and quality control of the activities of the unit, indicators of progress are established. The indicators will allow the unit to measure the progress of the different activities.

The proposed indicators and the evidences of which they will be measured are summarized in the following table.

Progress Indicator	Measured indicators
A unit is equipped with the skills, staff, equipment, and means necessary to fulfill its missions.	Trained staff, equipment, office tools, software tools and working papers, guide to good practices in editing proposals and performing project management
Organization and management of the unit.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Task assignment to the staff using a defined procedure; • Job description for each staff member; • Implementation of a quality approach within the unit; • Development of an applicable procedure that is supported by documentation for all unit activities to show the adequacy between practice and guidelines of the different projects.
Implementation of unit activities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Action plan established at the beginning of each year academic; • Assessment of the activities carried out towards the end of each academic year

<p>Ability to measure the achievements of the unit and the quality of provided services</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quantifying the different services offered by the unit: number of submitted proposals, number of participation in European projects, number of EU projects managed by the unit, etc... • Degrees of satisfaction of the University staff dealing with the units: (i.e., the coordinators of the different EU projects in the University), which can be measured as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Feedback and comments from staff/professors working closely with the unit through the portal; ➤ Questionnaires distributed at each event.
<p>Communication action made internally and externally of the EU project management unit.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Production and dissemination of brochures; • Operational portal; • Tracking the number of visitors to the portal; • Number of expressions of interest for participation in European programs disseminated in professional networks, with partners and national contact points. • Agenda of information days organized by the unit; • Number of meetings of the unit with the project managers of the different projects; • Number of participants in organized events by the unit.
<p>Collaborations with the by the National Erasmus+ offices national/EU networks carried out by the unit</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participation in activities organized by the National Erasmus+ offices in respective countries; • Collaboration with the national network of similar units such as the ones that will be developed as part of the EuNIT project; • Active participation of the unit in the activities of exchange of practices and knowledge envisaged within the framework of this network.

			
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 <p>Princess Sumaya University for Technology, Amman, Jordan</p>	 <p>Yarmouk University, Irbid, Jordan</p>	 <p>Antonine University, Beirut, Lebanon</p>	 <p>Balamand University, Tripoli, Lebanon</p>
 <p>Saint Joseph University, Beirut, Lebanon</p>	 <p>Misurata University, Libya</p>	 <p>Tripoli University, Libya</p>	 <p>Zawia University, Libya</p>

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