How to prepare competitive project proposals in Tempus IV

Project Cycle Management: Identification & Formulation of Projects

Training Seminar in the framework of the
Tempus Meeting of National Contact Points and National Contact Offices

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EduTrain: Preparation of Project Proposals for European Higher Education Programmes
info@edu-train.eu

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- Budget

Evaluation of Project Proposals
General Information

Evaluation Process

Eligibility Check

Eligibility check is done by the EACEA and includes verification of:

- Conformity of original supporting documents with formal requirements, templates & instructions and against the data provided in the application;

- Compliance with other eligibility criteria set in the Call for Proposal (e.g. composition of the partnership, national & regional priorities, budget related thresholds)

Proposals which do not pass eligibility check will not undergo further assessment

Academic Technical & Financial Evaluation

Each proposal is assessed by two external evaluators according to predefined criteria: (2009):

- Relevance;
- Financial & Operating Capacity;
- Methodology;
- Sustainability;
- Budget Effectiveness

Eligibility: Critical Aspects

1. Original supporting documents:

- Consistency with the information provided in the application (e.g. partners names, the same project title, the same project objectives stated in partners endorsement letters, etc.)

- Conformity with formal requirements & instructions, including:

  - Templates & Forms to be used
  - Stamps & Dates
  - Persons authorized to sign the documents
  - Completeness (all required documents must be provided)

2. Eligibility of the project partnership

- Respect the minimum requirements concerning the number & origin (EU vs. Partner Country) as well as the status of institutions to be involved in the project consortia.

Note:
Individual experts must not be employed by any of the institutions included in the project partnership and their know-how/profile should be complementary to the expertise of the institutional partners!

Eligibility: Critical Aspects

Pay attention to & check:

3. Financial Requirements:

The Tempus call clearly specifies the minimum requirements concerning the budget thresholds that should be strictly respected in the project proposal (e.g. co-financing: min. 10% of the total eligible project costs, requirements on the minimum and maximum amounts of the Tempus grant)

4. National & Regional Thematic Priorities:

The project objectives must be in line with the thematic priorities for national & multi-country projects specified in the Annexes to the Tempus call;

5. The project focus & activities within the scope of the Tempus Programme:

Tempus is a Higher Education COOPERATION and not a research or a technological development programme – proposals that are entirely focused on pure research are ineligible

Note:
It does not matter how well the project has been designed if it does not fulfil the minimum eligibility criteria. The non-compliance with only **one** of the eligibility requirements will lead to the rejection of the proposal.

Eligibility: Critical Aspects

2009: Most of the rejections were due to the non-compliance with the requirements concerning the composition of the partnership

Frequent confusions or requirements that were not fulfilled:

▪ Status of the institutions to be involved: HEIs-vs. Non-HEIs;

▪ Minimum number of partners in multi-country projects;

▪ Non-inclusion of Ministries of Education in Structural Measures projects – inclusion of other ministries without obvious link instead;

▪ Different institutions named as Applicant/Coordinator – should be the same!

▪ Non-fulfilment of the requirement for the min. number of partners through multiple inclusion of the same institution but with different departments/contact persons-

➢Lack of understanding of the institutional vs. individual participation

Eligibility: Critical Aspects

Proposals which are obviously „copied", entirely or partly, will not be accepted!

What an external evaluator looks at

- **Compliance with each individual assessment criteria**

  Award and assessment criteria are defined in each year's Tempus call and should be acknowledged by the applicants - They are useful indications to which aspects attention should be paid during the proposal preparation.

- **Coherence among different sections of the project proposal**

  Evaluators check the consistency of the information provided in the application, both in relation to the narrative content of the proposal <u>and</u> the project costs.

- **Relevance of the supporting information**

  Supporting documents are used as an additional source of information on e.g.
  - Capacities & competences of the main project actors;
  - Verification of the consistency between the content of the application and objectives stated endorsed by the individual project partners

Quality of the Language & Clarity of Information – Underestimated Success Factors!

➢ It does not matter in which of the official eligible Tempus languages the proposal is submitted. What matters is:

  - the **quality of the language** (clarity & conciseness of the style writing);

  - the **quality** (preciseness) **of the information** provided in the application;

➢ Proposals which cannot be understood by external experts or in which information is unclear risk lower grades during the selection process;

➢ If information is missing the only grade evaluators can give is zero!

Quality of the Language & Clarity of Information – Underestimated Success Factors!

Implications for potential Applicants:

Proposal`s Language

Choose the language in which you feel most comfortable and in which you can best express the project idea

Educate the Evaluator!

Explain the concepts and ideas!

Be precise & specific!

Wherever possible provide facts and figures.
It is not enough to state that something will be done, but WHY, by WHOM and HOW it will be done

Avoid „patchwork" proposals

i.e. proposals in which different parts are written in different styles and/or which contain incoherent or contradictory information

Project Cycle Management

What is Project Cycle Management

Programming

Evaluation

Identification

Implementation

Formulation
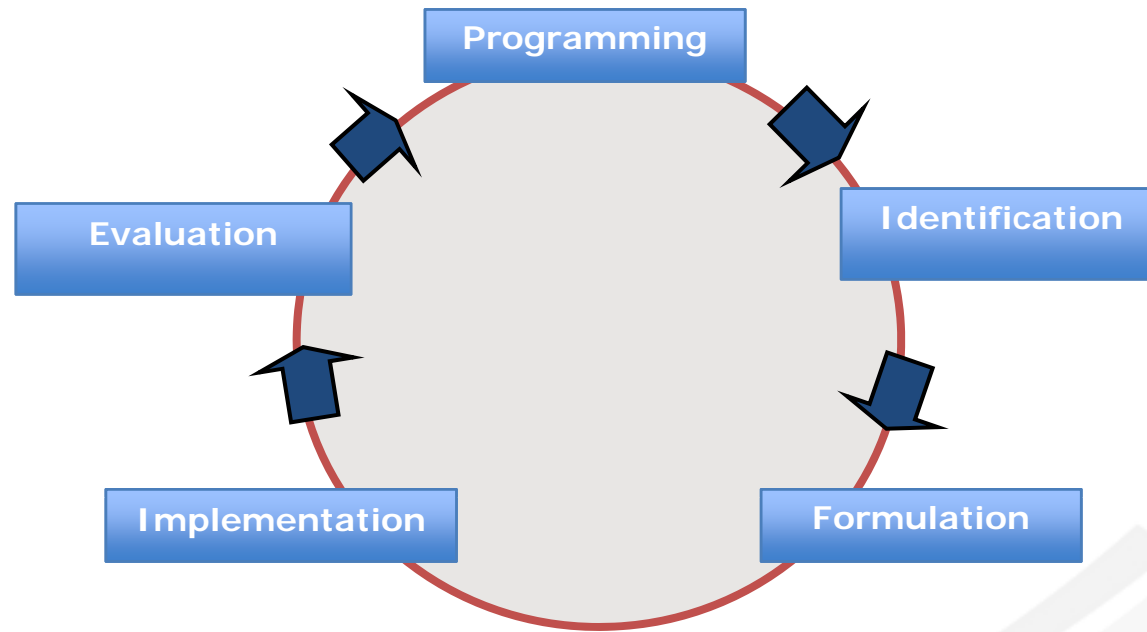
▪ Instrument applied by the European Commission in 1993 for planning and managing the EC's external assistance projects;

▪ PCM is based on five progressive cycles (operational phases) of a project;

▪ It defines the management activities and decision-making procedures to be used during each life-cycle of a project (including key tasks, roles and responsibilities, key documents and decision options).

