

*Equality Diversity and Inclusion for  
Research Enhancement in Bosnia Herzegovina*

**EDiRE**

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## Deliverable abstract

The deliverable contains a detailed description of all WP activities at month 18 of the project, paying particular attention to the setting up of the new Unit at SSST. In this deliverable, our primary objective is to assess the current landscape to identify opportunities for enhancing research management and fundraising initiatives at SSST. Additionally, we aim to establish effective communication channels to support the newly established Office for Research Project and Administration. This entails executing specific activities outlined in T5.3.

Moreover, we will conduct an overview of training courses developed by EDIRE partners for both academic and administrative staff at SSST and beyond. These courses are designed to enhance skills and knowledge relevant to research management practices.

Over the 18 months, collaboration between EDIRE partners has strengthened significantly as we collectively work towards the development of new project proposals. This collaborative effort underscores our commitment to advancing research excellence and innovation.

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## Glossary of abbreviations

AI	Artificial Intelligence
BA	Bosnia and Herzegovina
EC	European Commission
EDI	Equality, Diversity and Inclusion
ESR	Early-Stage Researcher
EU	European Union
GE	Gender Equality
GM	Gender Mainstreaming
HE	Higher Educational
HPC	High Performance Computing
IOT	Internet Of Things
IPR	Intellectual Property Rights
KoM	Kick-off-Meeting
ORPA	Office for Research and Project Administration
SSST	University Sarajevo School of Science and Technology
TUD	TU Dublin – Technological University Dublin
UCM	Complutense University of Madrid
UN	United Nations
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNIGE	University of Genoa
URCA	University of Reims Champagne-Ardenne
WP	Work package

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# 1. Introduction

This deliverable contains the description of all the activities carried out in EDiRE by month 18 within the framework of WP5.

WP5 is a Work package on *Expertise development in research management and fundraising*.

It is focused on ensuring that SSST develops structures and capacities in research management and fundraising in line with the standards required for research-vibrant universities in the European Research Area (ERA). WP5 aims at increasing the internationalisation and the research management and administration performance of SSST.

WP5 Specific Objectives are:

- 1)** establishing a new Research Management Unit within the institution;
- 2)** organising capacity building activities and high-level training for developing research management capabilities within SSST staff;
- 3)** implementing sustainable and durable actions in order to ensure a higher number of submitted applications to external R&I calls;
- 4)** engaging the highest possible number of SSST staff and especially those at high-level positions.

WP5 consists of five different tasks, this chapter discusses each task and the related activities which were conducted under each.

## 2. Recognition of current situation for boosting research management and fundraising capacities at SSST and beyond (T5.1)

This first task (M1-5) started with the KoM, which was organized at SSST on the 23rd September 2022.

On that occasion, bilateral meetings were organized between SSST and UNIGE Staff to review and analyse the current research management and fundraising infrastructures in SSST. Two panel sessions and a discussion between academics and government representatives were also held at this time.

The first panel included – EDIRE partners and experienced Horizon scheme participants, including Prof. Dr. Angela Celeste Taramasso, Rector's Advisor for Equality and Inclusion at the University of Genoa and Prof. Dr. Yvonne Galligan, Director of Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion at the Technological University Dublin. The panelists shared successful project initiatives that incorporated EDI principles at the core of their activities and explained the importance of gendering data and knowledge across all scientific branches and fields.

The second panel included individuals from BiH – Prof. Dr. Aleksandra Nikolić, the Minister of Science, Higher Education and Youth of Sarajevo Canton; Prof. Dr. Jasmina Husanović from the University of Tuzla; and the academician Prof. Dr. Mirsada Hukić from the Academy of Sciences and Art of Bosnia-Herzegovina. This panel consisted of discussions about recent efforts to highlight and implement gender mainstreaming within the university channels, and about sensitizing academia stakeholders and those involved with decision-making structures of the importance of implementing EDI related changes.

Having participants from BiH provided an opportunity to discuss research management and fundraising capacities within the country.

As part of this task, SSST conducted a survey of higher education and research institutions in Bosnia and Herzegovina, collecting data from 10 institutions with the aim of assessing adherence to EDI principles and current research and innovation practices and infrastructures. The activities helped to illuminate the areas of research management and administration procedures at SSST in need of improvement and which could benefit from further attention. The task main outcome is presented in the D5.1 Action Plan which contains a detailed report on the assessment of the situation at SSST and other research institutions in BiH.

