WORKSHOP EFFECTIVELY FUND INTER- AND TRANSDISCIPLINARY RESEARCH

ORGANISERS:	Task Force Link SSH with STEM, Task Force Competitive Funding and Network of Universities from the Capitals of Europe (UNICA)
PLACE:	online using Zoom
DATE:	14 October 2020 from 10:00 to 12:00 CEST

INTRODUCTION

The workshop addresses existing barriers to achieving high-quality integration of SSH in STEM-led projects under the EU funding instruments, presents proposals on how to overcome them and develops recommendations for funders. This event is jointly organised by the Task Force Link SSH with STEM, the Task Force Competitive Funding and the Network of Universities from the Capitals of Europe (UNICA) and is part of the CESAER Annual Meetings 2020, which this year takes place fully online.

BACKGROUND

Inter- and transdisciplinary research presents new opportunities for cooperation between specialists with diverse backgrounds in both the Social Sciences and Humanities (SSH) and Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) disciplines. Such engagement - bridging different subjects, methodologies and research fields - allows complex problems to be addressed from various angles simultaneously. Moreover, bringing knowledge and ideas from different disciplines within one approach can act as a catalyst for innovations and more creative solutions to address grand societal challenges, such as COVID-19 pandemic.

Despite the efforts to achieve deeper integration of SSH disciplines into the European research funding programmes, the success so far has been limited. The most recent statistics from 2017 show that the share of the overall annual budget going to SSH partners has gone up from 7% in 2016 to 8.5% in 2017. For topics flagged for SSH, the share of programme budget went up from 20% to 23% in this period. However, depending on the threshold of measurement used, only between 41% and 56% of projects with SSH involvement demonstrated levels of SSH integration considered to be 'good'.

The workshop will address the existing barriers to achieving high-quality integration of SSH in STEM-led projects under the EU framework programmes for research and innovation, present proposals how to overcome them and develop recommendations for funders.

GOALS

The goals of the workshop are to:

○ Present and discuss proposals from various universities on how to improve funding for inter- and transdisciplinary research;

○ Develop recommendations for funders how to better support inter- and transdisciplinary collaboration through EU funding instruments.

PARTICIPANTS

Any representatives of a Member of UNICA and of our Members are invited (Task Force Link SSH with STEM and Task Force Competitive Funding in particular).

PROGRAMME

All times below are local Brussels time.

Importantly, we will record all presentations of maximally 30 minutes and put them online for viewing before the workshop and only allow short interventions of maximally 5 minutes by the presenters followed by Q&A during the workshop. The Task Force Competitive Funding will analyse presentations and synthesise draft recommendations for discussion and adjustment in the second part of the workshop.

The workshop will take place from 10:00 to 12:00.

Part 1 from 10:00 to 11:00 on ideas of presenters from CESAER and UNICA on how to improve funding for inter- and transdisciplinary research moderated by Henrik Pedersen (AAU and Chair of Task Force Link SSH with STEM):

1. Presentation by Anders Kristian Munk (Aalborg University)

2. Presentation by Wendy Sonneveld (Ghent University)

3. Stimulations and drawbacks in the cooperation between SSH and STEM scientists: submission of a synergy grant application on multimodal communication by Aliyah Morgenstern (University Sorbonne Nouvelle, UNICA)

4. Financing interdisciplinary research, the challenge to go beyond institutional seed funding by Iago Otero (Interdisciplinary Centre for Mountain Research (CIRM), UNICA) and François Bussy (University of Lausanne, UNICA). Watch the video presentation here.

Part 2 from 11:00 to 12:00 contains a panel discussion on recommendations to funders moderated by a Jonathan Seckl (University of Edinburgh, UNICA):

1. Olivier Küttel (EPFL and Chair Task Force Competitive Funding)

2. David Bohmert (Secretary General)

3. Jens Kreisel (University of Luxembourg, UNICA)

4. Maryam Hansson Edalat (Stockholm University, UNICA)

5. David Budtz Pedersen (Aalborg University)