PCM – Main Principles

Project Cycle Management:

LFA as Central Planning Concept

- uses the Logical Framework Approach as its central analytical concept to support project's planning and management;

Good Quality Documents

- requires the production of good quality documents in each phase to support well informed decision-making;

Quality Assessment

- incorporates key quality assessment criteria in each phase of the project cycle;

Stakeholders Participation & Local Ownership!

- requires active participation of stakeholders in order to promote and ensure local ownership of the project.

PCM Phases: Identification & Formulation

The Logical Framework Approach

Analysis Phase

Planning Phase

- **Stakeholder Analysis** – Identification of potential stakeholders, analysis of their interests and capacities

- **Problem Analysis** – Identification of key problems & constraints;

- **Objective Analysis**– Translating problems into objectives

- **Strategy Analysis** – Identification and selection of the most appropriate project strategy

- **Development of the Logical Framework Matrix** – Defining the project structure and testing its logic & feasibility

- **Scheduling of activities** – Determining the sequence & content of activities, assignment of responsibilities to individual project partners and preparation of the workplan

- **Resource scheduling** – Developing the input schedule and project budget

The Logical Framework Approach helps incorporate the main quality criteria into the project design

What is a Good Quality Project

A „good" project is:

Relevant:
- i.e. supportive to the overarching policy objectives of the EC (Tempus Programme) and of the participating partners;
- Based on real needs & problems of target groups & beneficiaries;

Feasible:
- The project objectives can be realistically achieved within the constraints of the operating environment and capacities of the implementing partners;

Sustainable:
- Benefits generated by the project are likely to be continued once the programme funding comes to an end.

Project Preparation

When to start

Project planning is a complex process which requires several months of intensive work, therefore the applicants should:

- Start as early as possible;

- Set a realistic time-frame for the project preparation;

- Establish methodology for the project elaboration including how individual project partners will contribute;

- Decide upon communication strategy;

- Establish WHO will write & submit the project proposal;

Note:

• As of the third Tempus Call a new electronic Application Form will be introduced.

• The applicants should familiarize themselves with the form and with the relevant instructions as early as possible

When to start

Critical Aspect: Timing for the electronic submission of the project proposal

Implications for potential Applicants

▪ Do not wait with the submission of the proposal for the last moment!

▪ Take into account potential technical problems that may occur during the submission process

▪ If the official deadline (date <u>or</u> time) for the submission of the proposal will be missed the project will not be accepted!

Where to start

Pre-Analysis – Analysis of available documents/access to existing information.

Sources of information

Tempus Call including information on National & Regional Priorities for Partner Countries; List of past & ongoing Tempus Projects, etc.

Information on the Bologna & Lisbon Processes, National development policies in the relevant sector, Higher Education Reforms, etc.

Priorities anchored within Universities` development strategies, Mission and strategy papers of NGOs to be potentially involved, labour market analyses, etc.

Implications for potential Applicants

Carefully read the specifications of the Tempus Programme – the relevant documents include important guidelines on what is possible and/or needed.

Familiarize yourself with the relevant political developments at the European, national or regional level

Get an idea about the development priorities of the potential stakeholders (universities, NGOs, enterprises)

Preparatory Analysis - Purpose

Pre-Analysis should help:

- Generate information on existing problems and constraints in the targeted sector and ideally broadly identify the general development problems and opportunities for the project

- Ensure that the project idea will be in line with the European, institutional, national, regional development priorities as well as with the priorities of the Tempus Programme

- Ensure that the project will not duplicate efforts undertaken within other Tempus projects in the region. Ideally it helps identify potential synergies with other initiatives

- Provide useful arguments/data to which explicit reference should be made in the project proposal while describing the relevance of the project in the regional/ country context

Identification Phase

Stakeholder Analysis

Stakeholder analysis aims at analysing and identifying:

- The situation of potential stakeholders;
- Who might have potential interest in the project;
- Whom to directly involve or exclude;
- Who should be addressed and by which means/activities

Steps :

* Broadly identify **general problem** to be addressed by the project

* Identify **groups** that might have interest in the potential project

* Investigate their respective **roles**, different **interests**, **relative power** & **capacity** to participate (strengths & weaknesses)

* Investigate potential **conflict** in the relationships between stakeholders

* Interpret the findings (decide about which groups should be directly involved or addressed by the project

Stakeholder Analysis

Categories of potential stakeholders:

1. Primary or main (direct) target groups

- Groups or institutions whose interest lies at the centre of the project, beneficiaries who experience the problem and/or usually users of the services to be developed by the project (e.g. universities, students, teachers, enterprises)

Groups that should be directly involved in and addressed by the project

Who are the project stakeholders?

2. Those who will **"indirectly"** or in a longer term benefit from the project or may support project's sustainability (e.g. sector ministries due to recommendations for the improvement of legislation, other universities not directly involved in the project);

Groups that do not have to be directly involved but may be addressed by dissemination activities

3. **Potential Project Partners** – those who's direct support and involvement will be needed for the achievement of the project's objectives

Identifying the Project Partnership

Stakeholder Analysis provides useful instrument for the initial identification of the project partners. The evaluation of options for partnership should take into account the relevant criteria of the Tempus programme:

Expertise:

The partners should have:

- Specific (complementary) expertise in the area the project is going to address;

- Experience in the field.

Regional Dimension & Diversity:

- The partnership should involve representative number of Higher Education Institution from participating partner countries covering broad geographical area (i.e. from marginal and large cities);

- Wherever appropriate non-academic members should be involved in the partnership

Grant Applicant:

- Investigate & ensure that the grant applicant institution has:

- Sufficient resources (human, financial, infrastructure);

- Institutional support

- (ideally) Experience in management of international projects.

