

Information Technology Governance for Tunisian Universities (ITG4TU)

561614-EPP-1-2015-1-ES-EPPKA2-CBHE-JP



Co-funded by the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union

EXTERNAL ASSESSMENT: PROJECT APPROACH

GRIAL RESEARCH GROUP



Co-funded by the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union



Information Technology Governance for Tunisian Universities

561614-EPP-1-2015-1-ES-EPPKA2-CBHE-JP

External Assessment: Project Approach

Version 1.0

AMENDMENT HISTORY

Version	Revision	Date	Author	Modification
1	0	10 Nov 2018	GRIAL Research Group	External quality assessment



CONTENTS

1. Introduction	1
2. Experts Identification.....	1
3. Assessment.....	2
3.1. Project Management	2
3.2. Consortium.....	4
3.3. Project design and implementation.....	5
3.4. Impact	8
4. Your opinion about the project	9



Co-funded by the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union



Information Technology Governance for Tunisian Universities

561614-EPP-1-2015-1-ES-EPPKA2-CBHE-JP

External Assessment: Project Approach

Version 1.0

TABLES

No table of figures entries found.



1. Introduction

The purpose of this document is to gather the opinion of a recognized expert in the field with regards to the developments made under the umbrella of ITG4TU.

This document reflects the opinion of a working-group and can be considered as a supplementary material to assess the overall impact and of the project.

There are two kind of assessment forms for this project. The first one is devoted to assessing the technical side of the project, namely the impact of IT Governance aspects and the second one, taken from an EU Erasmus⁺ perspective. This document is the report of one expert from the later viewpoint.

In what follows main aspects of this external assessment are presented to be filled by external assessor.

2. Experts Identification

Name:	Francisco J. García-Peñalvo, Alicia García-Holgado and Lucía García-Holgado
Affiliation:	GRIAL Research Group, University of Salamanca
Nationality:	Spanish
Affiliation:	
Experience in EU Projects:	<p>Francisco: 15 years of experience in EU projects as project leader and partner leader under H2020, Erasmus⁺, Lifelong Learning Programme, etc.</p> <p>Alicia: 10 years of experience in EU projects as technical staff, researcher and project manager under different programs and funds, H2020, Lifelong Learning Programme and Erasmus⁺.</p> <p>Lucía: 3 years of experience in EU projects as project manager under Erasmus⁺ and 5 years' experience as technical staff under Erasmus⁺ and Lifelong Learning Programme.</p>



3. Assessment

3.1. Project Management

Is there a clear effective project management structure?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> To some extent <input type="checkbox"/> No
Describe project management mechanisms implemented	<p>The project has a detailed project management plan that provides the guidelines and mechanism to manage the development of the project and achieve the objectives. This document ensures the consensus between the partners regarding the workplan, the cost management, the quality management and the risk management.</p> <p>The project team is composed by eight partners distributed in two groups, four partners from Tunisia, which are the receptors of the actions to improve the governance model for Information Technology (IT) in Tunisia; and four partners from Europe with a wide experience in developing and deploying Information Technology Government.</p> <p>The project management plan is completed with the Project Management Infrastructure Report, a set of techniques, tools and directives to be applied in all the documents produced for the project. Moreover, this report provides a clear definition of the structure of the partnership, which includes a project coordinator, a project manager and a steering committee with one representative from each partner.</p> <p>Regarding the internal communication, online and face-to-face control meetings have been done in order to coordinate the work. In particular, there is minutes from 3 coordination meetings, 5 online control meetings and 6 face-to-face control meetings.</p>
Have partners developed the project with a division of tasks and effort as expressed in the project proposal?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> To some extent <input type="checkbox"/> No
Describe your main concerns about task division	All partners are involved in all workpackages and there is a balance in the workpackage (WP) leads,



	<p>three WP are led by European partners and two WP by Tunisian partners. The division of tasks and effort is clearly defined in the proposal and also detailed in the project management plan and in the annexes of the quality management plan. There are partners with more responsibilities, according to the deliverables available on the website and the distribution of the budget. In particular, the project coordinator, which is usual in this kind of projects, and the Tunisian partners (they have developed a lot of reports related to best practices visits, research visits, governance framework, pilot courses, etc.). Deliverables join the face-to-face and online control meeting reports evidence the work done. In this sense, we have detected a missing report, the steering committee said in the “D5.3. Virtual meeting – Framework assessment organization” that each European partner reviewed each Tunisian framework but the report from SRH is missing and the report from OUC only includes the assessment of UTM framework. Regarding the missed deliverables detected in the “D.3.2. Report: External Quality Assessment – UIB”, at the present stage of this assessment, those deliverables are available (D2.3 on the best practice validation; deliverable D2.6 on governance framework assessment; or deliverable D2.8 on training material validation).</p>
<p>Is there a clear and effective problem-solving strategy?</p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> To some extent <input type="checkbox"/> No</p>
<p>Describe problems occurred and mechanisms triggered</p>	<p>Several problems have been detected, but the consortium found solutions and the work plan remained almost unchanged, except a set of activities that were rescheduled. Highlight two changes, first, the kick-off meeting was scheduled in M1 (October 2015), but it finally took place in January 2016, three months later. Second, the initial training managers (D1.4) was rescheduled and relocated due to the terrorist attack in Brussels and in Tunisia in March 2016. Initially, the training was scheduled to be performed in Tunisia but after the terrorist attacks the Spanish</p>



