Deliverable report

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Second report on cross-fertilization context and opportunities between Research Infrastructures and Societal Challenge Pillar / Industrial Leadership Pillar / Excellence Pillar

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The *reports on cross-fertilization context and opportunities between Research Infrastructures and Societal Challenge Pillar / Industrial Leadership Pillar / Excellence Pillar* provide updates on the continuous efforts developed by the RICH project towards developing synergies with other NCP network projects.

On this second report, we describe collaborative initiatives carried out between June 2016 and November 2017. These have been of 3 major kinds: 1) general exchanges of information; 2) webinars or in-person presentations on Transnational Access to Research Infrastructures; and 3) tailor-made sessions on various aspects of interest to particular networks.

The activities carried out under task 2.3 are benefiting from other tasks within the RICH project and, through a close coordination within the consortium, are helping to maximize the impact of the project, through the dissemination of information and training beyond the beneficiaries and extended network, throughout the whole NCP ecosystem.

2. INTRODUCTION

The European Research Infrastructures (including e-Infrastructures) Programme encompasses all scientific and innovation fields.

In order to maximize the dissemination of Research Infrastructures opportunities to the relevant stakeholders, the RICH project contemplates a specific task (2.3) for connecting RICH with other NCP Networks.

Under the project's Grant Agreement, the general outline of the task has been defined and it includes **1)** the establishment of a structured collaboration with other thematic NCP networks with the aim of identifying cross-cutting synergies; and **2)** the Co-organization and/or representation of the RI dimension in other NCP network events.

This report details the actions carried out by the relevant RICH partners (APRE, DLR, FFG, IPPT-PAN, ISCIII and FCT) towards the implementation of this task in the June 2016 – November 2017.

3. RICH PLANNED AND IMPLEMENTED ACTIONS

Almost every thematic area and horizontal programmes in Horizon 2020 has a dedicated NCP Network project ongoing, with the aim of improving the preparation of the respective NCPs and the participation of clients in Horizon 2020 calls. The composition of consortia, contents of the projects' work plans and duration of the projects vary from one network to the next. This document reports the outcomes of the outreach efforts carried out by the RICH project towards other NCP networks and the activities undertaken and planned in collaboration with each of them.

Figure 1 maps the implementation period for each of the NCP network projects, with the current reporting period highlighted in yellow. At the bottom of the table, the Access4SMEs project has been added since the first reporting period, given that it hasn't started until September 2016.

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
	O N D	J F M A M J J A S O N D	J F M A M J J A S O N D	J F M A M J J A S O N D	J F M A M J J A S O N D	J F M A M J J A S O N D
RICH						
Net4Mobility						
ideal-ist						
NMP TeAm 3/4						
COSMOS						
HNN 2.0						
BIOHORIZON						
C-Energy						
ETNA						
NCPs CaRE						
Net4Society						
SEREN3						
NCP_WIDE.NET						
SiS.net						
Access4SMEs						

Figure 1: NCP Network projects implementation timings. The current report refers to activities carried out in the months highlighted in yellow (June 2016 – November 2017). Networks that have been awarded a follow-up project, or that had their implementation period extended have that added period marked in darker grey.

According to the RICH Grant Agreement, the responsibility for carrying out the communication with and information gathering from each of the Horizon 2020 NCP Networks was distributed according to the matrix presented in **Table 1**.

RICH Partner

	APRE	**DLR**	**FFG**	**IPPT-PAN**	**ISCIII**	**FCT**
NCP Networks	SC3	Space	ICT	MSCA	SC1	SwafS
	SC4	SC5			SC2	WIDENING
	SC7	SC6				
	NMPB					

Table 1: Distribution of responsibility for contacts with NCP networks by RICH partners.

As reported in the previous period, a communication channel was established with almost every NCP network project, and RICH partners responsible for each of the collaborations carried out the dialogue under general oversight of the task leader.