Note:
Operational & technical capacity of the project partnership constitutes an important quality criterion that will be assessed during the evaluation procedure

Problem Analysis

Identification of major and real problems to which stakeholders attach high priority and wish to overcome.
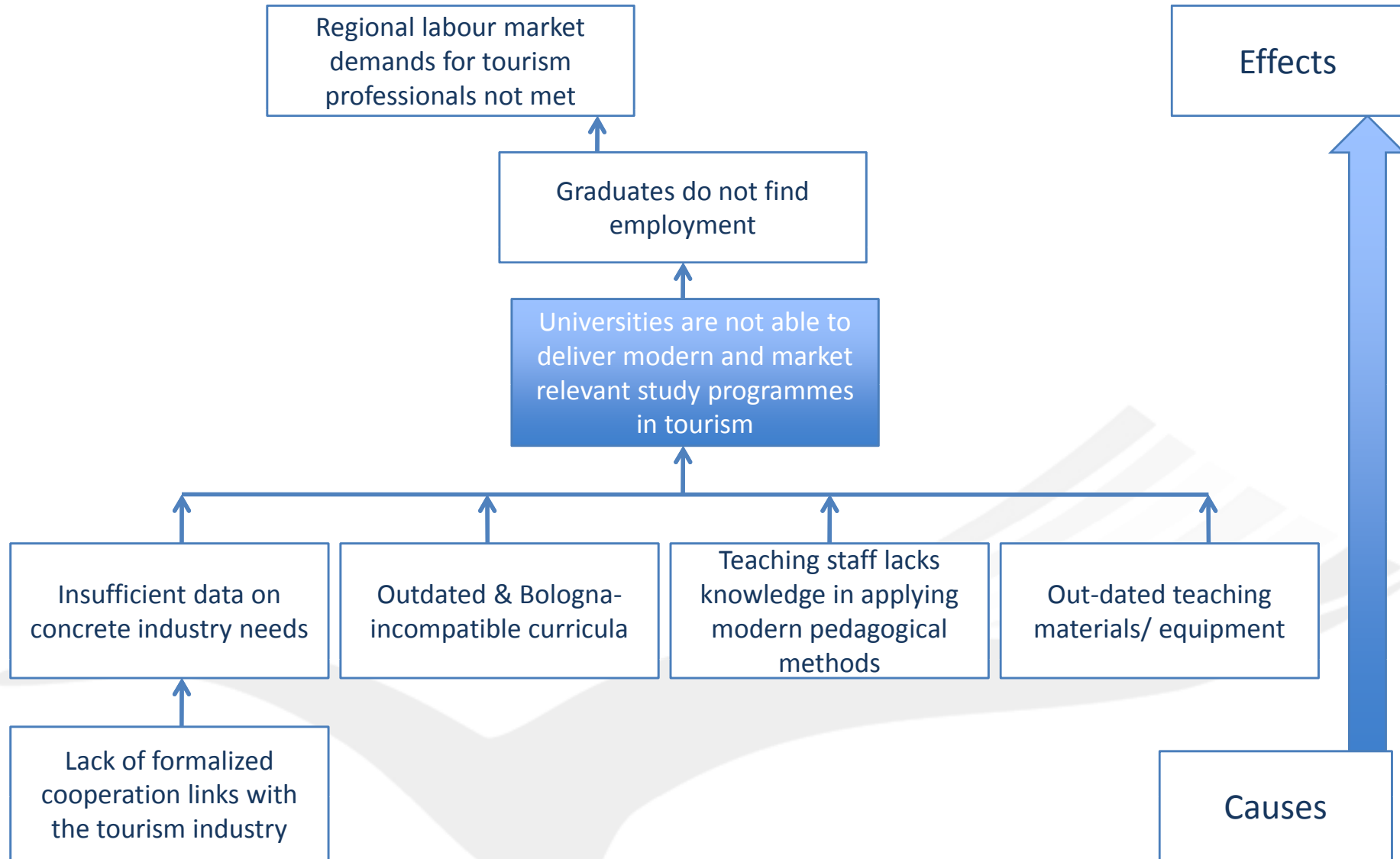
Purpose:
The problem analysis provides the basis for the identification of project objectives - it helps ensure that the project objectives and outputs will provide **relevant** solutions for **existing** and **real** problems faced by the project stakeholders.

Development of a Problem Tree

1. Open discussion of problems which stakeholders consider to be a priority and selection of an individual „starter" or „core" problem;

2. Establishment of a hierarchy of problems related to the „core problem" applying the „cause and effect" principle:

- Problems which are directly causing the starter problem are put below it;
- Problems which are direct effects of the starter problem are put above it;
- Problems which are neither an effect or cause are put at the same level.

Problem Tree – Simplified Example

Regional labour market demands for tourism professionals not met

Graduates do not find employment

Universities are not able to deliver modern and market relevant study programmes in tourism

Effects

Causes

Insufficient data on concrete industry needs

Outdated & Bologna-incompatible curricula

Teaching staff lacks knowledge in applying modern pedagogical methods

Out-dated teaching materials/ equipment

Lack of formalized cooperation links with the tourism industry

Objective Analysis

Analysis of objectives aims at:

- Description of the situation in the future once identified problems have been solved;

- Verification of the hierarchy of objectives;

- Illustration of means-ends (in contrast to causes-effects) in a diagram

Development of an Objective Tree

1. Reformulate all negative situations (problems) into positive situations that are:
•Desirable;
•Realistically achieveable;

2. Analyse the means-ends relationships to ensure their validity and completeness

3. If necessary: revise statements, add new objectives or delete objectives that do not seem suitable or necessary

Objective Tree – Simplified Example
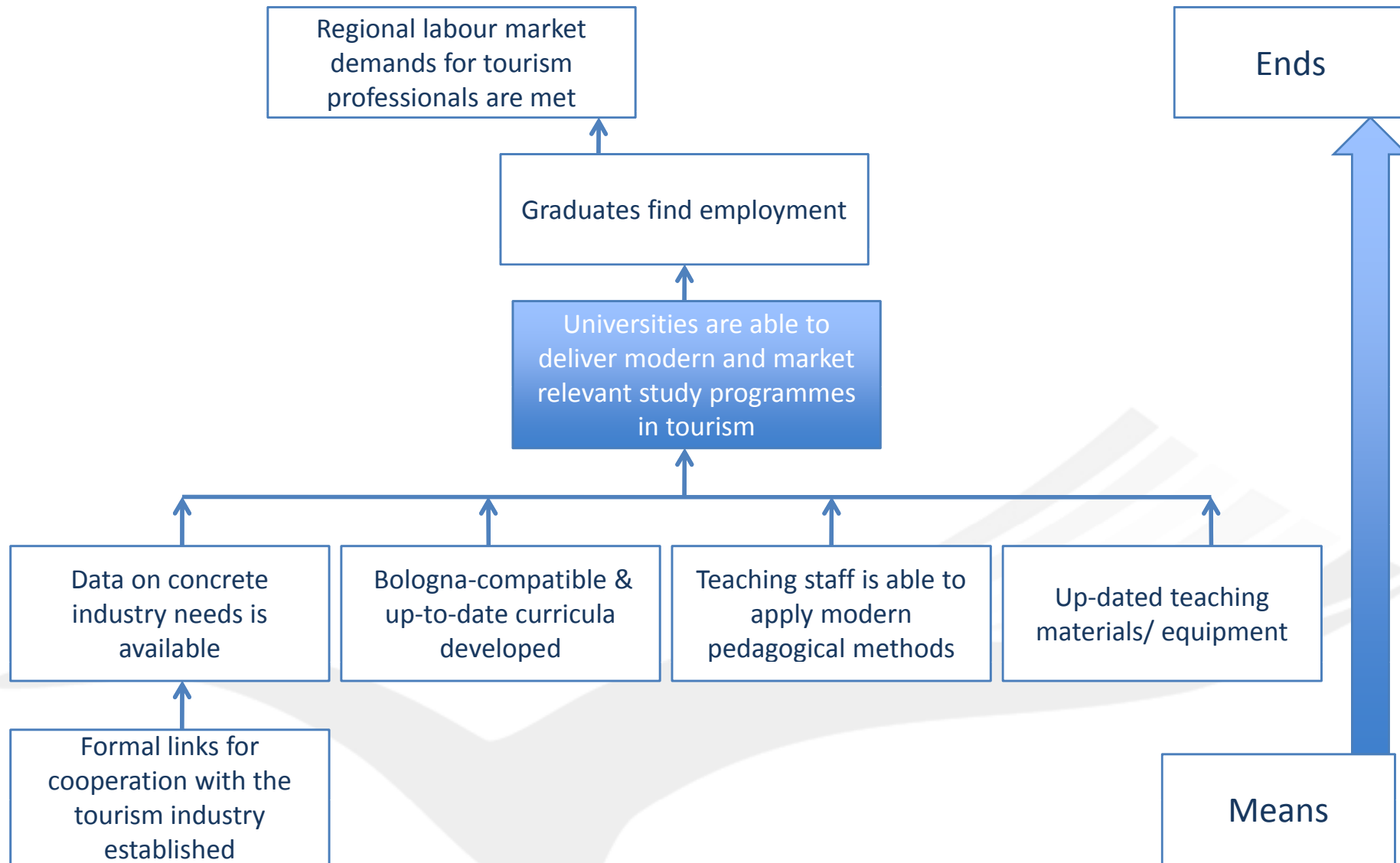
From Objective Analysis to the Project Strategy

