Laboratory for Policies and Practices of Social Development in Higher Education

(2015-1-ES01-KA203-015970)

Project Handbook

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Project Aim

The aim of our proposal is to promote the educational and social inclusion of underrepresented groups as well as of non-traditional learners, thereby broadly satisfying one of the main priorities being called for (i.e. the improvement of the capacities of organisations active in the fields of education, training and youth, notably in the areas of strategic development, quality of learning provision, equity and inclusion, qualitative and targeted activities for specific groups) and addressing clearly one of the important features of the Erasmus+ programme: "promoting equity and inclusion by facilitating the access to learners with disadvantaged backgrounds and fewer opportunities compared to their peers".

This main aim is specified in 4 specific objectives:

(1) to establish a map with the institutional policies for attending to vulnerable groups in relation to academic access and success;

(2) to establish a plan for the higher education organisations with initiatives aimed at promoting the access and successful development of students who are under-represented in university centres;

(3) to develop solutions for the phases embracing the access, permanence (and success) of vulnerable students and non-traditional learners in the institutions of higher education;

(4) to create a laboratory for reflection on and the promotion of the social commitment of Higher Education institutions in relation with the most vulnerable student groups.

Partners

Institution	Contact Person (e-mail)
P1. Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona (Spain)	David Rodríguez-Gómez (david.rodriguez.gomez@uab.cat)
P2. Instituto Politecnico de Leiria (Portugal)	Miguel Jerónimo (miguel.jeronimo@ipleiria.pt)
P3. Università degli Studi di Bergamo (Italy)	Fabio Dovigo (dovigo@unibg.it)
P4. Universitatea din Bucaresti (Romania)	Romiță Iucu (romita.iucu@unibuc.ro)
P5. University of Bristol (United Kingdom)	Lisa Lucas (lisa.lucas@bristol.ac.uk)
P6. University of Jyväskylä (Finland)	Tiina Mäkelä (tiina.m.makela@jyu.fi)

Implementation

The work packages (WPs) are the basic coordination units for this project. Each WP consists of four levels: 1) the WP leader, his/her main role is that of 'process owner' and therefore must plan and control the activities, outputs and resources allocated, 2) the core team, made up of the local research team, 3) a representative of each partners, to ensure maximum coherence and coordination between phases and tasks, 4) a representative of P1, as coordinating university, to ensure compliance with the program and an overview report on the project. The core project activities are grouped within five WP (see section G2 for more details):

1) WP1: management activities (leading P1): M-A1,M-A2,M-A3,M-A4.

2) WP2: context diagnosis (leading P3 & P6): O1 & O2.

3) WP3: Strategic plan development model for ACCESS4ALL (leading P1 & P5): O3 & O4.

4) WP4: Implementation of the strategic plan (leading P4 & P2): O5 & O6.

5) WP5: Lab of Social Development in Higher Education (leading P1 & P6): O7.

The implementation methodology is based on 3 basic principles:

- distributed leadership: enables the assignation of responsibilities and tasks of the different WP among the members of the consortium.
- horizontal participation: facilitates communication between all of the participant members and organisations and, most of all, makes it possible to take advantage of all of the ideas and initiatives and for these to be implemented without delay. Enabling all of the members to participate will increase implication and co-responsibility in compliance with objectives.
- knowledge management: is proposed from a double time perspective: (1) to manage the flow of knowledge accumulated from previous research and projects; (2) the management of the knowledge that other research teams are generating in relation to the same topics being proposed by our project. These methodological principles will benefit networking. The project therefore proposes the creation of a network on social justice in HEd.

The following summarizes the main actions to assure the optimal implementation of the project:

- **M-A1- Initial meeting (kick-off meeting):** Partners will attend an initial meeting hosted by P1 in November 2015 (2 days). At this meeting P1 will lead the contractual agreement with EACEA and clarify the legal and financial requirements. P1 will prepare and issue a draft project handbook for all partners that will be discussed and finalised at the meeting. The project handbook will set out overall roles and responsibilities, expectations, a detailed budget breakdown, systems for reporting and strategies for communication including the scheduling of further meetings. The roles and responsibilities will be set out in partner agreements, which all partners will sign. At the initial meeting, a detailed and operative action plan will also be drawn up that will set out timescales, specific actions to be led by each partner, criteria for success and the budget allocated. Lead partner: P1. UAB;

Output: MO1. Project handbook (include quality plan); Delivery date: December 2015.