	<p>Ministry of Foreign Affairs recommended not to travel to Tunisia. Steering management committee organized two virtual meetings to solve this problem. Finally, D1.4 was delayed from M4 to M8 to carry out in Almeria at the same time that the D2.1 Best Practice Visit.</p> <p>Those problems affected to other activities during the first year, in particular, the best practices visits were planned to be carried out between M6 and M10, but they were rescheduled to save costs of travel and adjust the calendar. The best practices visit to Almeria was in M10, but the best practices visit to Berlin was in the second year together a management meeting, and the visits to Halden and Palma took places during the third year.</p>
--	--

How satisfied are you with Project Management activity in the project?

- Very satisfied
- Satisfied
- Neither
- Dissatisfied
- Very dissatisfied

3.2. Consortium

Have all project partners participated in the project as intended?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> To some extent <input type="checkbox"/> No
Describe overall implication of project partners	<p>All partners have participated as expected regarding their roles, tasks and work done. Highlight the implication of the European partners, in particular the tasks related to management and quality assurance.</p> <p>Regarding the Tunisian partners, there were different levels of implication, especially UTM shows a moderate commitment with the project due to the delays to deliver some activities, as shown the dates of the deliverables.</p>



How satisfied are you with Consortium activity in the project?

- Very satisfied
- Satisfied
- Neither
- Dissatisfied
- Very dissatisfied

3.3. Project design and implementation

Rate the achievement of project objectives	
Perform specialized training modules for building ITG models in Tunisian universities	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Achieved <input type="checkbox"/> Partially achieved <input type="checkbox"/> Not achieved
Perform training to employers in IT sector	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Achieved <input type="checkbox"/> Partially achieved <input type="checkbox"/> Not achieved
Build ITG frameworks adapted to each institution	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Achieved <input type="checkbox"/> Partially achieved <input type="checkbox"/> Not achieved
Build the skills and tools to ensure the sustainability of government IT project beyond	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Achieved <input type="checkbox"/> Partially achieved <input type="checkbox"/> Not achieved
Set the value chain of IT in HEI and its KPI	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Achieved <input type="checkbox"/> Partially achieved <input type="checkbox"/> Not achieved
General comments on objectives:	<p>The project has achieved all the defined objectives. Regarding the training modules, initial trainings, both researchers and managers, were implemented. The satisfaction surveys reflect a high satisfaction degree with the activities, the teachers and the organization. They provided a solid base about ITG skills and served as input to develop the training materials (D2.7) for the pilot courses for industry and academia (D4.3). All the training activities to employers in IT sector have been successfully performed according to the reports provided by the Tunisian partners. The materials and the</p>



	<p>dissemination events to support the pilot courses were done.</p> <p>Regarding the ITG framework for each institution, first, a common ITG framework was defined and validated based on the best practices visits and the Spanish model. This framework was adapted by each Tunisian partner (D2.5). These proposals were assessed by the European partners (D2.6) which provided some recommendations that were included in the final version of the ITG framework. Finally, each Tunisian institution has implemented the approved plan (D4.5) with the monitorization of the European partners (D4.6). All deliverables related to those activities are available.</p> <p>As it happens in this type of projects, it is not possible to ensure the sustainability of the project. The consortium can establish some measures, but it is not possible to affirm it until sometime after the end of the project. In this sense, the consortium has set up some activities that provides a way to ensure the sustainability, in particular, the pilot courses together with the training materials, as well as the ITG frameworks together with a real deployment plan that cover until 2019.</p> <p>Finally, the ITG framework deployment in each Tunisian institution includes the value chain of IT and its KPI. According to the monitoring reports, the KPI for the main actions for the principles selected are presented although some institutions could be more detailed.</p>
<p>Has the project been managed according to planned project management methods?</p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> To some extent <input type="checkbox"/> No</p>
<p>General comments on project management:</p>	<p>The project has been well managed. The project management plan and the quality plan have ensured the correct execution of the project and the achievement of the objectives. Moreover, the online meetings and the coordination meetings have allowed to control the state of the project and to coordinate the activities carried out between the face-to-face control meetings.</p>