➤ Depending on the thematic focus and scope of the project there may be many problems and thus many objectives: While choosing the project strategy prioritise the objectives: select those to which stakeholders may attach highest priority;

➤ Chose objectives that are relevant for the Tempus programme and in line with the national and regional priorities of the partner countries involved

The final stage of the Analysis Phase involves:

▪ **Selection of the strategy (ies)** that will be used in the project to achieve the desired objectives; i.e. which objectives should be included **IN** the project and which objectives should be left **OUT**;

▪ Decision on what will be the **wider and specific project objectives, output and/or outcomes**

Phase II: Formulation

Logical Framework Matrix

LFM - Purpose

Provides coherent picture of the project

The matrix:
- brings together all key components of the project;
- exposes the logic of how the project is expected to work;
- provides a concise picture of the entire project intervention.
- is often used as the main reference document of the project

Important Planning Tool

- The matrix is a tool that helps test the logic of the identified project strategy and ensure project's feasibility;
- it should be prepared at the beginning of the project formulation phase.
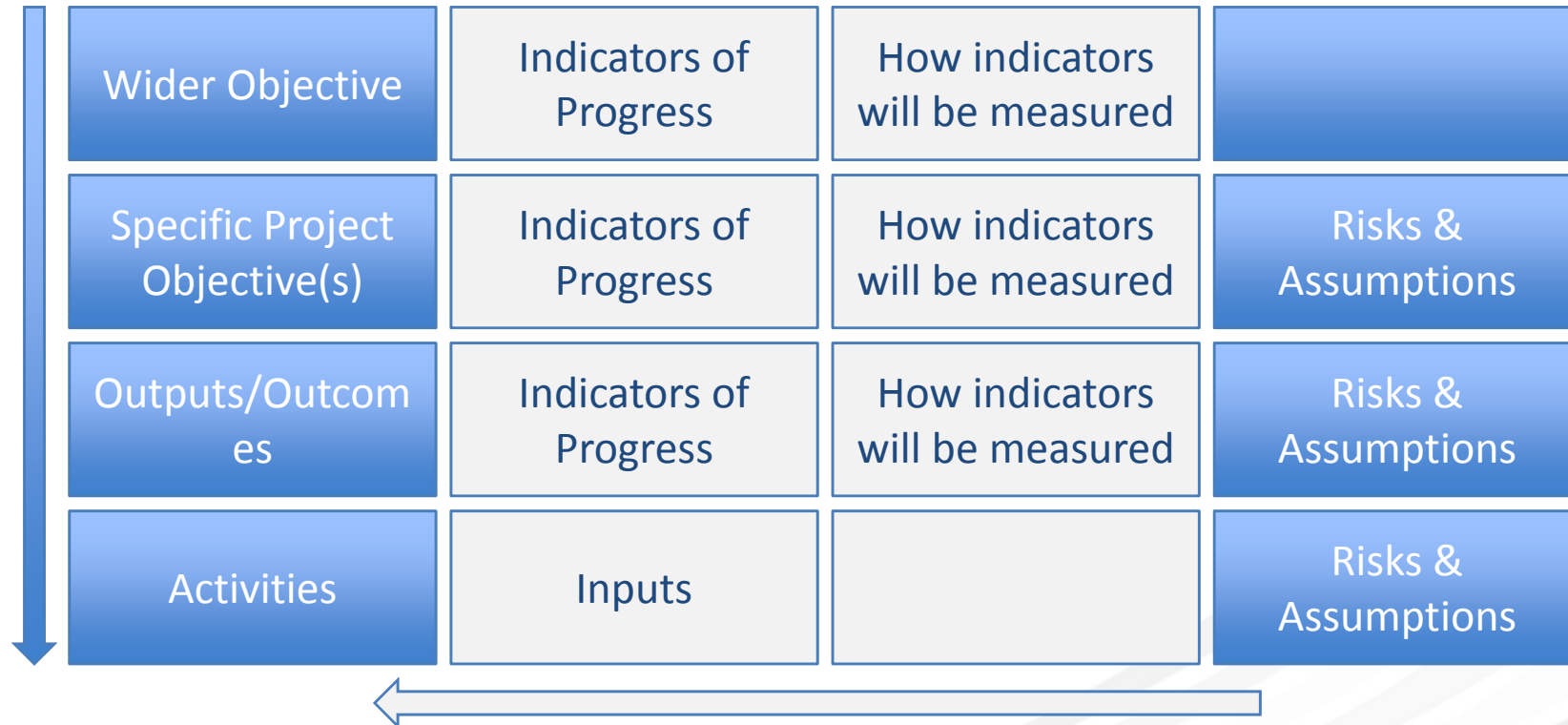
Management, Monitoring & Evaluation Tool

- During project's implementation the matrix should be kept under regular review & up-dated whenever the project changes course;
- It provides the framework for monitoring & evaluation.

The LFM constitutes a central management tool that will be used during the remaining project cycle management stages. It therefore requires thorough and careful preparation.

LFM – The Logic

Wider Objective	Indicators of Progress	How indicators will be measured	
Specific Project Objective(s)	Indicators of Progress	How indicators will be measured	Risks & Assumptions
Outputs/Outcomes	Indicators of Progress	How indicators will be measured	Risks & Assumptions
Activities	Inputs		Risks & Assumptions

Vertical Logic:
- presents what the project intends to achieve;
- determines causal relationships between objectives, outputs & activities;
- identifies assumptions & risks that may influence success or failure of the project

Horizontal Logic:
- refers to effects of the project;
- presents resources needed for project`s implementation;
- identifies key progress indicators as well as means by which the progress will be measured

LFM – Wider & Specific Project Objectives

Wider Project Objective:

•Expected „global" result or a broader aim to which the project will contribute;
-i.e. it will not be achieved by the project alone but might require the impact, e.g. from other interventions, programmes, or policies;

•Longer Term Impact
- i.e. It is not a direct or immediate result of the project - its achievement usually goes beyond the project-lifetime;
•It should refer to the priorities, specific objectives and themes of the Tempus Programme

Specific Project Objective(s)

•Intermediate or direct result of the project;
•It defines the benefits as a result of utilising programme's resources
•Should be in line with the objectives & themes of the Tempus Programme and with the national/regional priorities of the involved partner countries.
•Should be realistic & time-bound.

