

Staff Mobility Week at the University of Bergen (UiB)

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Funded by the Erasmus+ I participated in the Staff Mobility Week at the University of Bergen from 6th May to 10th May 2019. My motivation was to broaden my experience as a research consultant by visiting a renowned university in another country and to learn about programs, procedures best practices from participants from all over Europe. The University of Bergen regularly organizes such international staff exchange weeks to enhance quality of university administration, develop competences and ideas, build networks and increase job satisfaction. The 30 participants of SMW-19 were divided into three thematic groups: Research Administration, Communication/ Student Recruitment, Student Administration/International Credit Mobility. After a general introduction on the University of Bergen and the Staff Mobility Week at the first day, I took part in the group „Research Administration“.

University of Bergen

University of Bergen has 17 000 students (1 900 international), 3 600 staff (academic and administrativ) und seven faculties: Law, Medicine, Humanities, Mathematics and Natural Sciences, Social Sciences, Psychology, Fine Art, Music and Design. After University of Oslo and University of Trondheim, it is the third largest university of Norway.

Research administration at other universities

At the beginning of the week, all members of the group “Research Administration” gave a short presentation on their universities. Besides the general facts on the institutions, the organization and contents of research support was presented.

University of Bergen (Norway),

BOA-TEAM:

Integrated central support that understands that the university has a common goal in developing competitive proposals and project support. Includes: Research administration, HR, Finances, communication, Library, Center for the study of sciences and humanities.

Istanbul Medeniyet University (Turkey),

Project Development & Coordination Office:

- Working in collaboration with national/international organizations that provides grants
- Informing academic staff about the calls and grant opportunities via e-mails
- Establishing Researcher Data Base of Horizon 2020 for information/coordination
- Supporting academic staff on preparing proposals by giving preliminary information about the grants, proposal writing strategies
- Organizing thematic areas oriented ‘Horizon 2020 Program Information Days’
- Organizing ‘Marie Skłodowska Curie Program Information Days’
- Organizing meetings between project coordinators and managing board
- Mentoring Project Coordinators about administrative and financial procedures
- Matching the running projects of academic staff with COST Actions
- Organizing ‘Erasmus+ Program Information Day’ once a year

University of the Aegean (Greece),

Funds and Research Unit – Development & Administrative Support:

Connects research, funding and management in line with University strategic priorities by:

- Establishing beneficial and sustainable partnerships
- Encouraging and supporting UoA academic staff to obtain National and International/EU funding

- Acting as interface between academic and administrative partners and thus successfully and efficiently coordinating complex tasks related to project management
- Contributing to doctoral education with special focus on improving employability through acquiring teaching, research and project management skills

Alexandru Ioan Cuza University of Iasi (Romania),

Office for Administration of Research Projects:

- Research governance (policies, procedures which apply to research)
- Reporting of the research results to the MEN, Senat every year
- Information, assistance, guidance and advice for funding research
- Pre-and-post award research support; contract issues
- Intellectual property & patents
- Research infrastructures (applications, grants); research centres /units; university scientific journals
- Secretarial tasks

The office cooperates with the Finance Department, Human Resources Department, Procurement Office, Legal Office for implementations of the projects.

University Paul-Valery of Montpellier (France),

Innovation Department – Project Funding division:

- Coordination of the “projects” activity
- Monitoring of funding opportunities (regional, national, EU)
- Communication (various channels), awareness raising actions
- Counselling, setting action plans/strategies (Research unit, individual)
- Support to application: administrative parts, budget, writing non-scientific sections, reviewing scientific ones, consortium coordination, moderating meetings...
- Contracting with the funding agency, negotiating the CA
- Transmission to the financial management team

University of Leiden (The Netherlands),

LURIS Office:

- Knowledge Partnering - Creating and defining opportunities between Leiden and partners
- Entrepreneurship - Stimulating entrepreneurship in the hearts of Leiden academics
- Legal Affairs - Building the foundation for a good relationship
- Grant Development - Increasing the chances of research funding

Europa-Universität Viadrina (Germany),

Office for Research and Graduate Education:

- National research funding
- EU/International research funding
- Viadrina Center for Graduate Studies
- Research data management

Keele University (UK),

Research Support:

- Research Operations
- Research Grants and Systems
- Research Development
- Project Assurance
- Partnerships

Workshops on specific topics

University of Bergen has a **Brussels Office** and a distributor working there. This distributor for EU-projects has presented his work at the Brussels Office to us. He represents the interests of the *University of Bergen* at the European Commission, informs administration and scientists in Bergen about current topics and development in Brussels and motivates researchers to visit Brussels, to meet potential cooperation partners, to visit events organized by the European Commission and to write EU-applications. He has his office in Brussels and regularly (every 6-8 weeks) visits Bergen to meet the university board, administration and researchers.

In the session on **Support for Young Researchers**, I have presented our work at FAU, especially the Emerging Talents Initiative, the Brown Bag Breaks and the planned further development of the support of postdocs. Subsequently there was an interesting talk of a colleague from the research administration office at University of Bergen. She was before working at the division for the support of young researchers at Empirical Collage London and was therefore able to compare both systems. A general discussion on political and structural situations at the countries/universities of the group members helped to determine current trends and best practices.

In the session on the integration and support of research and researchers in **Social Sciences and Humanities (SSH)** the colleague from *Europa-Universität Viadrina* presented the work of her university in this field, which is divided in four fields:

- Supporting Researchers (information and training, administrative burdens)
- Promoting applications (seed Money, sending researchers to Brussels)
- Changing culture (developing trust in EU funding schemes, changing culture towards more impact)
- Creating synergies (EU competence Network of the State of Brandenburg, ROSE – Research on Societies in Europe)

A special focus was on her establishment of the network ROSE (Research on Societies in Europa) with the aim to strengthen the role of Research on Societies in European Research Funding (H2020 and Horizon Europe). The opportunity to broaden the network and include other European partners, for example the universities of the staff week participants, was discussed in the group.

The last session was on **Data Management** and **Open Access**. The colleague from *Keele University* gave an impression on their work on these topics. The motivations to have a good system for data management are funders' policies, institutional policies and the potential for assessments. At *Keele University* they have the following processes and systems: Data Management Plans, Ongoing storage of data, Data cleansing, Research Information System, Keele Data Repository.

The need to establish a good system for open access publications at a university arises from REF2021-regulations, funder requirements, the discussion of gold versus green access and the university policy. At *Keele University* they established the Keele Research Repository that can be used for open access publications.

Best practice to establish processes and systems for data management as well as for open access publications were discussed in the group, for example training and 1-2-1's, availability, library and research support, faculty experts - academic and non-academic, Self-help (e.g. via webpages), simple steps.

Social activities

During several common lunches and dinners as well as social activities it was possible to network with the colleges, to deepen discussions from the group sessions and to learn more about Bergen and its region (e.g. the former Hansa-district Bryggen, the leprosy hospital, the heathlands and the fjords) and Norway (lifestyle, typical food, Viking age).

Photos



University Museum of Bergen



Some participants of "Research-Administration"



View over Bergen from Mount Floyen



Talk on the Viking age in a recreated Viking house