



Idealist2018 Project

Advisory Board Public Report and Recommendations

Contract nº 645216

Public

Version 1.0

January 2017

1. Introduction

The objective of the Advisory Board created by Idealist2018 is to broaden the perspective of the activities and strategies carried out by the ICT NCP Network and provide recommendations for an optimal adaptation to the needs of participants, ICT National Contact Points and the European Commission.

The changes between Framework Programme Seven (FP7) and Horizon2020 (H2020) have spread ICT activities across the whole Programme. Hence a closer relationship with other key players (such as Industrial Associations behind the Public-Private Partnerships (PPP), Advisory Fora, Committees discussing and approving other ICT-related Work Programmes and other NCP groups and networks) is essential to understand the big picture and the difficulties the ICT participants now face when developing their project ideas.

This advisory group is therefore composed of persons with long experience in ICT and key relationships with different parts of the ICT Programme (ICT Committee, Connect Advisory Forum, Joint Technology Initiative ECSEL, different PPP initiatives and Technology Platforms, etc.) who have been invited to this Board to create a brainstorming atmosphere where relevant ideas can come from outside of the box, with the final aim of creating or adapting the ICT NCP Network's services to the real needs of ICT participants in Horizon2020.

2. Advisory Board's main recommendations.

The Advisory Board of Idealist2018 has met twice during the first two years of execution of the project (Vienna, July 2015 and Madrid, November 2016) and discussed various interesting topics related to the execution of the ICT Programme in Horizon 2020. This has led to a series of recommendations that are summarized below under two categories:

2.1 Recommendations to the ICT NCP Network.

R.A1) Guarantee the **correct involvement of all NCPs** in the activities of the NCP Networks – as in many cases the ICT applications under the Societal Challenges are the responsibility of other NCPs not present in Idealist2018 – and particularly when dealing with training and mentoring activities, bearing in mind that the new structure of H2020 has resulted in different national configurations to address the dispersion of ICT across the whole Programme. This requires increased **cooperation with other thematic NCP Networks**.

Provide services for both NCPs and participants in a way that is attractive for a majority of NCPs and guarantees their participation in the Idealist project activities.

R.A2) Continue **cooperation with the Enterprise Europe Network (EEN)** with respect to brokerage and other kind of events where potential participants can increase their visibility and meet good collaborators. This can be particularly addressed to SMEs and cPPP calls in order to contribute to the goal of at least 20% of SME participation in Horizon 2020. In

many cases cPPPs find it difficult to attract end-users coming from non-ICT sectors and hence this approach could be used to cooperate with other NCP Networks that could help involve those end-users.

R.A3) Stress activities dealing with the different **cascade funding initiatives** opened in H2020 i.e. projects funded by the Commission reserving budget to launch their own calls for small-scale research or experimentation which constitutes good participation opportunities to for third parties. This creates a need to centralize all the information and brief ICT NCPs correctly and in time so they can distribute that information and raise awareness among the participants. Idealist2018 should be seen as a **central point of information for cascade funding** opportunities and appropriate cooperation with the EC and the cascade funding projects is essential for that.

R.A4) Strengthen **cooperation with cPPP associations** so that the Idealist ICT NCP Network will become more involved in their strategic and practical activities. This is in order to gain a better internal knowledge of the kind of advances these cPPP initiatives are pursuing and enable transmission of the right information to stakeholders that will go beyond what appears in the H2020 Work Programme topic text. Communication activities with the cPPP associations may include co-organizing Info-days and brokerage events in order to be involved in discussions of the different priorities, always aiming to eliminate the perception of a closed club.

R.A5) **Rethink and adapt the concept of partner search services** as it might be possible that, given the actual levels of participation, they will not be as interesting as before for some countries that already have established links at the European level and have a big pool of potential participants: it is well-known that participants tend to cooperate with those people and organisations they already know. On the other hand, the partner search services always increase chances of meeting people and hence are still interesting for many countries and newcomers facing difficulties.