The depth of the implementation of collaboration activities has so far varied according to the particular interest of each network in the offer presented by RICH. There were 3 main groups of activities carried out so far:

1. general exchanges of information – including co-promotion of activities at events (several networks at ESOF 2016), or dissemination of RICH activities in newsletters and social media (Net4Mobility, COSMOS);

2. webinars or in-person presentations on Transnational Access to Research Infrastructures – with a focus on thematic opportunities for the respective NCP domains (HNN2.0, BioHorizon, Net4Mobility, ETNA, ALCUE NET);

3. tailor-made sessions on various aspects of interest to particular networks – including "combination of funding sources" (NCP_WIDE.net) and "Open Science" (SiS.net).

Apart from these, there were continued interactions with **ideal-ist**, which carried over from previous projects and materialized mostly in a presence of RICH in every ICT Proposers day, using those opportunities to promote the e-Infrastructures part of the Research Infrastructures Work Programmes. Finally, sporadic interactions were promoted on every opportunity when staff exchanges occurred at RICH partner institutions, involving NCPs from other H2020 programmes.

Below, specific actions carried for the various networks are described in more detail.

Net4Mobility

Following up on the preliminary exchanges of information, the interaction with Net4Mobility proceeded with the delivery of 2 presentations at separate meetings of the project: On July 6th 2017, in Warsaw, RICH partner IPPT PAN presented the RICH project and opportunities for researchers within the Research Infrastructures programme and projects; on November 10th 2017, in Rome, RICH partner APRE delivered another presentation for Net4Mobility NCPs, focusing on Transnational Access Opportunities in Research Infrastructures and projects (**Figure 2**).

The Net4Mobility project comes to an end on January 21st, 2018. A follow-up project (Net4Mobility+) will be under different coordination, starting in March 2018. Future interactions with the new project will be evaluated once it is under way.

Figure 2: *Tweet* showing audience of MSCA NCPs attending a presentation on Transnational Access to Research Infrastructures, delivered by RICH partner APRE

ideal-ist

ideal-ist has, traditionally, been one of the networks with more shared interests with RICH. This is in large part due to the fact that the Infrastructural part of the ICT research ecosystem in Europe is under the

umbrella of the Research Infrastructures programme (under the e-Infrastructures part). Inevitably, several NCPs follow both the Research Infrastructures and the ICT programmes.

Ideal-ist's annual ICT Proposers' day is a prime event for collaboration and several RICH partners have been active both in the **2016** (26-27.09.2016) and **2017** (09-10.11.2017) events. This was particularly important for the sessions on the e-Infrastructures, promoted by DG CNECT. In addition to these, RICH co-promoted a workshop with the ALCUE NET network of CELAC NCPs as a side event of the ICT Proposers' day 2016 (27.09), which helped cement the ICT-RI network between EU and CELAC.

Finally, the public activities of the RICH project have been advertised through the ideal-ist web page.
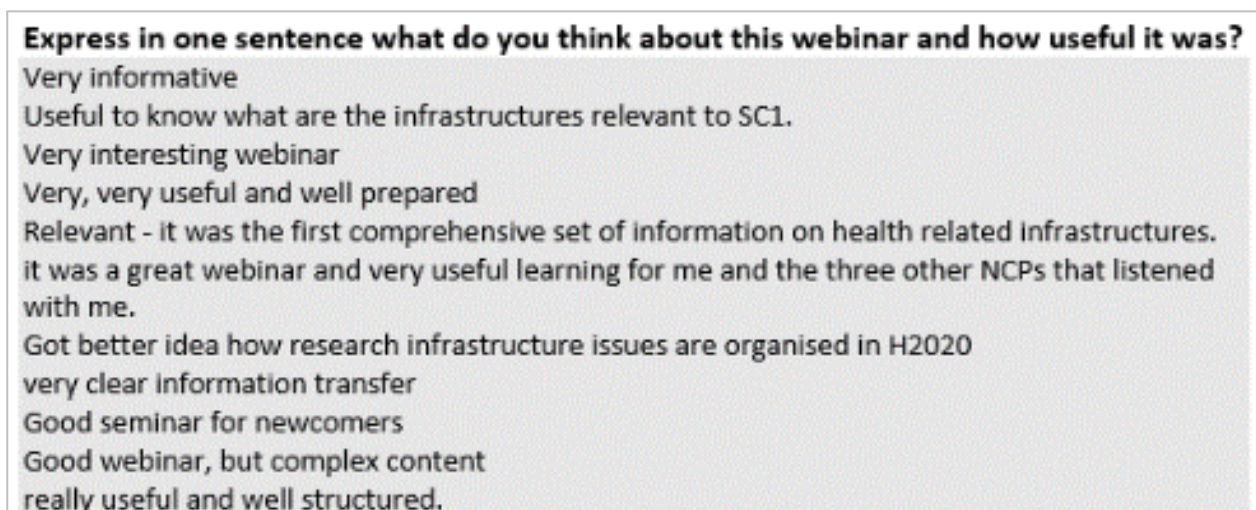
NMP TeAm 3

