



REPUBLIC OF TUNISIA
Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research
Future European Tunisian Research Innovation
Cooperation Project (FETRIC)

Work package 2- Task 2.1

Plan for improving the innovation management capacity of Research Centres

TERMS OF REFERENCE

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July 2015

1. PROJECT DETAILS

Project: Plan for improving the innovation management capacity of Research Centres, Future European Tunisian Research Innovation Cooperation Project (FETRIC), (FETRIC action plan/ Work package 2 - Task 2.1).

Project coordinator: Pr Moez Jbara, FETRIC Coordinator.

2. BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVES

The plan for improving the innovation management capacity of Research Centres is made in the context of the implementation of the Future European Tunisian Research Innovation Cooperation project (FETRIC) which aims to strengthen the bilateral cooperation between the EU and Tunisia, by enhancing synergies between S&T EU and Tunisian actors, projects and programmes. FETRIC will tackle the Horizon 2020 societal challenges through a challenge-based approach in order to examine and answer societal challenges in both Tunisia and the EU, especially in these fields: scarcity of resources, energy with a focus on renewable energy and energy saving and high quality affordable food.

FETRIC is organized in 5 different work packages. The objective of those WP is to support the bilateral ST&I policy dialogue by contributing to the preparation and implementation of a new road map for future EU-Tunisian STI cooperation. It is also to support the coordination and proper synergies with other research policies and programmes of EU Member States vis-à-vis Tunisia, putting special focus on the development of new programmatic approaches and fitting instruments.

The overall objectives of the second work package (task 2.1) is to address the problem of the lack of linkages between the research community and the enterprises, and also the lack of skills ensuring interfaces and methods to create trust between the two worlds. Against this background the MHESR initiated in collaboration with the DLR (International Bureau of the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research) a programme for the "***Improvement of the innovation management capacity of Research Centres***" (***IMC-RC Programme***). The programme IMC-RC aims to strengthen the innovation management capacity of the Tunisian research centres by introducing major changes in their way of governance, mainly in their administrative management and innovation strategy, and management of project and research activities.

The programme targets the following objectives:

- ✓ The development of a culture of evaluation and quality,
- ✓ The creation of an environment for the valorization of research and development of innovation,
- ✓ The acquisition of skills to develop tailored strategies for the improvement of innovation and technology transfer capacities.
- ✓ The adoption of an objective-based and result-oriented management.

The "Plan for improving the innovation management capacity" focuses on:

- ✓ Guided self-assessment of organizational performance in the field of knowledge- and technology transfer;
- ✓ Support for the identification of tailored measures for the improvement of the research centre's management capacities for knowledge- and technology transfer (Management results-oriented);
- ✓ Support for the development of a long-term strategy to bridge the gap between the research centre and the industry as well as national and international founding bodies.

The costs for the implementation of the *IMC-RC Programme* are covered by the *FETRIC project*.

3. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE IMC-RC PROGRAMME

The programme will be implemented in three phases:

Phase I: Call for proposals

A competitive call for proposals will be launched by the MHESR. In response, each research centre/laboratory which is eligible presents its candidacy, according to a “Bottom-Up” approach and a competitive basis. The proposal should specify goals and gaps of the research centres/laboratories, identify its strengths and propose its approach for reforms at the level of innovation management capacity.

A Technical Committee will be appointed for the selection of one research centre/laboratory from each social challenge (Resource efficiency particularly *Water*, High Quality Affordable *Food* and Energy particularly *renewable energies*). In total, three research centres/laboratories will be selected with reference to pre-defined selection criteria.

Phase II: Execution of the IMC-RC programme activities (three pilot projects)

A methodology for improving innovation capacities will be developed for each research centre/laboratory beneficiary for the IMC-RC programme (three pilot projects). This mission will be conducted by external experts from *University of Bremen* (Germany) with the support of Tunisian experts, DLR and MHESR. Through this action, the MHESR considers (i) positioning research laboratories in relation to the targeted objectives and international good practices in terms of management of knowledge- and technology transfer processes, and (ii) establishing a “Plan for improving the innovation management capacity”. The deliverables of this mission are:

- ✓ A proposed development “Plan for improving the innovation management capacity” for each research centre/laboratory beneficiary, including proposed strategies to strengthen management capabilities, and innovation and technology transfer capabilities.
- ✓ A training plan for capacity building in the conduct skills to formalize innovation strategies and adopt an objective-based and oriented management.

