



ERA-NET SIINN
Safe Implementation of Innovative
Nanoscience and Nanotechnology

Deliverable D4.2 (Month 32)
(Report on Coherence of Themes of Calls)

Version No. 1

Carles Cané (MINECO, Country)

Reviewed by Vladimir Maly (JÜLICH, Germany)

Dissemination Level: PU

2015-07-10

Approved by Executive Board on 2015-08-04

Deliverable no. D4.2 under the European Commission's 7th Framework Programme
Grant Agreement Number 265799 (ERA-NET SIINN)

Distribution List:

- SIINN Executive Board
- SIINN Consortium



Table of Contents:

- 1. Introduction..... 3
- 2. Definition of the Topics of the different calls 3
- 3. Documents developed for the calls 5
- 4. Summary of the Evaluation and follow-up procedures 6
- 5. Best practices implemented 7
- 6. Conclusions 8



1. Introduction

This deliverable of WP 4 summarizes the activities done in SIINN ERA-NET for defining the documents and procedures of the calls and of their follow-up.

As stated in the Description of Work of the project, transnationally planned and executed funding activities require agreement on all implementation and administration issues, and setting-up a strong contractual framework that will take advantage of the experience of SIINN partners in other ERA-NETs.

This deliverable reports the outcome of these agreements and the best practices agreed upon and followed by the partners during the SIINN ERA-NET period. It must be noticed that initially the project had planned to launch only two calls, while thanks to the interest of the Nanotoxicity community in SIINN and to the budgetary savings achieved, the consortium together with the European Commission agreed to launch a third call, that will extend the activities of the SIINN network for more than three years from the official end of the SIINN ERA-NET.

SIINN calls, together with the outstanding research work on the State of the Art on nanotoxicity assessment procedures for Manufactured Nano Materials (MNMs), are crucial for the success of the initiative. This means that an agreement on a good set of procedures is vital for the project.

2. Definition of the Topics of the different calls

For the definition of the topics of the different calls an ad-hoc “Call Topics Committee” has been implemented. It was driven by one member of the consortium, elected for this purpose, and was composed by a small number of experts on MNMs that are part of the consortium. Additionally, the opinion of other international experts has been taken into account via the Consultation Committee. Finally, the respective Call Committee has approved the list of topics of the specific call.

The Call Office, supported by the representatives of the Funding Agencies of each call, which are part of the Call Committee, has been in charge of the topic selection for each SIINN Call. Thus, the Call Office is the main body at the stage of the call definition and also in the follow-up process.

Before starting the process and considering the budgetary conditions imposed by the funding partners participating in each call, some commonly agreed limitations were taken into account:

- The number of topics of each call should be limited in order to concentrate the efforts to a set of high-interest themes;
- The topics should not be excessively broad in order to avoid important oversubscriptions;
- Topics should be adapted in each call according to the interest shown in the former calls, but also the main subjects of interest for MNMs should be kept in the topic list;



- The specificities of the national programmes of each funding agency will have also to be taken into account, and this means that maybe not all the topics will be supported by all funding agencies.

Figure 1 summarises the list of topics agreed for the three calls

Call1- JTC2012	Call2- JTC2013	Call3-JTC2014
1. Establishment and development of models and methods for analytical tools, theoretical prediction, and characterization		
	1. Over-arching aspects of Nanosafety research	
2. Exposure assessment	2. Exposure assessment	1. Exposure assessment
	3. Toxicity mechanisms	2. Toxicity mechanisms
3. Studies on Impacts of MNMs on environment	4. Environmental impacts of MNMs	3. Environmental impacts of MNMs
4. Studies on properties and effects of MNMs		
	5. Effects of MNMs on human health	5. Effects of MNMs on human health

Figure 1: Summary of topics selected in the three calls of SIINN.