The NMP TeAm 3 project finished at the end of 2017, with the follow-up project NMP TeAm 4 starting in January 2017. This reporting period, thus, covers the end of the first and beginning of the second projects. This has caused some delay in establishing productive collaboration. Nevertheless, the offer of a dedicated webinar or an in-person presentation of the Research Infrastructures programme and Transnational Access opportunities in the NMP domain is awaiting feedback from the NMP TeAm 4 coordination.

COSMOS

Even though a dialogue has been established with the coordination of COSMOS, specific actions have yet to materialize, given the lack of expressed interest on the side of COSMOS. As for the other networks, a set of potential actions have been put forward for consideration, but despite a general expression of interest in the past, RICH was so far unsuccessful in engaging productively.

HNN 2.0

On October 25th, 2016, RICH partner ISCIII delivered a webinar on Transnational Access opportunities for the SC1 NCPs. The webinar was very well received (see feedback examples on **Figure 3**), and a recording was available for future consultation by HNN 2.0 NCPs.

> **Express in one sentence what do you think about this webinar and how useful it was?**
> Very informative
> Useful to know what are the infrastructures relevant to SC1.
> Very interesting webinar
> Very, very useful and well prepared
> Relevant - it was the first comprehensive set of information on health related infrastructures.
> it was a great webinar and very useful learning for me and the three other NCPs that listened with me.
> Got better idea how research infrastructure issues are organised in H2020
> very clear information transfer
> Good seminar for newcomers
> Good webinar, but complex content
> really useful and well structured.

Figure 3: Extraction from feedback forms evaluating the RICH webinar on Transnational Access to Research Infrastructures for SC1 NCPs (HNN 2.0 network)

BioHorizon

On March 8th, 2017, RICH partner ISCIII delivered a webinar on Research Infrastructures, focusing on Transnational Access to facilities in the scientific domains covered by SC2. The webinar was attended by 30 NCPs and the presentation was available afterwards on the BioHorizon intranet platform.

C-Energy

Figure 4: Evaluation results for the webinar delivered to BioHorizon project NCPs

Energy is one of the well-delineated research fields addressed by the H2020 Research Infrastructures programme, as well as ESFRI. There is, thus, interest in collaborating with C-Energy, and expression of such interest has been mutual. Due to several agenda incompatibilities, concrete action has only been planned towards the end of this reporting period, with a webinar focusing on Transnational Access to Research Infrastructures being scheduled for March 7th, 2018.
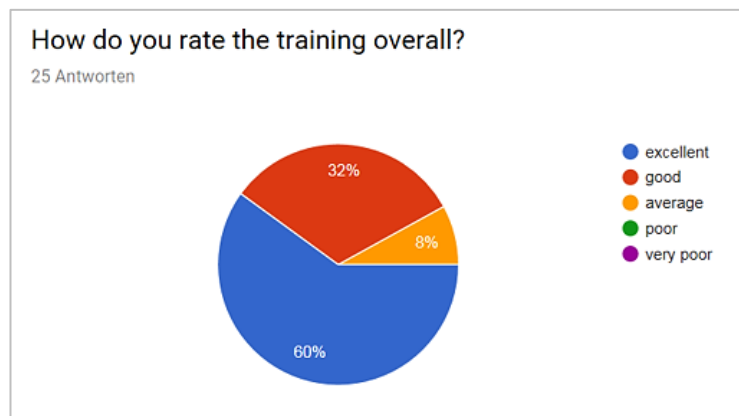
ETNA

On March 29th 2017, RICH partner APRE delivered a webinar on "Transnational Access and Services to European Research Infrastructures" to the ETNA network of SC4 NCPs. The webinar was attended by 19 NCPs.

