



TEQ Steering Committee Meeting

Online via Bluejeans - July 17, 2020 – 17:00-18:00

Agenda

1. Updates on the lockdown from the partners
2. Actions to take to mitigate the consequences of the COVID lockdown
3. Reports and Review Meeting
4. Observations on the choice of external experts for the Review Meeting
5. AOB

Participants

- UNITS: Angelo Bassi, Irene Spagnul
- INFN: Catalina Curceanu
- QUB: Mauro Paternostro
- OEAW: Luis Cortes Barbado
- AU: Cyrille Solaro
- UCL: Peter Barker
- Southampton: Hendrik Ulbricht
- MSquared: James Bain
- TUD: Liberato Manna

Minutes

1. Updates on the lockdown from the partners

Angelo Bassi welcomes the participants and opens the meeting. He goes through the Contingency Plan prepared and updated by the partners since March 2020 to monitor the situation and be ready, if needed, to react project-wise. The Plan is an alive document that is constantly updated by the partners and contains relevant information on dates of closures and re-opening of the partner institutions and universities (especially labs) and possible effects of the crisis on the project deliverables. Angelo asks the partners if there are changes to make or further updates. No changes are needed.

2. Actions to take to mitigate the consequences of the COVID lockdown

Angelo Bassi illustrates the options:

Mitigation measures (from less to most invasive):

- I. Reorganize tasks - no formal action (project ends as originally planned)
- II. Rescheduling of deliverables - formal action towards Commission with justification (project ends as originally planned)
- III. Extension up to 6 months with rescheduling of deliverables - formal action towards Commission (easily granted, fairly fast)
- IV. Extension over 6 months with rescheduling of deliverables - formal action towards Commission (evaluated case-by-case)

Partners express their concern over the delays accumulated over the lockdown period and state their opinion:

Peter Barker proposes to ask a 6-month extension;

Hendrik Ulbricht also proposes to ask a 6-month extension and to shift some deliverables.

Catalina Curceanu states that INFN has restarted to work normally but their work depends on the work done by other partners. Not possible to travel to other labs yet. Very unlikely that missions are to be allowed in a short time.

Mauro Paternostro agrees with asking a 6-month extension (try to ask a costed extension).

The partners discuss a possible costed extension. Irene Spagnul reminds that some money from the budget line 'Other direct costs' can be moved to the budget line 'Personnel' in case money for Travels/Events (or other costs that during COVID emergency are unlikely to be spent) are unused.

The project partners decide to request to the Commission a 6-month extension of the project to catch up with delays in labs and experiments due to the COVID-19 outbreak.

Angelo is appointed to write to the PO for (possibly a costed) extension of 6 months and reschedule of deliverables. When is it the right time to ask for the extension?

3. Reports and Review Meeting

Irene Spagnul reminds deadlines for reports:

- Financial Report and Use of the Resources Report: July 31 – to be uploaded on the SYGMA portal
- Other info for continuous reporting (gender, dissemination, risks, innovation and SME impact, etc.): July 31

Discussion on the agenda for the Review Meeting – everyone agrees. Angelo confirms he will share it with PO asap. Irene reminds that the next SC Meeting is scheduled for 14th September and the Review Meeting for 15th September.

4. Observations on the choice of external experts for the Review Meeting

The partners have no observation on the choice of external experts for the Review Meeting. Angelo will confirm the choice to the PO.

Angelo thanks the participants and closes the meeting.

ADDENDUM - 10th August 2020

Angelo has written to the PO on July 21, as agreed during the meeting, with the following requests:

- 1) Is it advisable to discuss the 6-month extension request during the review meeting in September (keeping in mind that the first upcoming scientific deliverables are due by the end of the year) or is it better to initiate the procedure sooner?
- 2) Is it possible to ask for a costed extension? TEQ is a complex project, and any delay implies an increase of costs.

The PO has answered:

- 1) *There is a general approach taken by us with respect to requests for an extension of up to six months, in view of the impact from COVID-19 – there is no problem. The only important detail is that we avoid processing amendments for an extension of the duration of a project earlier than 6 months before the end of the project. So, we will process the amendment for an extension in about a year time.*
- 2) *We cannot change the grant amount. We understand that the project (essentially every project) is impacted by COVID-19, including financially and we can grant extensions of the duration of the project but we cannot increase the money. Thus, the only option is to reduce the scope of the project as much as necessary, without compromising too much the main objectives.*

The change of the due dates of all the deliverables that supposed to be submitted at the end of the project will happen with the amendment for the extension. If there are deliverables due sometime in the middle of RP3, their deadline can be changed even without an amendment, just after a discussion with me.