

Formal Research Projects in European Research Area: Networking for Results



Ruslan RAKHMATULLIN (presenter)

School of Business Studies

Trinity College

University of Dublin

Dublin Ireland

rakmator@tcd.ie

Professor Louis BRENNAN

School of Business Studies

Trinity College

University of Dublin

Dublin Ireland

brennaml@tcd.ie



European Investment in Formal Collaborative Projects



- Current EU Framework Programme 7 (FP7) committed to provide (over the period 2007 to 2013) a budget of 51 billion Euros to the research in the European Community States.
- The biggest component of the FP7 is Cooperation Programme (64 percent of the budget).
- European interest in formal networking funding schemes



COST - European COoperation in Science and Technology



- Under the FP7 COST received an increased budget of 210 million Euros to support its activities (up from 80 million Euros under the previous FP6 Programme).
- The COST networks (Actions) allow researchers both within Europe and from outside to cooperate on specific scientific issues.



Formal Networking Research Projects



- What are the general motives driving researchers' participation in such projects?
- Which research outputs can be attributed to participation in these projects?
- Do researchers learn *to 'network'*?

Motives to Participate (Survey 1)



- A survey of applicants for Networking funding suggested that:
 - Participation in Networking Research Projects (FNR) is generally motivated by researchers' general need to meet peers.
 - Motives driving researchers to join FNR projects depend on researchers' previous experience of FNR projects and tend to change over time.

Researcher Productivity Index



Items included in this Index:

1. International conference of high standard
2. Joint publications in high-ranked scientific journals (peer reviewed)
3. Publication of a book
4. Industrial application and Patent
5. Raised the international profile of researcher's organisation
6. Raised the international profile of researcher's own research
7. Raised the international profile of funding organisation
8. Utilisation of project results at national level
9. Influence on policy issues (at European level and/or country level)
10. Submission of proposal(s) for a new EU funded project, in particular networks of excellence (NOE)

Attainable Research Outputs (Survey 2)



- This study further suggests that project participants tend to achieve two groups of outputs:
 - (1) *commonly reported* outcomes (conferences, raised profiles of organisation, personal, and sponsor's, utilisation of project results)
 - (2) *advanced* outcomes (joint publications, publication of a book, submission of proposals for a new EU funded project, influence on policy issues)

Learning to 'Network' over time (Survey 2)



- Researcher productivity gradually improves over the time of researcher's involvement in Formal Networking Research projects.
- Researchers involved in more than one project tend to achieve overall greater results and higher productivity scores.

Impact of other factors (Survey 2)



- No statistically significant differences in the research outputs reported by senior researchers and by junior researchers.
- Researchers with a PhD tend to achieve research outputs to a greater extent than researchers without a PhD.
- Participants from the more homogeneous research domains (in terms of participation of non-academic participants) tend to report lower results in comparison with researchers from the more heterogeneous research domains who in general report the highest results on most outputs.

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School of Business Studies

Trinity College

University of Dublin

Dublin Ireland

rakmator@tcd.ie

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