



# Common implementation errors

MSCA online Audit Event

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# Implementation errors: ITN



# Project implementation

## A. Research Training programme

- REA not informed when project not progressing in line with the DoA (e.g. delays to recruitments, changes to secondments, delays with research, problems with trainings or events, etc.)

## B. MSC Fellows

- Not aware of the GA provisions, working conditions (employment contracts, eligible allowances, visa issues, administrative support), tuition fees
- Recruited under a contract not fully compliant with Article 32 of GA
- Supervision issues and lack of a coherent career development plan

# Project implementation

## C. Management

- Delayed recruitments and vacancies not correctly advertised
- Beneficiaries not aware of eligibility criteria, GA provisions, working conditions (employment contracts, eligible allowances, visa issues, administrative support), tuition fees
- Researchers' Declarations not submitted within 20 days and/or not updated in time (e.g. in case of sick/parental leave, resignation)
- Underpayment issues (non-respect of the established MSCA rates defined in Annex 2)
- Non-respect of the 30% secondment rule

# Project implementation

## C. Management

- **EID:** hosting arrangements not always compliant with 50% inter-sectoral rule
- **EJD:** delay in defining PhD requirements at each hosting institution (joint agreement); difficult enrolment and recognition of double/joint doctoral degree and hosting arrangements
- Delay in submitting amendment requests
- Non-compliance with Article 29.2 of the GA (open access to publications)

# Project implementation

## D. Reporting

- Continuous reporting not kept updated
- Reporting and Payment process: wrong reporting dates encoded in technical report
- Communication: use of e-mail instead of messaging facility

# Audits

- **Article 6 - Underpayments of researchers:** Total remuneration costs (inc. mobility and family allowances) sometimes less than total claimed for the researchers in the financial statements.
- **Article 32.1** – Non-compliance with the **specific requirements** listed regarding the recruitment and working conditions, and rights and obligations, of recruited researchers
  - **Article 32.1 a):** No evidence provided that researchers were informed about the European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for the recruitment of Researchers.
  - **Article 32.1 b) and c):** No evidence provided that vacancies had been published internationally and recruited based on open, impartial procedure, as required
  - **Article 31.1 f):** The employment contracts of the researchers often did not include the specific obligations listed (e.g. work exclusively for the action, ensure visibility of EU funding, submit questionnaires, etc).

# Audits

- **Article 18 – Keeping records – supporting documentation**  
Did not adequately demonstrate that eligibility conditions were complied with (for recruitment); that the researcher actually worked on the project; and that the researcher allowances were fully paid.
- **Article 38 – Promoting the action – visibility of EU funds**  
Non-compliance with the obligation to display the EU emblem and acknowledge the EU funding in any communication activity related to the project



# Implementation errors: IF



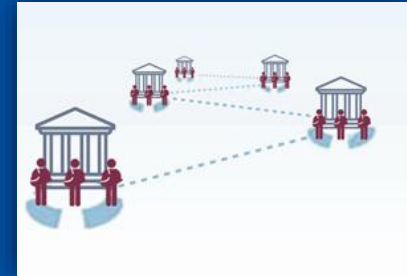
# Project implementation

- Scientific deviations not notified (or justified)
- Leaves of more than 30 days
- Amendments requested after end of project (suspension, part time, start date, etc.)
- Uncertainty regarding use of contribution (esp. Research, Training and Networking costs)
- Open Access rules & acknowledgement of EU funding (even after project ends)

# Audits

- Early terminations or delays not taken into account
- Fellow did not work full time
- Fellow elsewhere than beneficiary's premises
- Employment contract not specifying obligations in Art.32 of MSCA GA (e.g. no other income, confidentiality, visibility of the EU funding, etc.)
- Career Development Plan missing

# Implementation errors: RISE



# Project implementation

## 1. Continuous reporting

- Open Access (OA) is not reported correctly or complied with the GA.
- The link provided for peer review publication is not OA.
- Open Research Data Pilot / Patent: information are not updated continuously.
- Split stays are not correctly encoded.
- Quality of the Data Management Plan is poor.
- Very poor quality of scientific deliverables.

# Project implementation

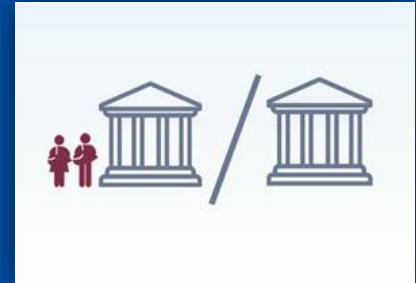
## 2. Reporting and Payment

- Impact section is insufficiently developed in the technical report.
- Delays are not properly justified in the technical report.
- No upfront monitoring of secondments implementation.
- Delayed mitigation measures.

# Audits

- Record keeping to prove:
  - Staff member
  - Mobility of the researcher
  - Work in the project during the secondment
- No proof of total amount category A payment.

# Implementation errors: COFUND





# Project implementation

- **Unrealistically high expectations** on number of applications - **problems recruiting enough excellent fellows** and then more calls.
- A high percentage of **ineligible applications** probably due to unclear guidelines.
- Setting the **evaluation threshold too high** for shortlisting - having to lower it in order to have enough candidates for second evaluation step (e.g. interview).
- The programmes often **too ambitious** with a high number of high quality fellows to be selected in a short time.
- Some programmes are still **not using a reserve list** - need time in setting up a new call if they do not get the right fellows in the first place.

# Project implementation

- The beneficiary frequently **fails to update the Researcher Declarations** when details change during the execution of the project.
- On the fellow side - depending on the discipline **fellows may need more time to complete their research.**
- Late recruitment for doctoral programmes – if they do not get the right candidates from the beginning or any suspension during the research, **beneficiaries might not be able to cover the total duration** of the programme.

# Project implementation

- The **use of experts from other countries at all stages** in the selection process for the fellowship programmes.
- The **increasing number of requests for additional reporting** periods because of cash flow problems, especially with French beneficiaries.
- The **lack of detailed information on the salary** package when a beneficiary publishes a call.
- The **acknowledgement of the funding** and the use of the correct EU emblem that are missing in their communication and dissemination activities.

# Implementation errors: NIGHT



# Project implementation

- The **acknowledgement of the funding** and the use of the correct EU emblem that are missing in their communication and dissemination activities.
- The details, and the difference between **Subcontracting and the Other Direct Costs are often vague.**

# Thank you