NCPs CaRE

The Environmental and Earth Sciences are one of the strongest pillars in the European Research Infrastructures edifice. Several EU policy priorities rest on environmental issues and this research community is among the most active in the Research Infrastructures programme. It is, thus, natural that NCPs CaRE has been flagged as one of the priority networks under this task. Nevertheless, and despite attempts on the RICH side to coordinate joint activities, there hasn't been a productive response from the side of NCPs CaRE. For the remainder of the RICH project, one last effort will be made to connect and to provide useful information to the SC5 NCP colleagues.

How do you rate the training overall?
25 Antworten

- excellent 60%
- good 32%
- average 8%
- poor
- very poor

Net4Society

RICH partner FCT was present at the "Democracy and Europe - Our Common Future?" event, organized by the Net4Society project in Lisbon, 30-31 of October, 2017. A networking corner for NCPs from non-SC6 H2020 programmes was set up at the event, and RICH was represented and interacted with participants. Other, more directed actions, are pending feedback from the Net4Society project coordination and are expected during 2018.

SEREN3

Contact was established with the SEREN3 coordination, but interest in research infrastructures was lukewarm, for which reason there haven't been specific actions planned together with the SC7 NCPs. As with NCPs CaRE, one last effort will be made to connect and to provide useful information to the SC7 NCP colleagues.

NCP_WIDE.NET

On October 11th, 2016, RICH partner FCT presented a talk on "Funding the Lifecycle of Research Infrastructures" at the NCP_WIDE.NET workshop on synergies between funding sources for R&I (**Figure 5**). The presentation was a joint effort from FCT and ISCIII and it focused on case studies extracted from the 1st RICH Symposium, held in Madrid (Task 3.1). This collaboration with NCP_WIDE.NET was one of the cases of service provided "on demand" by RICH to partner NCP networks, stemming from the expertise accumulated within the network and maximizing its value through sharing with others.

Figure 5 - Introductory slide on the presentation delivered at NCP_WIDE.NET's workshop on synergies between funding sources for R&I

SiS.net

On May 30th 2017, RICH partner DLR delivered a presentation at the SiS.net project meeting in Berlin, on Transnational Access to Research Infrastructures and on the contribution of the RI programme to the "Open Science" policy. This has focused mainly on the e-Infrastructures being set-up and coordinated under the EOSC framework. The event was attended by around 30 NCPs, who had a chance of incorporating the information about architecture, governance, financing and deployment schedule into the "open science" policy framework promoted through the SWaFS programme.

NCP Academy

RICH is part of the "NCP projects coordinators forum" established by the NCP Academy as a Task Force (TF) to report on the impact of NCP projects from the NCP perspective including aspects such as examples of good practices, recommendations for remaining H2020 and FP9.

Based on the Meet & Exchange workshop on „Impact of NCP projects" (June 7th 2016, Copenhagen, http://www.ncpacademy.eu/meet-exchange-workshop-impact-of-ncp-networks/) the objective of the TF is to structure and maintain a stable community where NCPs Projects coordinators can discuss, compare and improve the services provided by the NCPs projects and the impact they generate.

The Community is chaired by APRE that acts as moderator.

NCP project coordinators established a Task Force to discuss, compare and improve the services they provide and the impact they generate. The TF interacts with other stakeholders including the EC Officers, National Coordinators and experts that have been – and possibly will be – involved in the development of the TF's activities.