Example:

Wider Project Objective:

„Improved students employability & strengthened capacity of Central Asian Universities in meeting regional labour market demands for tourism professionals"

Specific Project Objective:

„Modernized study programmes through the development of a Master and Bachelor Programme in Tourism at five Central Asian Universities according to the market needs by 20XX

LFM – Outputs & Outcomes

Outputs & Outcomes

▪Results of the planned/implemented activities;

▪Their realisation should logically lead to the achievement of specific project objective(s)

▪Specific outputs/outcomes related to Dissemination, Sustainability, Quality Control & Monitoring and Management should be planned and included in the LFM

Outputs (tangible)

▪ Services, facilities or capital goods that the project delivers;

▪If possible outputs should be expressed in measurable terms i.e. include quantitative dimensions

Examples:

X new teaching courses developed and X courses modernised for a Master programme in Sustainable Tourism.

Technology Transfer Units at X Universities established;

Outcomes (intangible):

▪The likely or achieved short and medium-term intangible effect of the project;

▪Usually refer to new skills, methods, practices or capacities.

Examples:

New pedagogical skills and methodologies acquired by the teaching staff of X Universities

Enhanced managerial and administrative staff capacity in implementation of internal quality assurance/assessment techniques.

LFM – Activities & Inputs

Activities:
- Tasks & actions that need to be carried out in order to deliver planned results (outcomes/outputs)
- Activities should be planned and presented in the LFM in a chronological order;

Inputs:
Financial & human resources, equipment necessary for the implementation of project activities

Example:
Outputs & Activities:

Output:
1. *New Bachelor Programme in Sustainable Tourism developed & implemented*

Activities:
1.1. Establishment of pedagogical teams;
1.2. Development of curricula
1.3. Development of X new and modernization of X existing Bachelor courses;
1.4. Development of teaching materials;
1.5. Pilot implementation of the new Bachelor programme at X partner country universities.

LFM – Risks & Assumptions

Assumptions:

- External factors that have the potential to influence or determine the success or failure of the project, but lie outside the direct control of project managers;

- The way assumptions are formulated reflects a desired & positive situation.

Risks:

- A negative way of describing an assumption;
- Reflect negative situations

Examples:

Assumptions:
„Continuing political support to improve financial situation in Higher Education Institutions"

Accreditation of a new study programme/curriculum received on time

Risks:
„Lack of political support"

Accreditation of a new study programme/curriculum not granted or delayed

LFM – Risks & Assumptions

Test of project's feasibility

- Determination of risks and assumptions is a method for assessing the "riskiness" or feasibility of the project and should be conducted within a thorough analysis.

Counteracting measures

Note:

- It is not enough to formulate risks & assumptions in the Logical Framework Matrix – The project structure should reflect efforts to limit the impact of potential risks;

- Wherever possible counteracting measures should be specified and reflected in project activities.

LFM – Risks & Counteracting Measures - Examples

Risks	Potential Counteracting Measures and/or Activities
Difficult legal and/or fiscal environment for imports (equipment)	▪ Wherever possible equipment will be purchased from local markets
Lack of a suitable candidate for the post of a manager of the International Relation Office	▪ Recruitment procedure will be carefully planned & implemented from early stages of the project lifetime
Accreditation not granted or delayed	▪ Steps to ensure official recognition of the new study programme will be addressed from the very beginning of the project; ▪ Active involvement of relevant ministries (accreditation bodies) in project activities.
Potential language barriers: e.g. Limited language skills of university teaching staff that will participate in trainings abroad	▪ Organization of language courses at the beginning of the project implementation ▪ Use of translation services wherever necessary

LFM – Assumptions & Risks Analysis

Steps & guiding questions for the analysis of risks and assumptions

1. Is an assumption/risk important for the project?

1. What is the likelihood that an assumption will hold true or risk will be realized?

1. Can the project structure be modified in a way that the assumption/risk is no longer needed or the impact of risk can be reduced?

If it is not possible to eliminate or reduce the impact of a risk that has been assessed as important and probable, through redesigning the project structure or potential counteracting measures – **the project might be not feasible**.

LFM – Assumptions & Risks Analysis

Note:

During risks & assumption analysis particular attention should be paid to **factors determining project's sustainability**, such as:

- Political support;

- Commitment of partners/stakeholders to the project;

- Physical conditions/ availability of appropriate resources/technology;

- Institutional/ Organizational capacity of beneficiaries to continue delivering of project services beyond the Tempus support;

- Economic & Financial viability (can the project services be financed in a long term?)

- Socio-cultural & gender issues (have issues to ensure equal access and use of the services to be developed been considered?)

LFM – Indicators of Progress & Sources for their Measurement

Indicator of Progress:

A variable (quantitative or qualitative) that provides the basis for the measurement of the project achievements and its performance

- Indicators must be specific & measurable;
- Include ambitious but realistic targets;
- Should be objectively verifiable, i.e. different persons that will use the indicators will obtain the same measurements;

How indicators will be measured:

Sources of information & means of their collection;

- Including:
-Sources of information that are already available, e.g. publications, official statistics & documents; reports.

-Sources of information that will be produced during the project implementation (& method for the collection of information);
e.g. monitoring reports, questionnaires, interviews, evaluation reports.

Note:
The Indicators and Sources for their Verification provide the basis for:

- Quality Control & Monitoring Plan to be designed and implemented by project managers;
- Regular review of the project progress during the project's implementation;
- Preparation & verification of monitoring reports.
- Their definition should take into account the costs related to the data collection and analysis.

LFM – Indicators of Progress & Sources for their Measurement

Simplified Examples

Output	Indicators of progress	Sources of measurement
New Bachelor Programme developed	X courses developed until X project month; New Programme accredited until X project month	Course documentation; Accreditation documents
Staff training	X teaching staff accomplished targeted teacher training until X month 80% of the total number training participants satisfied with its quality (evaluate the quality of the training as good or very good)	Records on published training materials; List of training participants; Feedback questionnaires

Quantity of deliverables; Milestone (deadline) for the completion of a task

Size of an audience/beneficiaries and deadline for the realisation of the output

Qualitative targets

Scheduling of Activities

Scheduling of Activities

Method that involves:

- Identifying the **logical sequence** and **dependencies, location and content** of activities
- Provides a basis for allocating **responsibilities** to individual project partners;
- Includes the development of a project **workplan**.