- **M-A2 & M-A3- Progress reports and interim monitoring meeting**: Partners will produce interim reports on progress with the deliverables, the action plan and the costs to P1 in accordance with all terms and conditions set out in the partner agreements by early September 2016 & September 2017. These reports will be discussed at the monitoring progress meetings which will take place in Italy (September 2016) and Portugal (September 2017) (2 days each). P1 will check, approve, analyse and summarise the internal partner reports and issue a progress report to EACEA. Lead partner: P3. UNIBEG & P2. IPLEIRIA;

  Output: M02 & MO3. Progress Reports and interim monitoring meeting; Delivery date: SEP 2016; SEP 2017.

- **M-A4- Final reports and final meeting**: Partners will produce a final set of reports on the outcomes of the deliverables, the action plan and the costs to date to P1 in accordance with all terms and conditions set out in the partner agreements. These will be completed by the middle of May 2018 to prepare for the final meeting in June 2018. This final meeting will be held the same week as the international seminar foreseen within WP5, in order to make efficient use of the budget. Therefore, this final partner meeting will be hosted by P4 and will close the formal project activities, summarise the results achieved, analyse the information gathered from the final partner evaluation and set the basis for the final report of the project, which will be conducted by P1. Lead partner: P4. UB;

  Output: M04. Final Reports and Final meeting; Delivery date: MAY 2018; JUN 2018.

Non-Intellectual Outputs

- Project handbook
- 2 Interim reports on progress (should be submitted in advance of the interim meeting in Sep. 2016 and Sep. 2017)
- 1 final project report (should be submitted in advance of the interim meeting in Jun. 2018)
- 1 Quality plan (included in the project handbook).
- 2 books derived from E1 & E2.

In addition, other expected results of the projects will be reached: the partners’ institutions will use their web pages to disseminate the project outputs, they also could develop their own platforms as blogs or webs to promote the project news and outcomes, the participants will update their professional social networks as: LinkedIn, Research Gate, google Scholar or Twitter with news derived from the project. Also, due to the partner institution possess their own publishing houses, posters and leaflets will be published and make available to project targets and stakeholders.

Monitoring meetings and international multiplier events (seminars/conferences) associated

Year 2015

WP1 - Initial meeting (2 days): November 2015 –Spain-. Attendance: all partners;

Year 2016

WP2 - Monitoring meeting (2 days): March, 2016 – Finland-. Attendance: all partners;

WP1 - Interim monitoring meetings (2 days): September 2016 – Italy- . Attendance: all partners;

WP2 – E1 Conference / roundtable on good practices for equity and inclusion in HEd (1 day): September, 2016 – Italy-. Attendance: all partners;

WP3 - Monitoring meeting (2 day): December, 2016 – UK-. Attendance: all partners;

Year 2017

WP4 – Online monitoring progress meeting (1 day): April, 2017. Attendance: all partners;

WP1 - Interim monitoring meetings (2 days): September 2017 – Portugal. Attendance: all partners;

Year 2018

WP1 - Final meeting (2 days): June, 2018 – Romania-. Attendance: all partners;

WP5 – E2 International seminar (2 days): June, 2018 – Romania-. Attendance: all partners;

E3 to E8: Local seminar in Social dimension of HE

Each partner should hold a local seminar related to the social dimension of HE (and Access4All). The seminar will be developed at local level and will involve the participation of all the stakeholders at local level. The aim is to carry out activities of inform social community regarding the access of vulnerable groups to university. During the seminar the main progresses of the project will be explained. Also the seminar will contribute to the creation of the local networks and the exchange of practices between different stakeholders and the co-creation of measures to be implemented during and after the project at local level. This event will create the premises for the sustainability of the project.