### 3. Setting up and running of a research management/administration unit within SSST (T5.2)

This task is specifically devoted to the creation of a new research management/administration unit at SSST, as required by the call itself.

According to the needs that emerged in the activities in T5.1 in M6, a new Administration Research Unit was established with the aim of implementing capacity building activities and increasing the Unit's project design and management capabilities as a means of securing sustainability (MS2).

The Unit was named the 'Office for Research Project and Administration' (ORPA). Within the EDIRE project activities, and through the many trainings that have been conducted, ORPA has strengthened its capacities and has been put in the Institutional Statute of SSST University. ORPA is currently composed of three employees (while at the beginning it was 2) all of whom having previous experience in the design and management of research projects.

The names of the persons involved are:

- *Edis Arifagić, Head of the ORPA*  
Mr. Edis Arifagić (Bosnia and Herzegovina) is the University's Director of Research and Project Administration, providing overall coordination and oversight of all externally sponsored programs implemented by the University. Edis has more than 20 years of global experience in delivering large-scale development projects, serving in senior roles with both the OSCE and the UN's Development Program. He has successfully fundraised and implemented technical assistance and infrastructure programs valued at over EUR 120 million. Edis is also a Senior Response and Recovery Coordinator with the United Nation's Emergency Surge Program and has worked as a consultant for a range of international organisations and corporations. He holds degrees from Henderson State University (USA) and the University of Bristol (UK) in Political Science and International Security, respectively.
- *Amina Katica, ORPA Assistant*  
As a Project Officer, Amina Katica plays a crucial role in managing administrative project tasks, contributing significantly to the efficient execution of various initiatives. She is responsible for overseeing coordination efforts and ensuring quality assurance across projects. Amina is also tasked with managing the International office, where she oversees cross-border projects and facilitates international cooperation for University SSST. In this role, she facilitates effective communication and collaboration between diverse teams, ensuring that projects are executed smoothly and efficiently across geographical boundaries.
- *Selma Dedović, ORPA Assistant*  
Selma Dedović, with a background in law, finance, and project assistance, applies her skills in overseeing financial and other project operations at ORPA. In her



current role, she handles tasks like drafting agreements, preparing financial reports, and overseeing budgeting with a careful approach to ensure document integrity and protect the interests of all parties involved. Selma also manages open calls, evaluating proposals to support ongoing projects and contribute to their smooth progression. Her systematic document review and comprehensive understanding of financial and legal nuances make her a valuable contributor to effective project management and implementation.

- *Hena Saraj Atlić*

Hena Sara Atlic has built a solid foundation in implementation of project activities with a specific focus on digitalisation, youth empowerment, and supporting civil society organisations (CSOs). With notable experience at international organisations like the UNDP, she has focused on utilising digital technologies to foster development and ensure equitable opportunities. At SSST, Hena is assisting in coordination of project activities, stakeholder engagement, and promotion of digital solutions within projects, while demonstrating a strong commitment to social improvement.

- Jasmina Bajramović, ORPA Assistant for Internationalization (who left SSST in 2024)

ORPA deals with internationalisation, project administration, and acts as a support to all SSST academic staff in preparing and implementing research project proposals.

Between M6 and M9, once ORPA was created, specific personalised training was given by the EDIRE EU partners to the Unit's staff on how to organise the new office.

On the 13<sup>th</sup> April 2023, Rita Bencivenga and Cinzia Leone from UNIGE met Jasmina Bajramovic, Edis Arifagic, Amina Katica from SSST ORPA in an online meeting to discuss the following topics:

1. Day-to-day research support at SSST;
2. Bottlenecks and criticalities;
3. How to prevent and minimize obstacles;
4. Improvements and further actions.

During this meeting 3 training sessions delivered by UNIGE staff for ORPA but also open to other staff at SSST were scheduled:

- Fundraising and research funding, 20<sup>th</sup> September 2023;
- Project management and financial issues, 29<sup>th</sup> September 2023;
- Grant writing, 20<sup>th</sup> November 2023.