Steps

1. List main project activities (from the LFM) for each outcome/output;
2. Break Activities down into Manageable Tasks – i.e. define the content of each activity in sufficient detail;
3. Clarify sequence and dependencies, i.e. determine:
- in what order should related activities be implemented? **(sequence)**;
- Is an activity dependent on the start-up or completion of any other activity? **(dependencies)**;
4. Estimate start-up, duration and the deadline for the completion of activities;
5. Define expertise needed for the completion of each activity;
6. Allocate tasks among the project team taking into account capability, expertise & experience of each member of the project team (i.e. consortium members who will carry out activities);
7. Define target groups for individual project activities (i.e. to be addressed by each activity);
8. Prepare the project workplan

Presentation of Outcomes & Activities – Frequent mistakes in project proposals

Note:
- The new e-Form form will introduce changes concerning the format of the information to be provided in the presentation of the project outputs and related activities;
- The following examples refer to frequent mistakes encountered in previous Tempus IV calls.

▪ **Unclear methodology for the implementation of outputs/activities**
-Lack of detail or insufficient presentation of the content of project activities and working methods for their implementation (what, when, where and how will be done)

▪ **Lack or limited involvement of students throughout the project cycle;**

▪ **Insufficient specification of target groups or measures to ensure their active participation in the project**
e.g. lack of quantitative targets, general statements like „all students"

▪ **Unbalanced distribution of tasks among the project partners or missing information on their involvement**

-Distribution of responsibilities strongly biased towards European partners with partners from partner countries having insignificant roles,
-Evidence of „sleeping partners"

• **Lack of coherence between activities listed in the Outcome tables, LFM and in the Workplan**

-Different activities listed in different parts of the application or incomplete indications

Tips for the preparation of the workplan

Pay attention to:

The logic of the annual and multi-annual distribution of activities

▪The workplan should reflect a short preparatory or inception phase (at the beginning of the project), development and (pilot) implementation of the main project outputs as well as their evaluation;
▪The pilot implementation/or teaching of new or updated courses in the partner country(ies) has to start during the lifetime of the project and take place during at least one third of the project duration;
▪Demonstrate the progress of activities
▪Avoid excessive periods of inactivity, unjustified breaks or "empty" workplans;

The rationale behind the location and dependencies of activities

▪E.g. Study visits or trainings of partner country teaching staff in the EU should not be planned/organized during the implementation of the new study programme in the partner country;

▪Purchase and instalment of necessary equipment should be planned as early as possible to ensure that it can be used during the project lifetime and support the realization of the project objectives;

Plan sufficient time for the implementation of individual activities but avoid:

▪Overloaded workplans;
▪Long periods of initial and basic analysis (the situation in the partner countries should be analysed prior to the submission of the project proposal and provide the basis for the project design)

Dissemination

Dissemination

Dissemination is:
- A strategy to communicate, propagate and diffuse the information about the project and its results;
- An important instrument that supports project's sustainability

Dissemination helps ensure or facilitate

Project's Visibility;
Beneficiaries are legally obliged to take the necessary steps to ensure that the financial contribution of the EU is given adequate publicity;

Support from political decision-makers
Information towards decision makers is crucial to facilitate necessary political support and their positive decisions concerning project's sustainability.

Potential multiplier effects
Information on the project should be made accessible to groups of people or institutions not directly involved in the project in order to share the results, best-practices, lessons learned and possibly contribute to the solution of similar issues in a broader institutional, regional and national context.

Acceptance and interest of the direct users/target groups for the delivered services
Intensive communication about the attractiveness of the planned project results/services towards their direct users will determine their willingness to use the services and/or potentially support their sustainability

Dissemination – Who should be addressed

Groups of people directly involved in the project

Direct beneficiaries/users of the project results (e.g. students, academic & teaching staff, enterprises)

Decision-making bodies within the involved institutions/universities

Other teaching, academic staff, students, faculties not directly involved in the project

Partner country universities outside the project partnership

National & Regional Authorities (Political decision-makers)

Universities/potential stakeholders, general public in the region or in neighbouring countries

How to plan dissemination strategy – few tips

What should be disseminated:

- Clearly identify the outputs/ project results or information that can or should be disseminated (e.g. new teaching materials, manuals, information about a new curriculum)

Timing:

- Dissemination should start early in the project implementation (from the first project year) and activities should be possibly implemented at regular intervals throughout the entire project duration;

- Pay attention to the consistency of the planning with the timing for the implementation and delivery of the main project results (e.g. students recruitment events should be planned well in advance to the start of the new study programme)

Whom to involve:

- Utilize the existing dissemination potential and networks of the project partners (e.g. enterprises, chambers of commerce involved in the partnership);

- Consider involvement of students organizations, national authorities & institutional decision-makers and professional organizations in dissemination activities.

- Establish contacts with other Tempus projects, National Tempus Offices

Develop visual "identity" for the project; including:

- Project logo, templates to be used in promotional materials.

How to plan dissemination strategy – few tips

Dissemination instruments should:

- Be adequate to reach the identified target groups;

- Include both passive (brochures, leaflets, publications) and active dissemination tools (periodical electronic newsletters, information or recruitment events, fairs, students competitions, media coverage)

- Be varied and involve a wide range of dissemination tools.

Be creative – Project homepage is not enough!

Sustainability

Sustainability

- The capacity to deliver project benefits in a long term, i.e. for an extended period after the European funding has been completed;
- The longer term impact of the project

What can or should be sustainable:

- **The main project outputs/results**; such as:

Physical or political structures, bodies created within the project;
Examples:
- Internal Quality Assurance Unit, Technology Transfer Structures, Training Centres, infrastructure
- Partnership or professional networks;

Reforms, laws, regulations:
Examples:
- New laws, organizational or financial models for the implementation of doctoral studies;

Services/programmes for beneficiaries:
Examples
- Training courses for professionals, enterprises, teachers,
- A new or modernized study programme;
- Employment counselling;

Specific activities initiated within the project:
Examples:
- Student exchanges;
- Events (e.g. round tables, technology or employment fairs)

Categories of Sustainability

Institutional Sustainability

Created structures and processes have the "institutional" capacity to continue to perform their functions in a long term.
Elements to be considered:
• Well defined and adopted laws/decision making processes
• Human capital;
• Physical infrastructure

Financial Sustainability

Financing of the main project results will continue after the project comes to an end, i.e. it has been secured from other sources than the Tempus programme.

• Ideally, the maintenance of the project results will generate further sources of funding and thus support institutional sustainability.

Political Sustainability

The project is capable to generate impact on decision-makers and lead to the reflection of the area concerned in a wider context of institutional, regional or national planning and implementation.
• The impact of the project goes beyond the involved partner country institutions.

How is projects sustainability assessed

Guiding questions:

▪Is it evident that the project partners and major stakeholders are committed to the project objectives and have been involved not only in the preparation of the project but will also participate in the design and implementation of the project results? **(local ownership);**

▪Are relevant capacity building measures foreseen to ensure that the partner institutions will be able to deliver the results on their own? – e.g. sufficient trainings of partner country staff, securing relevant technology and its long term operation, measures for official recognition or institutional implementation of the project outputs. **(institutional sustainability)**

▪Is there an evidence that the institutional, local, regional or national decision-makers and political bodies support the project and will put in place the necessary resources and policies to facilitate project's sustainability? **(policy support**);

▪Does the project include arrangements to secure long-term financing of the project results outside of the Tempus funding? Are the arguments for potential financial contribution from the service users (enterprises, students) supported by relevant quantitative demand & financial analysis? **(financial sustainability)**

▪Does the project include measures to ensure that the project results will be shared with a larger community? Is there evidence that the project may lead to the solution of similar problems in a larger political, institutional or national context? **(multiplier effects, political sustainability**).