Higher School and local and/or regional policy makers will be invited to take part of all the multiplier events planned. It is expected that, at least, 30 and 100 local actors will attend the two main multiplier event (E1 and E2, respectively). Additionally, each partner is organising at least, one local multiplier event which will take in 50 participants each.

Outputs and main tasks summary

Output[1]	Activities	Coordinator	Date
O1. Report of the different understandings of vulnerable groups and non-traditional students in Europe	O1-A1: Mapping the vulnerable groups and non-traditional students. O1-A2: Monitoring meeting for context diagnosis	UNIBEG	From Sept 2015 to Jan 2016. Meeting (FI): Jan 2016
O2. Bank of good practices	---	JYU	From Dec. 2015 to May 2016.
O3. ACCESS4ALL Self-assessment tool - Mapping of dimensions of the ACCESS4ALL HEI	---	UAB	From Jun 2016 to Dec. 2016
O4. Strategic plan model for equitable access and success in Higher Education	O4-A1: Strategic planning for equitable access and success in HE O4-A2: Monitoring meeting for strategic plan development model for ACCESS4ALL	UOB	From Jun 2016 to Feb. 2017 Meeting (UK): December 2016
O5. Specific training programme addresses at the key university actors	O5-A1: Design a specific training programme addresses at the key university actors O5-A2: Online monitoring meeting for the training plan	UB	From Sep. 2016 to May 2017 Meeting (online): March 2017
O6. Design and implementation of an own Institutional Strategic Plans for Inclusion (and its monitoring reports)	---	IPLEIRIA	From Apr. 2017 to Apr. 2018
O7. Lab of Social development in Higher Education	O7-A1: Creation of the ACCESS4ALL website O7-A2: Build a community that is sensitive to the social dimension of HEd. (JYU)	UAB	From Jan 2016 to Aug. 2018 From Sep. 2015 to Aug. 2018

[1] O1 and O2 are not funded by the E+ programme.

Participants

Our main target group is made up of young people from marginal, non-traditional learners (i.e. part-time students, those with family responsibilities, adult learners), disadvantaged and/or underserved groups (i.e. immigrants, Roma, young people affected by the financial crisis) with difficulties accessing, progressing in and graduating successfully from university, as well as any member of staff in HE who is interested in enhancing student inclusion and success. Other stakeholders include NGOs and associations developing inclusive programs for HE (e.g. FAS in Spain or GuidHE in UK), students' unions and associations (e.g. the European Students' Union and European Students' Forum), High Schools and local and regional policy makers.

All the partners in the consortium must up partnerships with at least one other Higher Education Institution, one High School and one relevant policy maker in their own country to spread and apply the policies and strategies developed within WP3. Therefore, between 6 (only partners) and 12 (with the associated partners) HEIs will be involved in the project.

The HEIs will also identify the staff to be involved in this project. This target group is anticipated to be at least 4 members of staff (from different areas of knowledge) per HEI and may include those responsible for tutoring and guidance. In total, between 24 (only partners) 48 (with the associated partners) members of staff in HEIs will be involved. The HEIs will then identify the students from vulnerable groups depending on the analysis and criteria established by WP2. The target group of students is therefore between 48 (8 students each partner) and 96 (8 students each partner and 8 students each associated partner) over the course of the project.

Therefore, the consortium will work with two assumptions:

1) minimum of 6 partners: 24 members of staff and 48 students (66.7% of participants)
2) maximum of 12 partners (6 project partners + 6 associated partners): 48 members of staff and 96 students (66.7% of participants).

The involvement of participants will start at an early stage through contacts with institutional leaders, student associations/unions and specific student services or divisions for student affairs from each partner institution (i.e., services for students with disabilities, counselling services, health support, etc.).

Quality plan

The quality plan ensures support for the planning, monitoring, control and evaluation of results.