On April 14<sup>th</sup> 2023, the UCM team (Liisa Hanninen, Patricia Núñez, Cristina Pérez and Olga Kolotouchkina) held another online session with Jasmina Bajramovic, Edis Arifagic, Amina Katica from SSST ORPA to discuss available mechanisms and tools for identification of partners for European Projects. The main topics of the session were related to the expertise in

identifying potential partners and in building effective European consortiums. EDI and RRI aspects of partnerships were also discussed.

Further activities will be conducted between M10 and M36. While the work on this has already begun, the activities described in the subtask that will be mentioned above (a,b, c). are ongoing and are being planned further.

- A) A day-to-day helpdesk service is being offered by UNIGE staff for SSST: contacts have been created between administrative staff at UNIGE and the ORPA. This was aided by the in-person meeting that Amina Katica and Jasmina Bajramović (ORPA) attended at UniGe with the Research and Grants Office during their staff visit at the end of January 2023.
- B) Activities also consist of the organisation of periodic meetings and workshops with the high-level management of SSST Within the framework of T5.2 ST on the 1st and 2nd December 2023. The first day was dedicated to the participation of partner universities. The University of Reims Champagne-Ardenne (URCA) in France provided an introduction of URCA and its laboratories. They also presented an opportunity on Biomaterials and inflammation in bone sites, on HPC and Computer Graphics, and on IOT, AI and Applications. From the University of Genoa the topics were connected to the work at the Physiochemistry Lab, Virtual Reality, Augmented Reality & Gamification and – EDI in Business and Management Higher Education Institutions. The Technological University Dublin, Republic of Ireland presented two main mobility areas: one on gender and politics/social science, hosted by the RINCE Centre, with a strong focus on interdisciplinary HE funded research, and in the field of computer science with a focus on AI and Data Science, hosted by School of Computer Science. The Complutense University of Madrid, Spain, presented opportunities of the GRASIA research group and the Institute of Knowledge Technology. The main interest areas are on the application of Artificial Intelligence in multidisciplinary projects with social value, such as assistive technologies, health monitoring, ambient assisted living, smart cities, education, computational creativity, and tools to support Responsible Research and Innovation (RRI). During the last part of this meeting, Edis Arifagić, the Head of ORPA presented the ongoing activities at SSST and upcoming projects applications. The second day of the virtual mobility training involved the high-level management of SSST to generate impact at the national level. The people involved were EDIRE Advisory Board Member, Prof. Dr Mirsada Hukić who is member of The European Academy of Science as well as the BiH Academy of Science and Arts, SSST Chancellor Prof. Ejup Ganić and Dr. Jasna Bošnjović, Head of the International Relations Office of University of Sarajevo. More of these events are being planned and organized by EDIRE team, some of which are planned for March 2024, during which time a delegation from UCM and UNIGE will visit SSST.
- C) Another crucial part of the activities related to T5.2 is the organisation of international working groups to tackle crucial issues such as research funding, fundraising, research management, IPR and ethics. SSST and UNIGE asked partner universities to nominate experts in the fields of 1) Research funding and Fundraising; 2) IPR and research management; 3) Ethics. The groups are composed as follows:

## International working groups Organization

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Name	Institution	Contact
<b>GROUP 1_Research fundings and Fundraising</b>		
Aida Hajdarpašić	SSST University	<a href="mailto:aida.hajdarpasic@ssst.edu.ba">aida.hajdarpasic@ssst.edu.ba</a>
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Edis Arifagić	ORPA SSST	<a href="mailto:edis.arifagic@ssst.edu.ba">edis.arifagic@ssst.edu.ba</a>
Oluwasegun Seriki	R&I TU Dublin	<a href="mailto:oluwasegun.seriki@tudublin.ie">oluwasegun.seriki@tudublin.ie</a>
Cristina Pérez	UCM	<a href="mailto:mapere73@ucm.es">mapere73@ucm.es</a>
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Arnaud Renard	URCA	<a href="mailto:arnaud.renard@univ-reims.fr">arnaud.renard@univ-reims.fr</a>
Claudia Sanguineti	UNIGE	<a href="mailto:Claudia.Sanguineti@unige.it">Claudia.Sanguineti@unige.it</a>
<b>GROUP 2_Research management and IPR</b>		
Belma Ramić-Brkić	SSST University	<a href="mailto:belma.ramic@ssst.edu.ba">belma.ramic@ssst.edu.ba</a>
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Nwabuogo Enwerem	R&I TU Dublin	<a href="mailto:nwabuogo.enwerem@tudublin.ie">nwabuogo.enwerem@tudublin.ie</a>
Elisa Brey	UCM	<a href="mailto:ebrey@ucm.es">ebrey@ucm.es</a>
Olga Kolotouchkina	UCM	<a href="mailto:olga.kolotouchkina@ucm.es">olga.kolotouchkina@ucm.es</a>
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<b>GROUP 3_Ethics</b>		
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Edis Arifagić	ORPA SSST	<a href="mailto:edis.arifagic@ssst.edu.ba">edis.arifagic@ssst.edu.ba</a>
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Soon a first meeting for each group will be held, with the purpose of starting the activities in March. The working groups will be facilitated by UNIGE partners. Partner universities will be asked to share good practices and to also discuss the main obstacles related to their country/institution situation. After initial meetings have taken place representatives from other RPOs in BA and in the WB will be invited to join the discussions.

## 4. Mentoring and reinforcement (T5.3)

The focus of this task is to raise awareness amongst SSST staff about the need to increase the research community involvement in project design activities.

To do this the organisation of workshops and periodic meetings have already started. The virtual mobility training mentioned earlier can be considered an important part of this, and further in-person workshops will be organized to take place in March 2024 when staff from UNIGE and UCM will visit SSST. It is important to report that to organize the activities of WP5 and T5.2 sub (b) and (c) since December 2023 members of UNIGE and SSST, including the ORPA, have attended regular online meeting (8 since December, still ongoing).

Further activities that are being planned in strict collaboration between UNIGE and SSST are:

- the reinforcement of the operational procedures of the research units by putting in place a specific research performance monitoring system, so that researchers and managers can fix objectives and goals, monitor and review performance, detect particular training needs and ensure efficient use of resources;
- the preparation of a set of templates and tools, building on the partners' expertise in research management and in the successful implementation of EU and international funded projects.

## 5. Training courses (T5.4)

As described in detail in D.5.1 EDIRE will offer six different types of courses to different groups of personnel at SSST:

- 1) fundraising and research funding;
- 2) project design;
- 3) project management, including financial issues;
- 4) IPR and technological transfer;
- 5) RRI principles, especially for what concerns Open Science, ethics and gender and diversity issues in research);
- 6) EDI and gender awareness and unconscious bias for leading position Managers/Chairpersons, Secretaries of scientific fields, Directors and Deputy Directors, where TUD has a deep expertise.

Currently, 10 training have been already organized and provided. Lessons were held on zoom and recorded a good participation of SSST staff (18) most of the training are also available on the EDIRE YouTube channel so that people can watch them in an asynchronous way.

The table provides a list of training courses which have already taken place, and which are still being planned.