RICH contributed to the TF: from the very preliminary phases to a mature status of self-awareness of the NCP system and services that necessarily need to be implemented by different networks to comply with our own mandate: *support transnational cooperation among NCPs and the implementation of the WP*, but it is clearly perceived as a unique, whole system.

The TF grew up around three milestones, represented by three "consultations": Feedback from the review meetings, Collection of data on individual and joint activities and Continuation of Network activities. The overall exercise led to the conclusion that NCP projects provide a paramount benefit that makes the existence of individual network projects meaningful:

- **Community**: the networks represent a community for all NCPs irrespective of the geographical belonging or experience and ensure equal access to information, documents, expertise…;

- **Benchmarking**: specific needs and competencies are usually assessed and taken into consideration in the implementation of the network workplan (e.g. trainings, welcome pack, mentoring, staff exchange);

- **Transnational cooperation**: ultimately it raises the general standard of support, ensuring that the programme becomes known and readily accessible to all potential applicants;

- **Bridging the Programmes**: NCP Network Projects should be up and running during the launch of FP9 in order to ensure the bridge between the two programmes and prompt support to the capacity building activities for NCPs and applicants.

Figure 6 – Cover page of the experience report on "impact of NCP projects" produced by the NCP Academy

The consolidated outcomes of the TF activities have been presented during the Meet and Exchange Workshop: "NCP Systems – benchmarking on micro and macro level; future needs" that held in Helsinki on May 30-31, 2017.

Other Networks

On July 26th, 2016, a webinar on Research Infrastructures, focusing on Transnational Access opportunities was delivered by RICH partner ISCIII to the ALCUE NET project of Latin American and Caribbean NCPs. Although not foreseen in the RICH project as a target audience, the consortium decided to make this link, due to the priorities set out jointly at the Senior Officials Meeting (SOM) for EU-CELAC cooperation, which pointed Research Infrastructures as one of 3 pillars for the future R&I engagement between these World blocks.

The webinar was delivered in Spanish to an audience of NCPs from 12 institutions in 7 CELAC countries (Argentina, Brazil, Colombia, Costa Rica, Mexico, Republica Dominicana, Uruguay). This interaction has been a stepping stone also for a new MoU signed between RICH and Uruguay, for inclusion in the Extended Network, and has allowed informal contacts to continue to this date.

4. CONCLUSIONS

The European Research Infrastructures programme is placed under the Scientific Excellence pillar of Horizon 2020. It is relevant for all areas of the Framework Programme and thus engagement of NCPs from all domains of Horizon 2020 in the opportunities offered through this programme is important to maximize its impact.

As such, the RICH project has pro-actively engaged all other NCP networks in a dialogue about the main opportunities as identified by RICH partners, but also – and importantly – on the knowledge gaps and information needs identified by the partner networks themselves. The latter has led mainly to 2 tailor-made presentations, on case studies for combination of funds in Research Infrastructures, for the NCP_WIDE.NET project; and on e-Infrastructures for Open Science, for the SiS.net project. Such offer was only possible due to the good articulation between RICH Work Packages and Tasks within them, which allowed the partners to assimilate and re-package the lessons learned in Symposia and in Expert Seminars in formats that were useful to the new target audiences.

In a task of this nature, interest has to be mutual, and even though there has been an attempt at engaging, only a subset of the partner NCP networks has embraced the offering enthusiastically. For those who did, and especially the ones for which RICH partners had an opportunity to present a webinar or to deliver a talk at a larger event, the feedback from the audience has been invariably good. This is a clear sign of the value of this task, and of the need to spread the practice to benefit of as many NCPs as possible.

By the end of the previous reporting period, HNN 2.0, NCPs CARe and Net4Society networks were identified as priority partners/targets of actions in this task. So far, HNN2.0 has been the only one with which a significant activity (webinar) was possible. Until the end of the project, final attempts will be made at this connections, along with the already planned actions, as detailed in the previous chapter.

Hopefully, the continued interaction with other networks will be a useful way of defining collective actions for the final stage of H2020, and some of the actions carried out will certainly inform on ways to more efficiently allocate resources and boosting the impact of the work of NCPs.