Activities / Tools

Outputs	O1	O2	O3	O4	O5	O6	O7
Indicators	✓ A definition of non-traditional students is included; ✓ The different types of vulnerable groups are defined; ✓ Vulnerable groups are characterized.	✓ Clear criteria about what is a “Best Practice” (BP) have been defined; ✓ A methodology to identify, select and characterize BP has been created; ✓ Ways to collect and disseminate BP are known; ✓ Existence of a platform to host and manage BP.	✓ A unique and common strategy is specified; ✓ A criteria list to identify good practices and vulnerable groups is provided;	✓ Counselling strategies for teachers are presented; ✓ Organizational development strategies are provided; ✓ Specific strategies for each vulnerable group and moment (access, progress and graduation) are suggested.	✓ There is a training programme; ✓ Training meets the needs of the participants; ✓ There are the resources to develop the training plan.	✓ Guidance activities have been developed; ✓ Organizational activities have been developed; ✓ The actions implemented have been monitored; ✓ Participants’ involvement has been evaluated; ✓ Impact assessment has been developed.	✓ Results are disseminated; ✓ European experts are contacted; ✓ Proposals for studies on vulnerable groups in HEIs are received; ✓ National and international networking among experts is generated;

Internal Assessment	Internal peer-review: each research report will be reviewed by a member of the consortium.	Internal Checklist: **P3** & **P6** design a checklist to access the accessibility, quality, storage, retrieval and dissemination of BP.	Internal quality circle: the consortium will develop a quality circle to analyse O3.	Internal Likert Scale: Allows an assessment of each of the components of O4; the scale shall be designed by **P5** and will consider – relevance, applicability, importance, uniqueness of O4;	Systematic and internal observation of training process by **P4**;	Internal focus group: **P2** will design a group discussion to monitor and verify the results of O6	Internal assessment report of O7 implementation and impact: developed by **P1** and **P6**;
Multiplier Events	E1; E2; E3 – E8.	E1; E2; E3 – E8.	E2; E3 – E8.	E2.	E2.	E2.	E2.

Reporting mechanisms

- **Meetings:**

Meetings	Initial Meeting	Monitoring meeting	Interim monitoring meeting	Monitoring meeting	Online monitoring meeting	Interim monitoring meeting	Final meeting
Date	Nov 2015	Mar 2016	Sep 2016	Dec 2016	Mar 2017	Sep 2017	Jun 2018
Partners	P1	P6	P3	P5	P4	P2	P4
Output	M01	-	M02			M03	M04

- **Reports:**

Report	Internal Progress Report	E+ Progress report	E+ Mid term report	Internal Progress Report	Internal Progress Report	E+ Final Report
Partner	P2	P1 & P2	P1 & P2	P2	P2	P1 & P2
Limit to send data	Jun 2016	Jun 2016	Dec 2016	Jun 2017	Mar 2018	---
Delivery date	Sep 2016	15th July 2016	28th February 2017	Sep 2017	May 2018	Jun 2018

Dissemination

The partnership will disseminate to other staff, leaders and students at involved partner institutions through internal newsletters, internal meetings, classes etc. External academic institutions, practice field organisations, professional associations and other relevant stakeholders will receive an e-mail with information about the project and its results and a public project web site is created in which the partnership will upload all project results and conference papers.