Examples of Activities supporting Sustainability

New study programme:
Possible Activity:

•Official recognition or accreditation of the new curriculum by relevant bodies (institutional and/or ministerial level, official accreditation bodies);

Condition:
Concrete steps for the accreditation of the new study programme should be clearly presented in the application and addressed as early as possible within the project lifetime.

Specific Network established during the project:

Possible Activities:
•Development of "legal arrangements" for the network's long-term operation (e.g. Mission and Strategy statement, with clear rules concerning its structure and coordination, membership policy & networks extension).
• Development of a financial plan for the maintenance of network's activities (incl. investigations concerning potential funding sources, feasibility of a fee-based membership)

Training courses for enterprises:

Possible Activities:
•Obtaining official recognition/certification of courses by professional bodies;
•Development of a business/financial plan for the commercial exploitation of courses (fee-base);
•Establishing contractual arrangements with enterprises to secure long-term demand and the potential financial support from the economic sector.

Quality Control & Monitoring

Quality Control & Monitoring - Definitions

Monitoring

- Ongoing analysis of the project progress in relation to the planned activities, budget implementation, outputs (and assumptions).
- It is an internal management responsibility and takes place at all management levels;
- It involves collection, analysis, communication and use of information on the physical and financial progress of the project and as well as on the achievement of results.
- It uses both formal reporting and informal communication.

Quality Control/ Evaluation

Periodic assessment of the quality of the project results, outcomes and outputs but also: evaluation of the quality (efficiency, effectiveness, impact, relevance and sustainability) of the entire project intervention.

Quality Control & Evaluation presupposes:
- Involvement of experts/ professional bodies external to the project management to ensure impartiality and credibility of the evaluation findings;
- Participation of major stakeholders to ensure that different perspectives and views are taken into account.

Monitoring - Main Aspects

•Monitoring involves not only collection of information and measurement of the project progress according to the pre-defined targets (Indicators of Progress), but should also include opportunities for project implementers to share and analyse the information and make collective decisions on potential corrective adjustments.

Main aspects to be addressed in the project

Arrangements for reporting on the project progress:
-Define how often and by whom information on the project progress will be collected and to whom it will be made available.
Examples:
Monthly reports on the progress/implementation of individual activities prepared by project partners submitted to the project coordinator;

Quarterly financial and monitoring reports prepared by the project coordinator submitted to the Steering Committee.

Regular Review, e.g.:
Reviews can take place at different management levels and with different frequency, but they should be regular;
Example:
•*Bi-annual meetings of a monitoring/or Steering committee to review the progress & evaluation reports and take corrective actions where necessary;*

Contingency Plan:
What kind of arrangements are planned in case the project results are not achieved on time or with an insufficient quality.

Quality Control & Evaluation – Tips

Foresee & pay attention to:

▪Careful Planning

➤Measures for quality control should be thoroughly planned and implemented as early as possible within the project duration in order to ensure that there is sufficient time for potential improvements.

➤Elaborate clear methods to ensure quality control of the academic content of planned results

▪Involvement of major stakeholders (students, enterprises, professional organizations) through, e.g.:

➤Provision of feedback on the stakeholders satisfaction concerning the quality of the delivered courses, services; evaluation surveys;

➤Direct involvement in quality control bodies,

▪External evaluation

➤Ensure impartiality of the quality assessment through the involvement of skilled staff (e.g. external experts), or professional bodies (national or international accreditation agencies) external to the project partnership.

Project Management

Project Management

Project management involves planning, organizing, and managing resources to ensure smooth implementation of a project and to bring about successful completion of the project goals and objectives.

Typical Project Management Activities include:

- Information & Communication;
- Reporting;
- Financial Planning;
- Staff Management

Note!

Project management activities should support ongoing implementation of the project and should not become overemphasised in comparison to activities related to the realization of the actual project objectives.

Project Management – Major Aspects

What should be planned & demonstrated in the project proposal:

I.   Clear management structure, which:

▪ Reflects balanced involvement of all project partners;

▪Defines who will oversee the project & make strategic decisions;

▪Ideally involves arrangements for „local" coordination of a project (e.g. nomination of a „local coordinator" in each partner country);

▪Foresees involvement of decision-makers and/or students (e.g. within a Steering Committee/governing body)

Note:
Not all decisions can be taken by projects managers, in particular when the project requires adjustments in objectives or budget. As such decisions may have important implications on the entire project scope, a specific governing body/e.g. Steering Committee that meets periodically to take strategic decisions, might be required.

Project Management – Major Aspects

What should be planned & demonstrated in the project proposal:

II. Procedures to ensure information & communication

▪Arrangements for formal communication between the project partners including how the infromation will be stored or made available.
▪May include:
Coordination meetings, communication via electronic resources, establishment of specific fora or electronic data bases for the storage of information.

III. Financial Planning:

•Arrangements to ensure proper budget implementation, stock taking, adjustments.

IV. Arrangements for decision making:

▪Decision-making refers to rules or methods for taking collective decisions and may refer to e.g.
- specific voting rules applied within the project governing body (unanimous or majority voting)

V. Conflict resolution strategy

▪What will be done in case of disagreement
▪May include:
-Specific decision-making arrangements for the case of disagreement;

Project Management- What to Avoid

Frequent mistakes in project proposals

- Lack of a clear management structure or missing information (e.g. on roles and the composition of the governing body/ individual teams);

- Too complex & complicated management structures and/or decision-making, which may hamper smooth project implementation;

- Unbalanced tasks distribution - One-Man show!

- Confusion between "communication" & "decision making"; e.g. "~~decision making process will be via email~~");

- Description of project management tasks and partners roles limited to the grant applicant (roles of each partner should be indicated)

- Unjustified "outsourcing" of project management tasks;

- Lack of information on conflict resolution mechanism;
- Inflated costs

Project Budget

Project Budget

Main principles to be considered within the budget planning

I. Compliance with financial requirements defined in Tempus

I. Involvement of project partners in budget planning

I. Bottom-Up approach for resource scheduling and budget preparation

I. Budget effectiveness and cost-efficiency

Note:

Budget effectiveness constitutes significant quality criteria in Tempus projects. Both the project methodology and the project budget should reflect efforts that will allow the implementation of project activities and the achievement of the project results at lowest possible costs.

Project Budget – Main Principles

I. Compliance with financial requirements defined in Tempus

Budget requirements and financial conditions for Tempus projects are clearly specified in the Tempus call.

The relevant document and its annexes include rules and instructions concerning the categories and eligibility/ineligibility of costs to be respected in the project proposal including:

- Requirements concerning the budget size, financial conditions and subcontracting, max. & minimum rates for staff and mobility costs).

Prior to the budget preparation the applicants should carefully read the instructions and familiarise themselves with the related guidelines.

