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### ***Project Deliverable D5.2: Report on establishment of RMAU***

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## Abbreviations

|      |   |
|------|---|
| CECs | Contaminants of Emerging Concern  |
| CSIC | Institute of Environmental Assessment and Water,<br>Research of the Spanish National Research Council |
| EGD  | European Green Deal   |
| HE   | Horizon Europe  |
| IRIS | Innovation Research and Impact Strategy Office at UNL,<br>NOVA School of Sciences and Technology      |
| LEAR | Legal Entity Appointed Representative   |
| PST  | Project Steering Team   |
| RMAU | Research Management and Administration Unit   |
| TFNS | University of Novi Sad, Faculty of Technology of Novi Sad   |
| UNL  | NOVA University of Lisbon, NOVA School of Science and<br>Technology                                   |
| UB   | University of Belgrade  |
| UNS  | University Novi Sad   |
| WP   | Work Package  |



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## 1. Executive summary

This document represents an overview of the efforts performed in 20 months of the TwINSol-CECs project execution regarding creation of Research Management and Administration Unit (RMAU) at the Faculty of Technology Novi Sad (TFNS). It is the public project deliverable D5.2 planned to be submitted at the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> project month. The described project activities are a part of Work Package (WP) 5 - Strengthening the research management and administration capacities of TFNS, task 5.2. They are based on working meetings with the researchers from the project partner institutions, Institute of Environmental Assessment and Water Research of the Spanish National Research Council (CSIC), and NOVA University of Lisbon, NOVA School of Science and Technology (UNL), also with representatives of the sister Horizon Europe (HE) twinning projects conducting at the University of Novi Sad (UNS) and University of Belgrade (UB), as well as within TFNS. Moreover, development of mechanisms for RMAU functioning at TFNS and legal background have been arranged with legal department of TFNS, while interviews with possible candidates for RMAU personnel have been initiated.

The aim of TwINSol-CECs is to support establishment of RMAU, which is expected to eventually will bring valuable experience for future research management and administration, having a positive impact on the increased number of project applications and successfully implemented projects.

After the Introduction section, in which the background of WP5 and task 5.2 are briefly presented, an overview of the project activities dedicated to creation of RMAU is given.

## 2. Introduction

The main goal of the TwINSol-CECs project is to raise the TFNS scientific and innovation excellence in various aspects of research on Contaminants of Emerging Concern (CECs) integrated in broader EU networks of excellence, contributing to national and regional scientific and economic growth and well-being and to the harmonization of advanced research and innovation efforts important for the overall faster and sustainable transition of whole Europe foreseen by European Green Deal (EGD) towards zero-pollution, toxic free environment.

To achieve this goal, it is necessary for TwINSol-CECs team to be committed to the strengthening of the research management and administration capacities of TFNS through WP5 activities, since this is one of the specific objectives of the TwINSol-CECs project. Two main objectives of WP5 are:

- To set up the very first RMAU at TFNS, and
- To strengthen the institutional capabilities for more competitive and successful participation in the EU research.

The leader of WP5 is UNL, a public higher education institution highly ranked at international levels, with well-established unit of Innovation Research and Impact Strategy<sup>1</sup> providing support to researchers of UNL-NOVA School of Science and Technology in the following areas: research funding (national and international), intellectual property, knowledge valorization and technology transfer, training, and dissemination of research and innovation opportunities.

The WP5 started in the 1<sup>th</sup> project month and it lasts during the whole project lifetime. In the frame of WP5, there are two tasks, 5.1. and 5.2, with later being dedicated to the creation of RMAU, under the leadership of TFNS. The related milestone “Established RMAU” is expected to be accomplished till the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> project month, with decision of Teaching-Scientific Council of TFNS on RMAU establishment (RMAU rules of procedure accepted) as means of verification for this milestone.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.fct.unl.pt/en/faculty/service-section/innovation-research-and-impact-strategy>

### 3. Overview of the activities within task 5.2

In general, the activities within task 5.2 could be divided in the following way:

- Meetings with representatives of the TwINSol-CECs partner institutions, CSIC and UNL, for discussing their own institutional support to the research,
- Meetings with representatives of the sister twinning projects for sharing the experience on establishment of an institutional unit for the research support,
- Meetings with legal department of TFNS for exploring the legal possibilities of the establishment of RMAU, and activities performed on institutional level towards the RMAU establishment, and
- Interviewing the interest of possible engagement of an administrator for RMAU.