One can verify that some changes have been included in the different calls according to the suggestions of the experts that have participated on the decision on the list of topics:

- In call 1 horizontal aspects related to models, tools and characterization were proposed as a research topic. In call 2 the range of over-arching aspects were broadened and left generic without specifications. Finally, in call 3, it was considered that the generic aspects should be taken into account in all projects, and thus it was not necessary keep the generic aspects as a separate call topic;
- Exposure assessment is one of the main aspects of risk assessment, and thus was considered as a key topic in all SIINN calls;
- Toxicity mechanisms, as a specific research topic, was open in call 2, and because of its importance it was also kept in call 3;
- Environmental impact of MNMs is another key topic in SIINN that has been addressed in all the calls;
- Study on properties and effects of MNMs was open as a priority research generic topic in call 1, while in Calls 2 and 3, the topic was restricted to the study of the effects of human health, in order to concentrate on a topic that was a priority for all funding agencies.



In conclusion, it can be seen that a core of highly relevant topics have been open in the three calls, while others have been adapted according to the changes observed not only in the scope of SIINN proposals but also on the strategies of other parallel bodies like Nanosafety cluster. The changes on priorities in the respective national calls have been taken into account for the call topics when appropriate.

3. Documents developed for the calls

In addition to the list of topics, a set of documents have been developed by the SIINN consortium for helping the proposers to participate in the different SIINN calls. The main documents are:

- The call text, with the list of call topics
- The guidelines for applicants
- The procedures of the call

These documents have been updated for each call after the discussions with the representatives of the funding agencies participating in the call. The aim is to make proposal presentation as simple as possible, which means that the documents must clearly specify the general scope of the call and also the specific objectives of the call themes or topics. Documents must clearly specify the evaluation process and the key indicators used in the peer review. These documents are reported in other deliverables of the project.

Another set of important documents is composed of the progress report template for both the project coordinators and for the rapporteurs of the project follow-up allocated by the project Call Office.

The main subjects that have to be addressed within the progress report are:

- The general information about the project and the contract data;
- The changes in the consortium, if any. Change of partners or change of activities of the partners;
- The project objectives and the work progress according to them. The changes proposed, if any;
- The impact being achieved;
- The risk management followed during the execution of the project;
- The dissemination and exploitation activities and the transnational collaboration.

The documents are collected by the Call Office and are transferred to the respective representatives of the funding agencies that are part of the Call Committee.

4. Summary of the Evaluation and follow-up procedures

Here, the main steps of the evaluation are summarised (full process is reported in other deliverables):

- The evaluation is done by peer reviewers selected by the Call Office and validated by the Call Committee members;

- Review process is made in two phases, first remotely and later a common meeting for the final ranking is held;
- Project evaluations are summarised by the rapporteurs, which are the members of the evaluation panel that attend the meeting;

Once projects are funded, their follow-up is made by Call Committee members as follows:

- Projects are yearly evaluated after the preparation by the project coordinators of the periodic reports;
- Projects also participate in open presentations for their launching and yearly presentation of results;
- Project reports are evaluated by experts belonging to the SIINN ERA-NET consortium;
- Experts are selected according to their knowledge but not according to the funding agency that they belong to;
- Expert SIINN members participating in the call will be responsible for the entire project;
- The Call Office will implement follow-up procedures focusing on scientific output and progress of projects.

In figure 2 the view of the follow-up template is shown as an example of the documents prepared by the different partners involved in WP4. This document is very important as from it the Call Office will give the feedback to the project partners in order to support them during the project life.

SIINN 1st Call (2012) - Progress report

Progress report

Please, note:

- The same font and style should be used for the whole report (Times New Roman, 11pt, single spaced).
- Adhere to the given page limits.
- All of the following sections have to be filled in.

This report must be submitted to the SIINN Call Office quintan.tomas@siinnconsortio.es within 40 days of the due date.

