UNIVERSITÀ DEGLI STUDI DI PADOVA

2013 – Evaluation Commission Meeting
Call for Strategic Projects
II Edition – 2011

24 September 2013

The Evaluation Commission (EC) – Second Edition of the Call for Strategic Projects 2011 – met on September 24th, 2013, at 9.00 am in Sala Canova, Palazzo Storione, Padua, for the second step of the evaluation process to select the projects to propose for funding.

The following attended the meeting: Silverio Bolognani, Vice Rector for Research at the University of Padua, Andrea Berti, Head of International Relations, Research and Technology Transfer, the Research Office staff, and the following members of the EC except Serge Briffaud and Ian Robertson who sent their apologies and James Rehg:

Area	Name
01 Mathematics	MYCROFT Alan - Cambridge University, UK Computer Laboratory
02 Physics	YEOMANS Julia M. - Oxford University - The Rudolf Peierls Centre for Theoretical Physics
03 Chemistry	MARTIN LEON Nazario - Universidad Complutense de Madrid - Organic Chemistry Department
04 Pharmaceutical Sciences	PIRMOHAMED Munir - Department of Molecular and Clinical Pharmacology – University of Liverpool, UK
05 Earth Sciences	VENDRELL SAZ Marius - Department of Crystallography and Mineralogy - Universitat de Barcelona
06 Biology	DUCHEN Michael - Univ. College London, UK - UCL Consortium for Mitochondrial Research
07 Medical Sciences	FERRARA Napoleone - University of California, San Diego
08 Agricultural Sciences&Veterinary Medecine	TSUR Yacov - The Hebrew University of Jerusalem - Department of Agricultural Economics and Management
09 Civil Engineering and Architecture	KABELE Petr - CTU in Prague, Faculty of Civil Engineering Department of Mechanics Czech Republic
11 Industrial Engineering	PIIROINEN Petri - School of Mathematics, Statistics & Applied Mathematics - National University of Ireland, Galway (NUIG)
12 Philological-literary Sciences, Antiquities and Arts	TUTTLE Edward F. - Department of Italian - University of California, Los Angeles
14 Law	ROSSI Matthias - Universitat Augsburg D
15 Economics and Statistics	BRUSCO Sandro - Stony Brook University, Department of Economics NY
16 Political and Social Sciences	AMIN Ash - University of Cambridge - Christ's Church College - Department of Geography - Chair of the Panel

The first meeting of the EC (April 22, 2013) decided that the projects listed below should proceed to the second phase of the evaluation process:

PI	TITLES OF THE PROPOSAL
AVOGARO ANGELO	DYCENDI - Dynamics of cellular networks in diabetes mellitus: an in vivo approach
BARCACCIA GIANNI	STAFF - AgriFoodOmics: Sviluppo di una piattaforma genomica per l'accertamento di salubrità, tracciabilità ed autenticità dei prodotti agro-alimentari.

BARGELLONI LUCA	I-BIVALVE - Innovating BIValve AquacuLture in the VEnetian region
BAROLO MASSIMILIANO	MADEMAN - Multi-scale approach to the design and manufacturing of solid dosage oral forms for the pharmaceutical and food supplies industries
BASSO GIUSEPPE	LEUXOMICS - Human acute lymphoblastic leukemia: from testing drug response in xenograft models to genomic-driven discovery
BIMBI FRANCA	CLISP - THE CITY AS LIVING SPACE PERSPECTIVE. The "Greater Padua". Meanings and Social Practices from the present to the future generations.
BUBACCO LUIGI	PROMINENT - Pathogenic and rescue mechanisms in neurodegeneration
D'AVELLA DOMENICO	FC-NEURO - Exploring the use of functional connectivity MRI for predicting outcome in clinical neuroscience
DI NOTO VITO	MAESTRA - From Materials for Membrane-Electrode Assemblies to Electric Energy Conversion and Storage Devices
GALVANETTO UGO	NEWSEA - Extracting energy from wave-induced chaotic motions of a double-pendulum
GAMBERINI LUCIANO	HULIXEX - HUman LIfe EXplorer (HULIxEX)
GEROSA GINO	VESALIO+ - VESALIO+ in vivo self-regenerating heart valve replacements: preclinical trial in non-human primates and novel nanotechnology modifications for cardiosurgical and transcatheter implantation
LANZONI STEFANO	WILMES - Water fluxes and vegetation dynamics: Implications on Land management and Ecosystem Sustainability
LO SCHIAVO FIORELLA	CLIPS - Climate Change and Plant Survival Strategies. How subcellular compartments contribute to orchestrate plant responses to environmental stresses: cellular, molecular analyses and transfer of knowledge from a model plant to crop
MODENA CLAUDIO	MACH - Multidisciplinary methodological approaches to the knowledge, conservation and valorization of cultural heritage: application to archeological sites
MONTECCHIO LUCIO	NEWENTREES - Man and tree health: NEW ENdotherapic biocides for TREES injection
NICOLO' ANTONIO	KIDNEY - Incorporating patients' preferences in kidney transplant decision protocols
PACCAGNELLA IVANO	EVERE - European and venetian Renaissance.
REGGIANI CARLO	MUSCLE&FAT - Muscle-adipose tissue cross talk: dissecting the underlying mechanisms to combat obesity and its complications
ROSSI GIANPAOLO	PAPPHY - Prospective Appraisal of the Prevalence of Primary Aldosteronism in HYpertensive Patients presenting With Non Valvular Atrial Fibrillation
SCRIMIN PAOLO MARIA	NAMECA - Nanochemistry and medicine for cancer: from diagnosis to treatment
SEMENZATO GIANPIETRO CARLO	CANCERSIGN - Signal Transduction Pathways in Chronic Hematologic Malignancies: Identification of New Therapeutic Strategies
TESSARI PAOLO	MILKPROT - Structural, biochemical and functional characterization of milk-based proteins from different species: potential benefits for human health
TESTONI INES	SOCIALPACT - Social Practices and Actors for Culture of Trust : Promotion of constitutional cohesion between policy and economic system
THIENE GAETANO	TRANSAC - Translation in Arrhythmogenic Cardiomyopathy: from pathobiology to molecular medicine and prevention
TISO NATASCIA	IMPACT – Inception Mechanisms, Pathophysiology and Assessment of Cardiovascular Traits in IUGR: Biology, Clinical and Technological advances
VALBONESI PAOLA	EPP_ISLG - Efficient Public Procurement, Innovation and Sustainable Local Growth
VALLE GIORGIO	BIOINFOGEN - Bioinformatics for Personal Genomics
WEBER GUGLIELMO	POPA_EHR - Population aging - economics, health, retirement and the welfare state
ZORZI MARCO	NEURAT - The Cognitive Neuroscience of Attention in Perception and Cognition