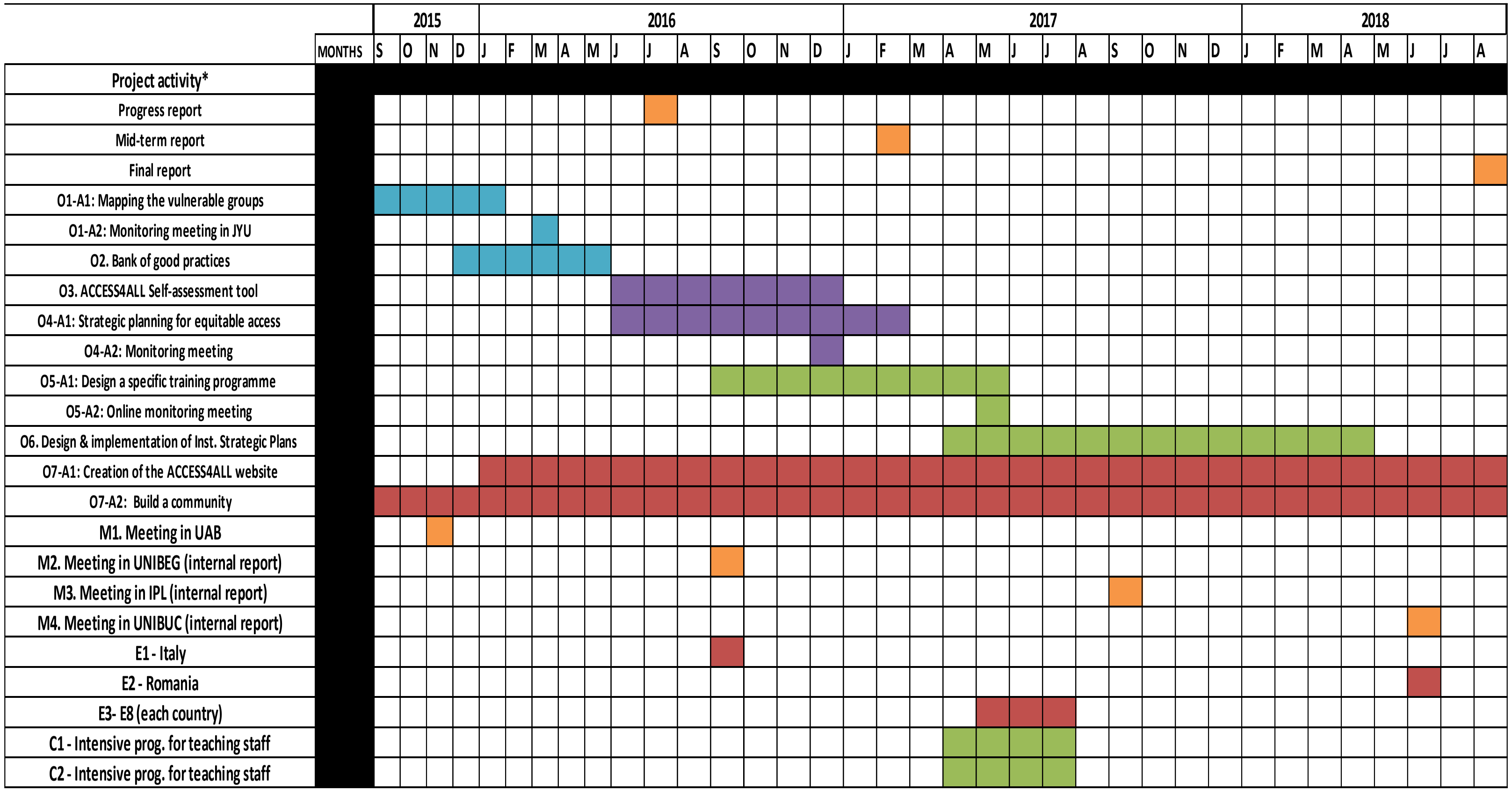
All partner countries will arrange for local dissemination in their national contexts through training seminars to ensure that the results of the project reach relevant stakeholders. The results of the project will likewise be presented to a wider public for all areas of the academic and practice field at a cross-national training seminar/conference. The program will represent the different types of partners and the different national contexts. The cross-national conference will be open to participants from all areas involved with the field of HE. It will e.g. be open to: Practitioners, students and academics.

Work on the dissemination of the project will start in month 1, at the initial meeting. A dissemination plan will be drawn up at this meeting and all members of the consortium will have a role in dissemination, initially using their own networks in their own countries.

This initial dissemination will raise awareness of the project through meetings, seminars and conferences that members of the consortium normally attend. The wider dissemination will take place through the project website, which will contain photos, blogs and regular updates on activities. All partners should be fully committed to keep the website updated, providing contents and suggesting ways for boosting it.

