

Monday 18 March 2019

To whom it may concern

**RE: Evaluation of the Progress Review (PR1) of COST Action 16207**

This communication is aimed at summarizing the External Advisory Board's impressions of the progress of the above-mentioned CA 16207 project in the past year. The PR1 covers work done in the previous year (2018) until April 2019.

In summary, there are 4 workgroups (WGs), each with their own unique plans, all in line with the aims and objectives of the overarching project. In the relevant period, the PR1 notes that WG1 (that is focused on knowledge creation and exchange) has achieved all planned tasks and is currently preparing a consensus statement on PUI. 18 publications in peer-reviewed scientific journals have arisen with COST support in 2018.

It is also noted that WG2 (focused on training and mentorship) has also made significant progress, and has run several successful workshops, meetings and early career activities in the last 12 months. Feedback from attendees of these training/workshop events was generally very positive, reinforcing the value of the Action. For example, the majority of the 200 attendees (168 joined online) of the recent International Training School and Conference titled "Problematic Usage of the Internet" held 14-16th January 2019, rated the quality and the organisation of the webinar as either very good or excellent. The feedback metrics also suggested that content of the webinar was mostly rated interesting and useful for attendees' career and that they would use what they have learned in their professional practice.

According to the report, WG3 (focused on dissemination, impact and exploitation) was successful in establishing, launching, and maintaining the CA 16207 website and various dissemination channels. The dissemination plan was achieved and approved.

And finally, WG4 (focused on management, governance and quality assurance) was successful in setting the EU-PUI in place, organising the management structure and Management Committee (MC), and providing the governance structure. In order to do so, this WG conducted regular WG/MC meetings, and drafted the relevant and necessary reports. Risk management is continuously assessed and reported by this group, and the regulations and reporting ledger is still ongoing. It may be concluded that the majority of plans for the review period were successfully executed.

A few of the plans would have to be attended to in the 2<sup>nd</sup> year of the project however. These appear relatively minimal in comparison to what has been achieved overall. For example, WG2 planned to establish a PPI group, and to do training and certification, but this would only be possible in the next evaluation period. This workgroup has proposed that a new separate (5<sup>th</sup>) WG be established that would be dedicated to the establishment of a PPI group. In addition, open-access database development, launching and training are underway and licenses are being awaited. In addition, WG3 was also not yet able to do a proposal for a science fair to promote science and awareness of the work being done on PUI. This would remain on their agenda for the upcoming year.

The CA 16207 project has throughout the past 12 months emphasized support for early career investigators (ECIs) and accommodating participation by so-called inclusiveness target countries (ITCs). Considerable effort has been made, successfully so, to increase in ITC participation, ECI participation and female representation, in line with the recommendations. A higher than average ECI involvement have been maintained to the extent that almost a third of the leadership roles are now taken by ECI members. Going forwards, ITC co-leadership of the existing 4 WGs and addition of another WG focussing on public involvement and led by an ITC member, are planned. Females were well-represented on all levels, including as ITC and STSM grant awardees, and seems to be well-represented in the Action and in leadership roles. In terms of ITC and STSM grants, it is notable that 4 ITC grants were allocated, and 2 STSMs were organized (both for ECI members one of whom is an ITC member). There is a strict established governance process in place for administering and awarding ITC and STSM grants, to ensure that both types of awards are focused on ECI members.

PR1 has highlighted many achievements and milestones in the period under review, and these attest to the worthy focus of investigation. We would like to wish them all the best of the next period.



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Prof Christine Lochner

On behalf of the external advisory board of CA 16207, consisting of:

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