#### 3.1. Meetings with representatives of the TwINSol-CECs partner institutions, CSIC and UNL, for discussing their own institutional support of research

During the onsite meetings held in the so-called “TwINSol-CECs Week in October”<sup>2</sup> at TFNS, a session held on 17 October 2022 was dedicated to WP5 activities, which was an opportunity to discussed with Project Managers of CSIC and UNL, Dr. Marinella Farre and Prof. Joao Crespo, respectively, the need for establishment of RMAU at TFNS. CSIC and UNL representatives briefly described the support given to the researchers at their institutions. On this occasion, the agreement on a visit of senior TFNS researchers to UNL with the purpose of multiple meetings with representative of the IRIS team from UNL was set, with the deadlines to be decided upon in the subsequent communication. The meetings with IRIS representatives were recognized as of the highest importance for sharing the experience on RMAU structure.

During the kick-off meeting on October 19, 2022, the objectives and activities of WP5 were officially presented to the meeting’s attendees.

The meetings with IRIS representatives were arranged during two visits of TFNS researchers to UNL:

- 15 December 2022 during the onsite training at UNL (12-16 December 2022), described in details in the Report available at the project site<sup>3</sup>, when Prof. Nataša Đurišić-Mladenović and Prof. Zita Šereš had multiple meetings with representatives of IRIS, i.e. with Mrs. Juliana Monteiro, Executive Director of IRIS, Mrs. Marta Cerejo, Head of Intellectual Property & Tech Transfer Department, Mr. Bernardo Hourmat, funding advisor at Business Development & Funding Department of IRIS, Mr. Miguel Martins working with Nova Research Portal, Mr. Pedro Almeida working on knowledge valorization and intellectual assets,

<sup>2</sup> <https://twinsol-cecs.com/index.php/news-events/36-twinsol-cecs-week-in-october>

<sup>3</sup> [https://twinsol-cecs.com/images/documents/r3\\_2-3rd\\_onsite\\_training-unl-12-16dec2022.pdf](https://twinsol-cecs.com/images/documents/r3_2-3rd_onsite_training-unl-12-16dec2022.pdf)

- On several occasions during the short-term scientific exchange of 4 senior TFNS researchers at UNL, 6-13 March 2023, described in detailed in the Report on this visit (available at the project site<sup>4</sup>), when Prof. Biljana Pajin, Prof. Nataša Đurišić-Mladenović, Prof. Dragana Šoronja Simović, and Prof. Zita Šereš attended the meetings with the following representatives of UNL for discussing various aspects of the institutional research support existing at UNL: Mrs. Sara Hourmat working in Financial Management Division; Mr. Bernardo Hourmat (above mentioned); Mrs. Marta Cerejo (above mentioned) and Mr. Pedro Almeida (above mentioned); Mr. Bruno Miguel Pack Martins and Mr. Rui Andre da Graca Pinto Fernandes from IRIS Pre-award Department. Mrs. Juliana Monteiro, Executive Director of IRIS, joined these meetings for wrap-up sessions to emphasize the importance of the institutional research management and advise possible routes how to start similar unit at TFNS, emphasizing some of the most important initial aspects to be covered by RMAU, as well as the profiles of first RMAU employee(s).

