

Information session minutes

Call Policy Supporting Research (PSR) 2019

Participants

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New approach of PSR

Introduction by Mr Guy Rayée, vice-director of DGD:

- DGD has already 20 year experience with policy supporting research
- Evaluation of 2016 showed that not all forms of support were operationalised and internalized by the administration
- Following this evaluation, there were discussions on how to reform the system during one year and a half
- The new system will start on the 1st of January 2019
- There are differences with the ongoing ACROPOLIS system: the term will no longer be 3 years, the budget is more limited and the intercommunity character of the research groups is no longer obligatory
- A call is organised for four themes, for which terms of reference were developed by DGD
- The main driver of policy supporting research should be the needs of DGD, not the needs of the researchers. PSR is aimed at supporting DGD.
- Term is 1 year, with possible extension for two years, which will be decided on year by year. This will depend on the products developed and the capacity development that has been done in relation to the needs of DGD.
- First information meeting for interested researchers is organised today. Maybe in September another information round will be organised.
- Next steps for a researcher to take is to decide if there is interest. If so, further contact should be made with the focal points of DGD who are directly involved to see whether a match is possible between the needs of DGD and the expertise and interest of the researcher
- Proposals will be submitted to DGD on the 1st of October.

Information on the call

See powerpoint presentation

Questions and answers:

- **Budget:**

- What is accepted and what is not in collaboration with non-university actors? How do we manage the daily fee with these actors? Who should be considered as a non-university actor? Can this be an NGO? → Everything is possible, if the collaboration has an added value. There are no limitations, but more partners involved does have budgetary implications (budget will need to be shared among all those who demand payment for their input). However, this will be an internal matter since the budget is to be calculated on the basis of the number of man-days multiplied by 1.000 EUR. From this overall budget, all parties contributing to the PSR need to be paid from.
- Is the fee seen as a day price for one person or for the whole team? → How to use the fee is up to the researchers to decide and justify. Daily fee is fixed to avoid competition based on fees. Cfr. Supra : the result of the calculation makes up the overall budget from which all costs, for all individuals or parties, are to be paid from.
- Can investment costs be made? → How to use the fee is up to the researchers to decide and justify. The daily fee is just a calculation logic, the use of the budget is up to the researchers to develop.

- **Countries**

- Are the partnerships in the South limited to the partners countries of DGD? → There is a preference for the 14 partner countries of bilateral cooperation and of university cooperation for development. But in the context of a certain topic, a partner with great expertise in another country can be part of the proposal. The proposal should give the necessary information on why a certain partner is put forward.
 - List of 14 partner countries of bilateral cooperation: Benin - Burkina Faso - Burundi - DR Congo - Guinea - Mali - Morocco - Mozambique - Niger - Palestinian Territory - Rwanda - Senegal - Tanzania – Uganda
 - 16 extra countries for university cooperation for development: Bolivia – Cambodia – Cameroon – Cuba – Ecuador – Ethiopia – Haiti – Indonesia – Kenya – Madagascar – Nicaragua – Peru – the Philippines – South-Africa – Suriname – Vietnam

The final choice of countries will be made jointly with DGD.

- **Additional information**

- An inventory of training needs and plans of DGD is mentioned in the call, however, with little details. It would be interesting for universities to have more detailed information → This is not yet possible, but something that can be done in the future. The context is changing rapidly for the administration of DGD (international agendas, political choices...) and at the same time there are no extra human resources. Policy supporting research is also only one part of the instrumentarium of DGD (consultancies, Enabel...).
- Please feel free to contact DGD to discuss a proposal and have additional information.

- **Themes**
- The terms of reference are very broad. Should all the topics be included in the proposal or can we specify and focus? → this is up to the researchers, in consultation with the focal points. At the same level is the consideration of what can be done in 1 year. The proposal should focus on the deliverables of the first year. Advice is to keep exchanging information even after today, with the focal points. This is not a one way traffic, but a two way traffic. If you have suggestions that are not covered by the ToR, proposals can be done.

Terms of reference

Short summary of the Terms of References by the focal points Jean Jacques Bastien, Liesbeth Lodde-
dewyck, Sandrine Vanhamme and Geert Vansintjan.

