

How to Deal with Problem of Human Resources in Research with suitable Mix of financial Instruments from public Funds

Knowledge-based Society in practice: HI-TECH SLOVAKIA

Panel on 'Quality of science – human resources in science'

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How to think (and write) a great research centre proposal?

Lessons from the benchmarking and management of research and technology organisations (RTO) and the appraisals for funding RTOs

Six main chapters for writing / selecting proposals for RTOs

1. The entry condition: An attractive **research agenda**
2. Human Resources are capital **and** labour: The quality of the **team**
3. **Users, peers, and partners**: What are these guys doing anyway?
4. **The bottleneck, at all places: Human resources – workforce and capital**
5. **Management matters**: It's the difference, which makes the difference
6. The bill, please! Thus: **Financial issues**

Note: All specific questions are to be considered as 'fruit for thoughts' for the proposers and the panel!

2. Human resources are capital **and** labour: The quality of the team

1. Are the credentials, **past achievements and experience** of the **key research personnel** convincing to provide
 - *A successful implementation of the centre, particularly the research agenda*
 - *A reasonable assurance of the future quality of the centre*
2. Is there a convincing **proof of commitment** by the members of key staff?
 - *A convincing model for dealing with **multiple affiliations***
3. Is there a convincing **time-schedule** for the **development / recruitment of the research team**, an assessment of risks?
4. **Proposals will raise doubts** particularly in those cases,
 - *Where on the one hand 'big figures' are presented as representatives of the proposed RTO*
 - *While on the other hand an unequivocal attribution to substantial roles in the operation of the centre is missing*

4. **The bottleneck, at all places: Human resources**

1. Is the **age, seniority and gender structure** of the team, and the plans for its further development **balanced and appropriate**?
 2. Does the applicant already has or plans to install a **system for training of R&D personnel**, suitable to contribute to the research agenda?
 3. Does the proposal contain a credible, adequate **plan for development of PhD** graduates and for reproduction of the research team?
 4. Does the proposal contain a convincing **recruitment plan**, including **re-integration of researchers** from abroad?
 5. Does the proposal contain a convincing **career development plan** and a **plan for mobility of researchers**?
 6. Is there a realistic **overall time-schedule** for HR related activities, an indication of associated risks and how will they be managed?
 7. Proposals with a well described but questionable HR policy will be better off than proposals which are lacking substantial statements anyway.
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Conclusions and some elements of good practice

1. HR are capital **and** labour in research organisations: 'handle with care'
 2. Avoid 'add-on' programmes with a prime focus at HR, rather integrate them into the prime purpose of the organisation
 3. But: Check and make explicit the HR dimension in all kind of funding programmes
 4. **Size** of projects matter
 - *should allow working in teams*
 - *at different levels of experience / complementarity / different cultures*
 5. **Duration** should allow the completion of stages of development
 - *to complete the Master degree or PhD*
 - *to make a step from a contributing staff member to a project leader*
 - *to complete a broader research agenda (→ professor)*
 - *to exploit a technological opportunity*
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Thank you

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