The website (available by January 2016) is the main instrument of communication and internal coordination for the consortium of institutions that sign up for the project. It should later serve as a platform to connect with other institutions, bodies, groups interested in our research and to manage the knowledge generated and accumulated. Once formal contact has been made with the teams making up the consortium and their respective universities, we will be ready to initiate an external communication process with other teams, institutions and bodies that are interested in our topics. From this moment, a network of contacts will be established (by September 2016) that should link an international community of practice related with this subject. The dissemination will focus initially on the target groups (i.e. HE institutions and Student associations), and will also use social networking sites such as Twitter and Facebook.

Timeline



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*Project activity types:

An	- PROJECT MANAGEMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION ACTIVITIES
On / *An*	- INTELLECTUAL OUTPUTS/ACTIVITIES
Mn	- TRANSNATIONAL PROJECT MEETINGS
En	- MULTIPLIER EVENTS
Cn	- LEARNING/TEACHING/TRAINING ACTIVITIES
n	- number of the activity

- WP1: Project management and implementation activities
- WP2: Context diagnosis
- WP3: Strategic plan development model for ACCESS4ALL
- WP4: Implementation of the strategic plan
- WP5: Lab of Social Development in Higher Education

Budget

Institution	Management	Transnational meetings	Intellectual Outputs Researchers	Intellectual Outputs Technicians	Multiplier Events	Total
UAB	18.000,0 €	6.120,0 €	10.412,0 €	5.202,0 €	1.000,0 €	**40.734,0 €**
IPL	9.000,0 €	3.245,0 €	10.412,0 €	5.610,0 €	1.000,0 €	**29.267,0 €**
JY	9.000,0 €	3.615,0 €	17.976,0 €	9.396,0 €	1.000,0 €	**40.987,0 €**
UNIBEG	9.000,0 €	1.335,0 €	14.766,0 €	8.100,0 €	7.500,0 €	**40.701,0 €**
U. Bucaresty	9.000,0 €	3.245,0 €	5.550,0 €	3.190,0 €	17.000,0 €	**37.985,0 €**
U. Bristol	9.000,0 €	3.245,0 €	15.836,0 €	10.530,0 €	1.000,0 €	**39.611,0 €**
	63.000,0 €	**20.805,0 €**	**74.952,0 €**	**42.028,0 €**	**28.500,0 €**	**229.285,0 €**

The global budget approved by the Spanish national agency is 229.285,00 €.

Reports

Progress report

By ***15th July 2016***, the Coordinator shall complete a report on the implementation of the project, covering the reporting period from the beginning of the implementation of the project to 15th June 2016. The Partner shall make necessary contributions to this report according to the conditions agreed in the coordination meetings.

Mid-term report

By ***28th February 2017***, or when at least 70% of first pre-financing have been used, the Coordinator shall complete a progress report on the implementation of the project, covering the reporting period from the beginning of the implementation of the project until one month before the report shall be presented. The Partner shall make necessary contributions to this report according to the conditions agreed in the coordination meetings.

Final report

Within 60 days after the end date of the project, the Coordinator will complete a final report on the implementation of the project. Again the Partner shall make necessary contributions according to the protocols stablished in the coordination meetings.

Administrative issues

As specified on the partnership agreement, the general aspects that all partners shall comply are:

General obligations and role of the partners

The beneficiaries shall:

(a) be jointly and severally responsible for carrying out the Project in accordance with the terms and conditions of the Agreement;

(b) be responsible for complying with any legal obligations incumbent on them jointly or individually;

(c) make appropriate internal arrangements for the proper implementation of the Project, consistent with the provisions of this Agreement; where provided for in the Special Conditions, those arrangements shall take the form of an internal co-operation agreement between the beneficiaries.

General obligations and role of each partner

Each beneficiary shall:

(a) inform the coordinator immediately of any change likely to affect or delay the implementation of the Project of which the beneficiary is aware;

(b) inform the coordinator immediately of any change in its legal, financial, technical, organizational or ownership situation and of any change in its name, address or legal representative;

(c) submit in due time to the coordinator:

(i) the contributions which have been agreed upon in order to reach the project goals.