R.A6) Maximize the **exploitation of databases and technical facilities** both within the network and in cooperation with other networks to release the full potential of the enormous information collected about ICT participants through the years.

R.A7) Explore support mechanisms that the ICT NCP Network could offer to **first time coordinators** in the execution of their projects, particularly when they face problems. This could include training material about what it means to be a coordinator and advising on project management best practices to unexperienced NCPs and first time coordinators after each call.

2.2 Recommendations to the European Commission.

R.B1) Establish mechanisms to **address the large oversubscription in H2020** that only increases frustration among participants. Considering the high cost of proposal preparation, together with the low success rate, there is a widespread fear that even where

Horizon 2020 activities are industry-led, it will end up losing the confidence of industry (both SMEs and big industry), resulting in lower industrial participation than its predecessors.

R.B2) Establish more efficient ways of **identifying and avoiding duplication of activities** and objectives between big projects and pilots funded in different parts of Horizon2020 (e.g. ICT-LEIT and Societal Challenges) and, at the same time, strengthening synergies among those that are complementary and could benefit from a closer collaboration in terms of execution or application of results. This can lead to more impact of results and better value for money.

R.B3) **Rationalize the International Cooperation strategy** in a way that protects the interests of European companies and institutions, cooperating only with those countries that offer the same opportunities for cooperation in terms of access to market.

R.B4) Provide the tools to strengthen a fluid **cooperation between National Contact Points and the European Commission personnel**, beyond the Project Officer assigned to the NCP Network itself, to guarantee a fluent flow of information towards the activities that now are performed by the NCPs on behalf of the Commission (i.e. proposal check). The current situation regarding training and interpretation of the Work programme should be improved.

R.B5) Facilitate the transformation of the ICT NCP Network as the **central point of information** to H2020 participants on activities such as:

- ICT-related info-days and events
- Meetings of the different cPPPs and other relevant initiatives
- Cascade funding opportunities of interest for ICT participants
- Etc.

R.B6) The Commission should establish appropriate ways to measure the activities and impact of the different **NCP Networks** and support the continuation of those performing well and covering the needs of participants and NCPs, particularly at this time when adaptation in advance of the next Framework Programme is crucial.

3. Annex: Members of Idealist2018 Advisory Board.

Based on the premise of having a strategic board that can help widen the vision and objectives of Idealist2018 through the different ICT-related initiatives in Horizon2020, particularly the cPPP and JTI, and strengthening the link with the ICT Committee as a way of increasing the level of influence of Idealist activities, the Idealist2018 Advisory Board (AB) during 2015 and 2016 was composed of the following people:

1) Mr. José Luis Angoso (ES).

Member of the Connect Advisory Forum (CAF), the Big Data Value Association (BDVA), the Robotics PPP Association (SPARC), the Networked European Software and Services Initiative (NESSI), the ICT node of the European Institute of Technology (EIT ICT-Labs), etc.

2) Ms. Nuria de Lama (ES).

Vice-Secretary General of the Big Data Value Association and European Programs Manager at ATOS.

3) Ms. Laila Gide (FR).

Member of the Joint Technology Initiative on Electronic Components and Systems of European Leadership (JTI-ECSEL) through the ARTEMIS-IA industrial association. European Programs Manager at Thales.

4) Ms. Christina Hanssen (NO).

European Union Programs Advisor at SINTEF, providing a deep knowledge of the participation process from the proposer's side.

5) Dr. Werner Mohr (DE).

Chair of the Board of the 5G Infrastructure Association (5G-PPP) and chair of the Steering Board of the Networld2020 European Technology Platform, which is closely linked to the 5G PPP. European Programs Manager at Nokia.

6) Mr. Morten Møller (DK).

Former Head of Unit at the European Commission (DGConnect) in charge for a time of monitoring the strategy and activities of previous Idealist projects.

7) Mr. Lee Vousden (UK).

Member of the Information and Communication Technologies (ICT), the Nanotechnology, Materials and Production Processes (NMBP) and Future and Emerging Technologies (FET) Programme Committees.