<p>Has the project been financially managed according to plans?</p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> To some extent <input type="checkbox"/> No</p>
<p>General comments on financial management:</p>	<p>The budget has been correctly and efficiently management. An effort has been made to save costs of travel combining of several activities within each mobility. Highlight the correct management related to subcontracting. In particular, the budget for the Educational Platform has not used due to the providers offered the same thing already implemented for free in the universities using Moodle. The consortium preferred not to spend that real expense and return it than to throw away the money. The UIB has sent on time the payments to the European partners. Due to specific issues Tunisian partners have in managing their budget, UIB has to manage their budgets according to their agreement. This situation has been managed as well as possible. Due to the new public financial restrictions on public contracts from the Spanish Tax Ministry and the regulations about acquisitions issued by UIB, the equipment acquisition for the Tunisian partners was a complicated process, but finally was successful achieved.</p>
<p>Has the project been managed according to planned quality management methods?</p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> To some extent <input type="checkbox"/> No</p>
<p>General comments on quality management:</p>	<p>There is a workpackage focused on ensuring the quality of the project (WP3) which main deliverable in the quality management plan. It defines common standards for the whole project which include quality planning, quality control, quality assurance, and quality improvement. Different monitoring mechanism have been implemented, including the review of all materials produced in the project. This is reflected in the high quality of the deliverables. Moreover, several external quality assessments have performed.</p>



3.4. Impact

<p>Has the project reached its impact objectives?</p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> To some extent <input type="checkbox"/> No</p>
<p>General comments on project impact (Long term and Short Term):</p>	<p>The training sessions were fully performed. There were 15 attendants in the training for researchers (3 of each Tunisian university and 3 from the European universities) and 24 attendants in the training for managers according to the attendance list (4 of each Tunisian university, 5 researchers of the other European universities and 3 of the host university). Most of the participants gave a positive feedback through the satisfaction questionnaire.</p> <p>It is not possible to measure the impact of the ITG framework implemented in the Tunisian universities before the end of the project, only it is possible to monitor the implementation, the results should be measure in the following years according to the deployment plan defined in D4.5. On the other hand, it is possible to affirm that the activities to develop the ITG framework were useful to the Tunisian partners (best practices visits, tuning sessions, research visits).</p> <p>Regarding long term impact, according to the deliverables, two Ph.D. thesis are ongoing, one in Tunisia and one in UIB.</p>
<p>Is there an established and shared dissemination and exploitation plan?</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> To some extent <input type="checkbox"/> No</p>
<p>General comments on dissemination and exploitation plan:</p>	<p>There is a workpackage focused on dissemination and exploitation but there are not a dissemination and exploitation plan which defines the actions to disseminate project results to all countries involved in the project. On the other hand, there are several dissemination and exploitation plans of the project in the scope of the Tunisian partners. These plans include information about each dissemination activity carried out by the Tunisia partner but there is not explicit information about the dissemination of the whole project. There are evidences in the</p>



	Twitter account (@ITG4TU_Project) and the project website (http://itg4tu.uib.eu), basically through news and information provided in the deliverables, but there is not a formal document to proof it.
Is there an established and shared sustainability plan?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> To some extent <input type="checkbox"/> No
General comments on sustainability plan:	<p>The workpackage about dissemination and exploitation includes the definition of a sustainability plan to ensure the outputs of the project will be active and consortium will be working together still. Along the same lines as the dissemination and exploitation plan, there are four sustainability plans, one per each Tunisian partner. According to the amendment history each plan is based on a first version provided by OUC and adapted to each scope by the corresponding partner. Although there are a lot of activities performed in the project that are focused on sustainability as we comment before, we miss a sustainability plan in the scope of the all partners. Also highlight the brainstorming of new projects described in the minutes of the last face-to-face control meeting in Palma.</p>

4. Your opinion about the project

The ITG4TU project achieves the main objectives of the funding programme, the cooperation for innovation and the exchange of good practices in the field of Higher Education. In particular, the specific objectives of the project are addressed to the priority “Modernisation of governance, management and functioning of HEIs”. The project has fully achieved all its objectives.

The specialized training modules for building ITG models in Tunisian universities have been successful performed despite the changes in the calendar due to the terrorist attacks in Tunisia and Brussels. The materials produced to support those trainings are a good result for the sustainability of the project. These materials are available publicly on the project website, but also could be uploaded to an institutional repository or to Zenodo.

Regarding to perform training to employers in IT sector, the project provides a first step to implement the results of the project in the surrounding areas of the Tunisian



universities. Moreover, the pilot courses performed have associated a set of training materials that were validated by the European partners. Although the materials are adapted to the scope of each Tunisian university and some of them are in French, they are a starting point to implement the courses in other institutions.

The same happens with the ITG frameworks developed by the Tunisian partners, they are adapted to each scope, but they share a common ITG framework, so the same process could be carried out by other institutions to define its own ITG framework.

Highlight the correctly and efficiently management of the project. The European partners have provided a good set of documents to ensure the correct management and to assure the quality of the processes and the results. The documentation provides detailed information about the project lifecycle and demonstrates the achievement of the objectives. The documents related to the project management provides a set of good practices to apply in other projects, not only projects related to the scope of ITG4TU. Only the dissemination activities about the project should have required more effort, at least a plan focused on dissemination of the project itself, not only the activities in the scope of the Tunisian universities. We understand the difficult to get good dissemination numbers, but a general plan helps to improve these tasks.

The consortium has solved different problems related to budget, coordination and activities, always taking into account costs savings.

Finally, the project it a good example of cooperation between Europe and other regions, in particular, the South Mediterranean countries. The outcomes of the project and the available documentation of the process are a set of good practices and help to promote the sustainability of the project.