(ii) all the necessary documents in the event of audits, checks, evaluation and monitoring.

(d) Summary of Outputs, Activities and approximate submission shall be the same exposed on the original submission form.

Liability for damages

a) Each contracting party shall release the other from any civil liability in respect of damages resulting from the performance of this Agreement, suffered by itself or by its personnel, to the extent that these damages are not due to the serious or intentional negligence of the other party or its personnel.

b) The **Partner** shall protect the **National Agency**, the **Coordinator** and their personnel against any action for damages suffered by third parties, including project personnel, as a result of the performance of this contract, to the extent that these damages are not due to the serious or intentional negligence of the **National Agency**, the **Coordinator** or their personnel.

Confidentiality

a) The beneficiaries shall preserve the confidentiality of any information and documents, in any form, which are disclosed in writing or orally in relation to the implementation of the Agreement and which are explicitly indicated in writing as confidential.

b) The beneficiaries shall not use confidential information and documents for any reason other than fulfilling their obligations under the Agreement, unless otherwise agreed with the NA in writing.

c) Coordinator shall preserve the confidentiality of any information and documents, in any form, which are required to the partners for the correct economical and technical implementation of the project.

Payment arrangements

First pre-financing payment

The pre-financing is intended to provide the beneficiaries with a float.

The Coordinator shall pay the first pre-financing after receiving the amount from the National Agency as follows:

The Coordinator shall pay to the Partner within 30 days following the reception of first National Agency payment, a pre-financing payment corresponding to 40% of the maximum grant amount.

Second pre-financing payment

When the National Agency accepts the second progress report, Coordinator will receive the second pre-financing payment. Coordinator shall pay to the partner within 30 days following the reception of National Agency Payment according to this criteria: (1) if the activities developed and reported by the partner accomplish with the National Agency quality standards, the Coordinator shall transfer to the partner the corresponding 40% of the maximum grant amount; (2) if not, the Coordinator will discount from this pre-financing payment the corresponding discount applied by the National Agency.

Payment of the balance

The **Coordinator** shall pay the amount due as the balance within 60 calendar days, after he receives it from the National Agency, and after all documents referred to the final report arrive. This amount shall be determined following approval of the final report by the National Agency. The Coordinator shall apply to the partner the discounts imposed by the National Agency when it reviews the reports and activities in accordance with its quality standards.

Conversion of costs incurred in another currency into euro *(only if it is necessary)*

Any conversion into euro of costs incurred in other currencies shall be made by the beneficiaries at the daily exchange rate established by the European Central Bank and published on its website (http://ec.europa.eu/budget/contacts.grants/info_contracts/infoeuro/infoeuro_en.cfm) applicable on the day when the bank account of the **Coordinator** is credited.

Economic justification

All partners shall keep the documents cited below in order to accomplish the economic justification of the project. Before any economic report, copies of these documents must be available for the coordinator (online or hard copies), otherwise the cost shall not be accepted.

Management:

- No extra documents are required.

Transnational Meetings:

- Copy of traveller's passport.
- Original invoice of the flight company.
- Original invoice of the hotel.
- Certificate of meeting attendance signed by a responsible figure of the institution hosting the meeting.
- Signature sheets of all meeting participants.
- Meeting Agenda.
- Any other invoices than can demonstrate the meeting attendance.

Intellectual Outputs

- The output.

- Timesheets to demonstrate the hours dedicated to elaborate the product. That timesheets shall include:
    - Participant’s name and surname.
    - Professional profile (Researcher/Professor, Technician)
    - Working hours and days dedicated to the project.
    - ***IMPORTANT***: The time spent to attend meetings is not considered as part of intellectual outputs.
- Laboral contract between the participant and the partner institution.
- Last payroll to demonstrate the current relation between participants and their institutions.

Multiplier Events

- Event Agenda.
- Previous and post event’s broadcasting
- Signature sheets of all event participants.
- Original invoices of the costs of the event organisation.
- Participants’ satisfaction survey.
- Photos, videos, documents presented during the event, etc.