Phase III: Stakeholder workshop

At the final phase, an assessment of the technical feasibility of the three pilot projects will be carry out through a *Stakeholder workshop* to discuss the recommendations and developed strategies with the stakeholders. This workshop will be organized by the MHESR with the support of DLR.

Note that the FETRIC will provide financial assistance for the three research centres beneficiaries in order to support them in implementing their plans.

4. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CALL FOR PROPOSALS

4.1 ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA (conditions for participation)

This call for proposals is open to research centres that meet the following criteria:

- ✓ Include research structures (laboratories and research units) that are active in each of the FETRIC thematic priority fields
 - Scarcity of resources;
 - Energy with a focus on renewable energy and energy saving;
 - Agriculture, biotechnology and high quality affordable food.
- ✓ Include at least twenty-five (25) Statutory researchers with at least ten (10) of the category A (Professors or Associate Professors);
- ✓ Successful participation in EU framework programme projects

4.2 APPLICATION PROCEDURE

Proposals must be prepared using the form provided with these Terms of Reference. Proposals should be written in English and in accordance with the guidelines provided in these Terms of Reference and in the form annexed.

Components of the request for proposals:

1. Letter of application, dated, signed and addressed to the General Director of Scientific Research (dated and signed);
2. “Proposal Form” filled out according to the guidelines described in these Terms of Reference and in the proposal form (dated and signed);

The proposal must be dated, signed and sent to the General Directorate of Scientific Research-MHESR until **September 30, 2015, at 17.30 PM (Tunisian time).**

Final proposals must be (1) sent by post, or (2) deposited directly to the Registry Office of the General Directorate of Scientific Research-MHESR, **and mailed to the following address:** fetrich2020@yahoo.fr (with delivery notification) with the following indication:

« Do not open, call for proposals for the elaboration of plans for improving the innovation management capacity of Research Centres »

Future European Tunisian Research Innovation Cooperation (FETRIC)

Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research

Registry Office of the General Directorate of Scientific Research

7th Floor, 50 Avenue Mohamed V, 1030 Tunisia.

4.3 EVALUATION AND SELECTION CRITERIA

The proposals must follow the guidelines provided in these Terms of Reference and in the form annexed. Proposals will be reviewed by an international panel of independent experts. The review panel will be responsible for evaluating the merit of each proposal. The selection for program is based on the criteria presented in the following table.

Weight	Guidelines for selecting proposals
Compatibility with contextual needs and objectives of the action (as exposed in section 2) 70 points	Reliability of the environmental analysis: assessment of internal (strengths, weakness) and external (opportunities, threats) factors.
	Reality of the problems described
	Clarity and compatibility of the objectives outlined with contextual needs and objectives of the action
	Relevance of the proposed reforms and implementation procedure (main activities)
	Impact of the proposals: expected results and target groups
Quality of technical preparation 30 points	Evaluation of commitment and interest of the research centre in the programme
	Quality of the the self assessment exercise
	Quality of the presentation of the problems
	Scope of data
Total : 100 points	Quality of data analysis

5. CALENDAR OF RELEVANT DATES

ACTIVITY	Dates
Announcement of the call for proposals	July 27, 2015
Deadline for profile submissions	September 30, 2015
Selection of three research centres beneficiaries	October 02 - November 20, 2015
Experts' mission (Development of a methodology for improving innovation capacities)	December 01, 2015 - February 29, 2016
Organization of a Stakeholder workshop	The first half of March 2016
Validation of deliverables	The second half of March 2016
Implementation of the improvement plans	From April 2016 (not funded by FETRIC project)

6. INFORMATION AND QUESTIONS

Interested research centres can get further information about terms of reference via e-mail to the electronic address: hammamimaha2@yahoo.fr and find the electronic version of the documents related to this call on the web sites of the MHESR: www.mes.tn and FETRIC project: www.fetric.eu .