After opening the meeting, the Chair invited the EC members, acting as Lead Reviewers, to initiate discussion on each proposal on the basis of their evaluation of written reports from external referees and their own judgements against agreed criteria such as scientific merit and originality, international comparability, feasibility and management, and societal value and impact. Every proposal was individually and fully discussed, involving all members of the EC. Discussion focused on the strengths and weaknesses the proposals, their comparative ranking, their disciplinary spread, and the available budget. In seeking to fund as many highly ranked proposals as possible, and recognising that many budget proposals seem to have been rounded-up to just below the limit, the EC decided to cut all budget requests by around 20%.
After careful and deep deliberation, the EC approved the following projects for funding (in alphabetical order of project acronym), satisfied of their international academic standing, value to Padova University and society at large, and disciplinary spread:

	Project name	Principal Investigator	Requested budget (€)	Proposed grant (€)
1	BIOINFOGEN	VALLE GIORGIO	999.972,00	**809.977,00**
2	DYCENDI	AVOGARO ANGELO	996.125,00	**806.861,00**
3	EVERE	PACCAGNELLA IVANO	502.147,00	**406.739,00**
4	KIDNEY	NICOLO' ANTONIO	429.300,00	**347.733,00**
5	MAESTRA	DI NOTO VITO	999.997,00	**809.998,00**
6	NAMECA	SCRIMIN PAOLO MARIA	999.365,00	**809.486,00**
7	NEURAT	ZORZI MARCO	995.134,00	**806.059,00**
8	POPA_EHR	WEBER GUGLIELMO	426.902,00	**345.791,00**
9	TRANSAC	THIENE GAETANO	813.020,00	**658.546,00**
		TOTAL	**7.161.962,00**	**5.801.190,00**

The EC spent considerable time in discussing other high quality proposals that it could not fund, and proceeded to draft feedback on all projects. Once approved by the EC, the feedback will be passed on to the PIs, both those whose proposals could not be funded on this occasion, and those whose proposals were approved. It was hoped that this would help applicants to finalise approved projects or refine future bids.

The meeting closed with a discussion of this Call and providing feedback for future similar Calls. The EC congratulated the University of Padova on the initiative, which has very few peers in Europe, and on the overall scientific quality of the projects. Looking ahead, the EC made the following recommendations to improve procedure:

-- Projects could be submitted and evaluated in two phases:

- In the first phase, candidates submit only an extended abstract (with a section on approach and methods to be used and expected outcomes) and a budget plan, to ease the load of reviewers and proposers;
- The EC admits to the second phase only a limited percentage of the projects, possibly lower than the 70% used in this call, and gives them feedback on how to structure the full project:
- The EC is provided with a marking scheme with a clear “cut-off mark”, i.e. a minimum mark a project must obtain to be admitted to the second phase;In the second phase, admitted candidates submit a full project description that takes into account the feedback received in the first phase;

– The University should encourage projects largely achievable in the project time via the evaluation criteria, i.e. projects with clearly unrealistic goalsin the timespan allowed by the call;
– The University should encourage multidisciplinarity by inviting researchers to propose realistic collaborations among researchers from different areas, and project teams should reflect significant interdisciplinary collaboration rather than opportunistic "tick-box" teams; the advantages from interactions between research groups should be clearly described;
– The University should require more detailed budgets which clearly explain how the funds will be used;
– The University should adopt a more inviting procedure to recruit external referees; for instance sending the project abstract with the e-mail invitation rather than forcing the referees to use the on-line procedure would lead to a higher degree of acceptances;
– The application form should be improved (not repetitive as it is now, with an improved section for breakdown of costs and budget explanations, CVs separated from the proposal) and made more user-friendly also from the graphical point of view both for those who fill it in and for those who evaluate it (with regard to font size, word limits, etc).

Some strategic recommendations were also offered: for instance, the University might consider organizing separate competitions with separate budgets and panels for the three macroareas, because it’s difficult to compare projects from very different fields; giving smaller grants to a higher number of projects to allow funded researchers to collect data to compete for bigger grants outside the University at international level; or establishing mechanisms and schemes designed for early career and fast rising scholars.

Finally, the Chair informed the EC members that, in accordance with the Call for Strategic Projects, they would also be responsible for evaluating the projects in itinere and ex post, under the supervision of the Scientific Committee of the University of Padua, which will report the outcome to the Academic Senate.

The Chair closed the meeting by warmly thanking the EC and staff at Padova University for making the Call such an efficient and pleasurable exercise.

The Chairman
Prof. Ash Amin