### **3.2. Meetings with representatives of the sister twinning projects for sharing the experience on establishment of an institutional unit for the research support**

Two sister HE twinning projects have been conducting at UNS in parallel to TwiNSol-CECs, both coordinated by the Faculty of Sciences, i.e. TwinSubDyn (101059546) and SmartWaterTwin (101060110). The experiences on strengthening of the International Affairs Office, existing at the Faculty of Sciences, within these two projects have been discussed at meetings with representatives of TwinSubDyn and SmartWaterTwin, including with Mrs. Gordana Vlahović, Head of the International Affairs Office; importance of different aspects of the research support and profiles of potential employee(s) at RMAU were discussed at these occasions.

Additionally, TwiNSol-CECs team members have been invited to take a part in the webinar organized within the consortium of TwinSubDyn dedicated to capacity building to improve research management and administration, 14 February 2024.

On several occasions, coordinators of TwiNSol-CECs and PFAStwin (sister twinning project that has been conducting at UB, Faculty of Chemistry, 101059534)<sup>5</sup>, Prof. Nataša Đurišić-Mladenović and Prof. Vladimir Beškoski, met each other (ICCE Conference, Venice, June 2023; invited presentation on CECs at UB, September 2023) and shared the experience and activities on creation of RMAU as a part of both twinning projects.

<sup>4</sup> [https://twinsol-cecs.com/images/documents/r3\\_2-3rd\\_onsite\\_training-unl-12-16dec2022.pdf](https://twinsol-cecs.com/images/documents/r3_2-3rd_onsite_training-unl-12-16dec2022.pdf)

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.pfastwin.org/project>



### **3.3. Meetings with legal department of TFNS and procedures performed towards the RMAU establishment**

In order to explore the legal possibilities of RMAU establishment at TFNS, working meetings with a secretary of the TFNS had been organized on several occasions. During these meetings two documents have been prepared and sent for approval to the relevant TFNS bodies.

The first official document towards regulating the international research projects applications and implementation was created and accepted by the Teaching and Research Council of TFNS in November 2022 (“Regulations on application and procedures for implementation of international projects”<sup>6</sup>), and it was published on the internal TFNS website accessible for all employees with username and password. This is the first institutional act that sets procedures on the international project applications, implementation, and administration at TFNS.

Secondly, the document of systemization of the TFNS business was widened with the new role of “independent professional technical associate for international cooperation”, planned to work within the Legal Department of TFNS, and closely with Vice-Dean for Science, as well as with appointed TFNS coordinators for Erasmus and CEEPUS programmes, and HE Legal Entity Appointed Representative (LEAR). This new role introduced in the systematization was officially accepted by the Council of TFNS on December 26, 2023; this date might be regarded as a date when the milestone relevant for WP5 was accomplished. Currently, the roles and responsibilities of the associate are developing to be included in the relevant working contract.

Both documents represent a starting point in establishment of a RMAU unit, with initial tasks of informing TFNS researchers on open and forthcoming international research calls, primarily Horizon Europe and Interreg programmes, the relevant eligibility rules and deadlines, as well as for administrative work on applied and accepted projects.

### **3.4. Interviewing the interest of possible engagement of a technical associate at RMAU**

To explore the potential interest for employment of a technical associate at RMAU, the TFNS secretary sent a notification of the need for employment to the National Employment Service in March 2024, with the deadline of receiving the expression of interest till March 29, 2024; only two CVs were received in specified timeframe. Additionally, Vice-Dean for Science interviewed one additional person interested in the job of a technical associate, but eventually this person gave up of this employment possibility. CVs of all three persons, who expressed the interest for a job of the technical

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<sup>6</sup> ПРАВИЛНИК О НАЧИНУ ПРИЈАВЕ И ПРОЦЕДУРАМА РЕАЛИЗАЦИЈЕ МЕЂУНАРОДНИХ ПРОЈЕКТА НА ТЕХНОЛОШКОМ ФАКУЛТЕТУ НОВИ САД



associate at RMAU till the end of March 2024, have been filed together with the above mentioned notification.

In the upcoming period, interviewing of potential applicants for the role of technical associate will be continued.