Questions and answers:

- The Terms of References do not give a lot of information on already existing initiatives, platforms, networks...? → ToR indeed give a more general view, but after selection there will be an interactive process with the focal point to give information on everything that already exists before starting the project. This is one on one with the focal point.
- Is it possible to give more details on the availability of the focal points at DGD? → information will be available on the website of ARES and VLIR-UOS.
 - SDG: [Olivier Thery](#) - D0.1, [Tim Bogaert](#) - MD8, (Until 30/07 [Geert Vansintjan](#))
 - Gender: [Catherine Gigante](#) - D2.5, [Sandrine Vanhamme](#) - D2.5
 - Water: [Carol Durieux](#) - MD8, [Liesbeth Lodde-
dewyck](#) - MD8
 - Private Sector Development: [Jean Jacques Bastien](#) - D2.2, [Luc Risch](#) - D1
- Do we need to start on 1 January 2019 or is there some flexibility? → This is linked with the number of days you propose. The number of days and the budget is spread out over the year. The results should be there by the end of the year, or on the moments as requested by DGD (eg. In case of preparations for conferences, missions, ...). Also keep in mind that a possible prolongation is decided in September, so do not plan the delivery of all the products by the end of the year. We need to be able to evaluate the products already delivered.
- Is the prolongation subject to another evaluation? Will we need to develop another budget proposal? → Yes. This will be the task of the committee that monitors the implementation of the project. A first monitoring meeting is ideally planned in February/March.
- Can the proposal be complementary to Global Minds? → Yes, both programmes have another finality (capacity building of DGD versus capacity building of higher education institutions), so they can be complementary. Double funding, however, is not allowed.

Selection of proposals

Explanation of Mr Guy Rayée:

- Eligibility check is done by VLIR-UOS and ARES
- A small group will go through the proposals received. This is not a scientific board, the focus is not academic but the match with the needs of DGD, there should not be a 20 pages list of publications... The project should have hands-on and practical applications.
- Evaluation criteria are standard:
 - Composition of the team, proven knowledge and experience with respect to the theme proposed, involvement in previous policy support (Belgian, other...), knowledge of countries, capacity for action learning approach...

- Quality of the proposal relating to the ToR, products and activities proposed, link with SDG-framework, risk assessment...
- Budget: what will be done and how will resources be applied. No negotiations are foreseen.
- When a proposal starts, the team and DGD need to sit together to agree upon the final plan of action, and, if applicable, the choice of countries.
- Selection will be transparent and feedback will be communicated.
- Another possibility is of course the short term call for proposals.
- Current ACROPOLIS-groups can also be contacted to talk about their experience with working for DGD.

Questions and answers:

- Can the list of presence be circulated together with the themes of interest of the researchers so that we can find each other for collaboration? → this will be done by ARES and VLIR-UOS. A joint proposal will indeed be easier for selection, so it is encouraged to contact other researchers and see if there are possibilities to elaborate a joint proposal.
- How many themes will be funded? If the maximum budget is €250.000 and there is only €500.000 available for this call? How will the themes be chosen? → Priority setting will be done by DGD. There is some flexibility in the available budget for this call. Another part of the budget is reserved for tailor made short term assignments. This will also start up in 2019. If there are not enough short term questions, a part of this budget can be used for the long term assignments. In principle, DGD wants to have a PSR group for each of the 4 themes, hoping that in total the cost per group will be less than 250.000 EUR. But in case of a good amount of qualitative and convincing proposals, DGD might revise the budget division over the two types of PSR.
- Is it the goal of DGD to have 1 project on each theme? → there is in principle not enough budget for each theme, but there is some flexibility. Four themes would only be possible if there are proposals of €100.000-150.000. If everybody goes for the maximum, maybe we need to postpone some themes or even abandon it.
- What is the ideal situation for DGD: different small projects or a limited number of big ones? What is the easiest seen from the administration side? → Easiest for the administration would be to have one big project for each theme, but the minister wants to dynamise the process and wants to avoid to define groups for too long.
- Aspect of interdisciplinarity is not mentioned in the call, but seems to be important? → Yes.
- Will DGD also have a coordinating role after receiving the proposals, for example by putting proposals together? → This could be possible, but this situation can be avoided by being proactive and contacting other researchers. So the elaboration of joint proposals is encouraged.
- Do not forget to include the institutional overhead in the overall budget. This overhead should be paid from the overall budget. For VLIR-UOS this overhead is maximum 10%.