Sound knowledge of the programme-related financial rules is a significant precondition and the first step to ensure that the project budget will be in line with the EC/Tempus rules and will help avoid mistakes in the budget preparation

Project Budget – Main Principles

II. Involvement of Project Partners in Budgeting

All project partners should be aware of their contributions and shares in the proposed project budget and ideally be involved in budget preparation from the very beginning - this helps not only ensure strong partnership with clear responsibilities but shall also result in a realistic and well-justified budget.

III. Bottom-Up Approach – Budget Preparation

▪The budget preparation should be started "bottom up", i.e. estimating the costs of intended activities - budgeting should not be seen as a "pro-forma" division of the budget between the consortium partners.

▪The bottom up- approach helps ensure that sufficient resources are planned for the implementation of each project activity.

▪As the applicants will be required to provide aggregated and summarised cost information in the project application, the calculation of costs per each activity should be done using the established cost categories (i.e. staff, equipment, travel, publishing, other costs etc.).

Project Budget – Main Principles

IV. Budget Effectiveness and Cost-Efficiency

Attention should be paid to:

- Calculations of reasonable amounts of staff costs for each activity;

- Equipment purchase should be limited to what is necessary for the implementation of the project objectives and calculated at reasonable prices;

- Efficient use of mobility periods, i.e making best use of time abroad for a maximum benefit.

- Ideally the project design and its budget reflect efforts to limit the project costs; through e.g. combination of several activities in order to save travel costs (management/coordination meetings organised in connection with other content related activities); careful consideration concerning the location of activities.

- Daily salary rates provided in Annexes to the Tempus call should be respected and staff costs defined according to the type of task, not the status of the individual carrying out the task;

Note: Indicative salary rates are reference rates. The amount requested by the applicant must be in line with the real salary policy of the institutions concerned – i.e. the applicants should not apply automatically for the maximum daily rate.

Project Budget – What should be avoided

I.   Inflated budget or improbable calculations

Examples:

- 10.000 working days for two persons (academic staff) in a framework of a two-year project;

- Inflated project management costs e.g. constituting 80% of the total project budget;

II.   Missing justification or lack of considerations concerning the cost-efficiency

Examples:

- Extensive travel and accommodation costs e.g.:

Costs requested for 40 partner country university teachers for a one-day mobility to a European partner institution without further explanation concerning the necessity or purpose of the stay (doubtful cost-efficiency)

- Lack of justification or evidence concerning the need for and use of requested equipment within the project lifetime

Note: In Tempus equipment purchase should be limited to what is necessary and requested equipment should support the achievement of the project objectives.

Project Budget – What should be avoided

III. Unbalanced and/or unjustified budget distribution between the partners

Example:

- 70% of the project budget foreseen for the grant applicant

- Note: Projects or budgets clearly benefiting only one individual partner or mainly project partners from EU Member States should be avoided.

IV. Ineligible Expenses

Examples:
- Inclusion of cost categories that are specified as ineligible in the Tempus call (e.g. exchange losses);

- Costs that exceed the maximum rates or amounts indicated in the Tempus call; or costs for „mobilities" which exceed the min. or max. eligible periods defined in Tempus (e.g. students mobilities that exceed the period of max. 3 months)

- Costs for equipment requested for partners from EU Members States

Project Budget – What should be avoided

V. Non-compliance with the budget related thresholds defined in Tempus
such as:
- Staff costs: max. 40%, equipment costs: max. 30%, indirect costs: max. 7% of the total direct eligible project costs; or

- Co-financing below 10% of the total project costs.

VI. Calculations under wrong budget headings

Example:

- Costs related to travel/health insurance and visa should be calculated under "travel and costs of stay" not under "other costs"

VII. Calculation errors, inconsistencies and missing information

- Tables partly or entirely left blank;

- Inconsistent amounts indicated in different parts of the application.

Project Budget

Any adjustments of the project budget that might be required due to deduction of ineligible costs or elimination of calculation errors <u>may lead to</u>:

➢ a negative decision concerning the feasibility of the project to be implemented with a reduced budget;

➢ non-compliance of the budget with the ceilings and thresholds, such as for e.g. co-financing or the min. grant size; which constitute eligibility requirements;

And in consequence to:

To the rejection of the project!

Implications for Applicants
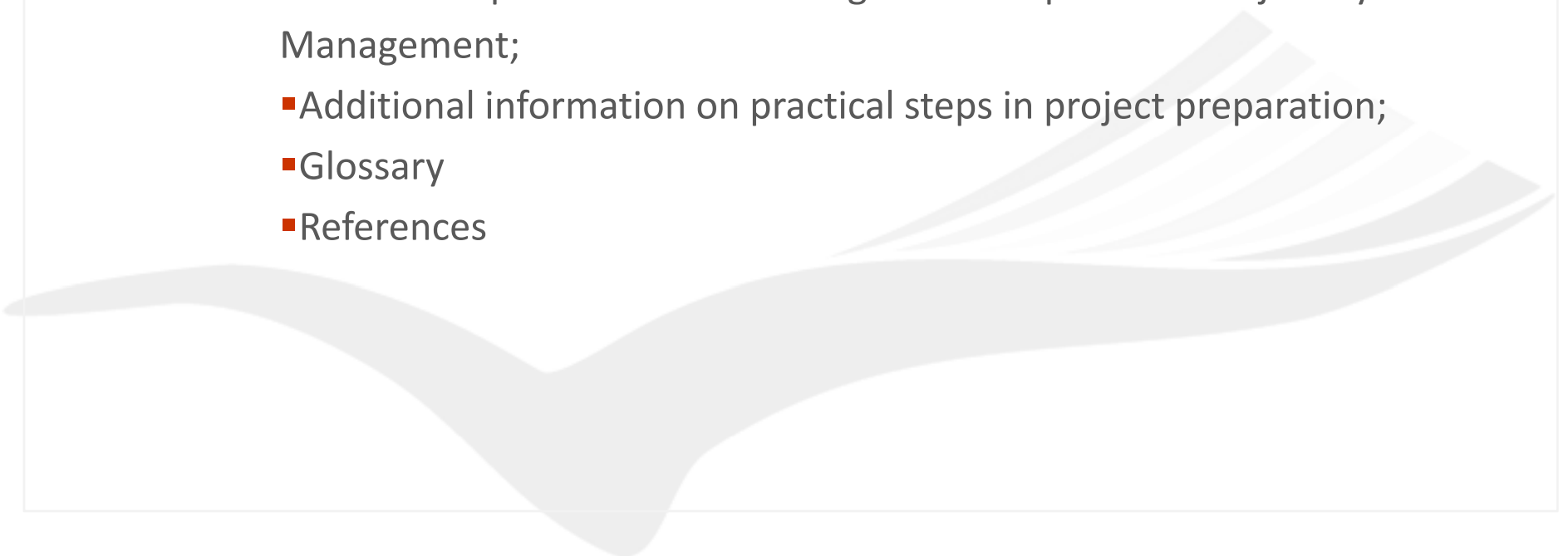Pay attention to careful budgeting and precise calculations

Follow up

Follow up

Coming soon:

Training Handbook as an accompaniment and "post- support" to the seminar including:

- Detailed explanations concerning the concept of the Project Cycle Management;
- Additional information on practical steps in project preparation;
- Glossary
- References

Thank you for your attention !