No.	Training type	Partner	Training Topic	Proposed trainer(s)	Enrollment (min and max)	Fixed Time(s)
1	Project design	TU Dublin	Participating in Horizon Europe projects: How do I identify suitable calls and what to do next?	Sara Clavero	Min 12 max 24	Friday 1st Sept 2023
2	RRI principles, especially for what concerns Open Science, ethics and gender and diversity issues in research (this training will be inspired by the FoTRRIS H2020 (UCM))	TU Dublin	Integrating gender+ intersectional approaches in the project design process	Sara Clavero	12 min-24 max	Thursday 12 October 2023
3	EDI and gender awareness and unconscious bias for leading position Managers/Chairpersons, Secretaries of scientific fields, Directors and Deputy Directors, where TUD has a deep expertise.	TU Dublin	Tackling unconscious bias in research	Caitriona Delaney	12 min-24 max	Friday 8th December 2023
4	Academic writing and publishing for ECR	TU Dublin	How to select a journal to publish your research	TU Dublin staff	12 min -24 max	Friday 2nd February 2024
5	Fundraising and research funding	UCM	Fulbright US Student Program	guest speaker, ECR	min 10 persons	Friday, 22nd September, 2024
6	Project design	UCM	Building international partnerships for a project success	Liisa Hanninen, Olga Kolotouchkina, guest speaker	min 10 persons	Thursdav, 26th October 2023
7	Project management, including financial issues	UCM	Internal management of European projects: challenges and best practices	UCM administrative staff	min 5 persons	Tuesday, 23rd January 2024
8	EDI and gender awareness and unconscious bias for leading position Managers/Chairpersons, Secretaries of scientific fields, Directors and Deputy Directors, where TUD has a deep expertise.	UCM	Gender equality resources in academia and research	Patricia Nuñez + guest speaker	15-20 persons	Thursday, 28th of September 2023
9	Research management for ECR	UCM	A road to PhD: supervision, networking and autonomous work	Clara Sánchez-Rebato Valiente + guest speaker	20-25 persons	Friday 29th of September 2023
10	Academic writing and publishing for ECR	UCM	From abstract to published paper	Olga Kolotouchkina, Liisa Hanninen	10-15 persons	Tuesday, 23rd January 2024
11	Fundraising and research funding	UNIGE	Horizon Europe	Cinzia Leone	max 12 persons	Wednesday, 20th September 2023
12	Project design	UNIGE	Risks and contingencies measures in EU projects	Cinzia Leone/Rita Bencivenga	max 12 persons	Wednesday, 15th November 2023
13	Project management, including financial issues	UNIGE	Typical obstacles and challenges in project management	Cinzia Leone	max 12 persons	Wednesday, 27th September 2023
14	RRI principles, especially for what concerns Open Science, ethics and gender and diversity issues in research (this training will be inspired by the FoTRRIS H2020 (UCM))	UNIGE	RRI, gender and intersectionality	Carla Maria Reale	max 12 persons	Wednesday, 13th December, 2023
15	EDI and gender awareness and unconscious bias for leading position Managers/Chairpersons, Secretaries of scientific fields, Directors and Deputy Directors, where TUD has a deep expertise.	UNIGE	Eu projects and GEPs: links, strategies	Rita Bencivenga	max 12 persons	Wednesday, 20th September 2023
16	Research management for ECR	UNIGE	Grant writing	Cinzia Leone	max 12 persons	Wednesday, 22nd November 2023
17	Academic writing and publishing for ECR	UNIGE	Social media for ESRs	Rita Bencivenga	max 10 persons	Wednesday, 22nd November 2023
18	Fundraising and research funding	URCA	Marie Curie Fellowship	Majde Chambah, URCA	min 10 persons	
19	Research management for ECR	URCA	Co-supervised PhD and Post-docs	Zahia Guessoum	10-20 persons	

More trainings will be organized after receiving feedback from SSST staff on their further needs and interests. We adopted the agile methods, and we are reiterating our plans and adjusting them to best fit the most current needs.

## 6. Joint research projects (T5.5)

The personnel of the newly established Research management office, ORPA, have been exploring since the beginning of its activities funding possibilities that are offered in the framework of both national and international research funding programs. Currently the consortium is exploring different opportunities within every pillar of Horizon Europe.

Concretely three new projects proposals by month 18 have been elaborated, two have been submitted already, while the third will be submitted in the next month.

1. EDIRE partners SSST and UCM jointly proposed the project titled "*Youth EU: Guidance to emancipation and autonomy of youth at risk of social exclusion in dialogue with third countries.*" This project proposal was formally submitted under the Horizon Europe Framework Programme, specifically under the category HORIZON-MSCA-2022-SE-01. Unfortunately, it did not get funded, but some very useful feedback was received.
2. The second project was born from the collaboration between SSST and TUD. The project will explore the topic of gender roles in extremist movements and their impact on democracy within HORIZON-CL2-2024-DEMOCRACY-01-05 call. In case the project is funded, it will be a great opportunity for enhancement of SSST's research capabilities.
3. The third proposal corresponds to the call HORIZON-WIDERA-2024-ERA-01-12, by mid-March. The proposal considers guidelines for applications of Artificial Intelligence with EDI principles, in line with EDIRE work. It is coordinated by SSST, with the collaboration of UCM, URCA and UniGe, and includes other partners from widening countries such as Portugal and Turkey, and from Japan, USA, and Morocco.