Project Accession: _____

Project Full Title: _____

Duration of the project: 1st year 2nd year 3rd year Period covered: _____
(From: select the reference)

Contact Data (Project Coordinator)

Name	_____
Organization	_____
Country	_____
Address	_____
Phone	_____
E-mail	_____

Partners

Number	Country	Organization	Principal Investigator	Other reference
1				
2				
3				
4				
5				
6				
7				
8				

1 The Principal Investigator (PI) is the point of contact of the partner for the corresponding Funding Organization
2 Name of other personnel participating in the project

SIINN 1st Call (2012) - Progress report

1 Project objectives and work progress

Describe the project objectives and deliverables for the period covered. List the main achievements and impact of your collaborative project. Explain the progress of the work in line with the work plan described in the joint proposal. Summarize the progress of the work in short, e.g. write a Gantt chart or equivalent. Clarify the work carried out over the next year for each partner.
(max. 3 pages)

2 Impact¹

State any contribution made to the development of a consolidated framework to address non-related risks and the management of these risks for humans and the environment by the scientific and/or technical activities. Clarify what data have been applied in the SIINN section of the NANBook database² and other relevant databases for research and innovation. Explain the actions taken for the dissemination of results (e.g. by means of publications, workshops, conferences or other events) and exploitation of results (e.g. by means of patents or spin-offs). List publications, events attended and invited to attend in person, networks, and the associated.
(max. 3 pages)

3 Transnational collaboration and project management

Describe the added value and synergies in the collaboration, any obstacles to the transnational collaboration, and the proposed solution if necessary. Clarify what actions and/or project results the research activities have had in Europe. Indicate committees in the SIINN/ERA-NET activities and other international activities. Present the processes and tools used for management and communication. List consortium meetings over the past year.
(max. 3 pages)

4 Deviations to the original project plan

Exclude any changes to the project that could affect the completion of milestones, and of any additional problems encountered with the scientific work, staff or resources. Detail any changes to your consortium among the collaborative partners over the past year. Give a brief explanation of use of resources³, including possible deviations from your proposal. Summarize your action plan to solve these issues. Detail the key goals and any deviations from the original milestones of your joint venture over the past year.
(max. 3 pages)

5 Final comments

(max. 1 page)

¹ Include link and details for any non-peer-reviewed publication, report, patent or communication.
² Link to the NANBook database: <http://www.nanbook.eu/>
³ Identification of costs is performed at the national level.

Figure 2. Template of the follow-up document of the funded projects prepared by the call members.



5. Best practices implemented

At the administrative end of the project, the SIINN consortium has managed two transnational calls and has already launched the third one. With the experience achieved during these four years some best practices and guidelines for the future may be given:

- The achievement of the objectives of SIINN ERA-NET relies on the quality of the projects funded and on the quality of their results. Thus, it is important that good publicity is made in order to ensure the knowledge of the call among the nanosafety community;
- In this sense, not only the announcement but also the pre-announcement of calls and topics is important in order to give maximum time for the preparation of the projects;
- It is important that all members of SIINN ERA-NET share their national data bases for ensuring that the information reaches the potential interested participants in a fast and efficient way;
- Expert's selection is also an important part of the process. Despite SIINN ERA-NET relies on volunteer experts, it has been shown that the amount of work done by them is important and thus, for the future possible follow-up of SIINN ERA-NET, maybe budget for evaluators should have to be considered. Funding Agencies should also help in proposing their best national experts for the international evaluations;
- The Call Text and /or the Guidelines for Applicants should at least summarise the main rules of evaluation and the minimum scoring for the projects being accepted for funding;
- Reduction of the time span between the submission of the proposals and the start of successful projects is desirable. One crucial part of the process is the eligibility check made by the funding agencies. Thus, it is vital that this process is made the faster the better;
- It has also been shown that the eligibility check is done prior to the starting of the scientific evaluation. In the first two calls, eligibility check was made in parallel with the evaluation and this has ended up with some misalignments, because some positively evaluated projects have been not funded because of administrative issues during pre-check. Thus, it has been decided for call 3 that only proposals that have passed the pre-checking - which should be finished before starting the scientific evaluation, despite this delays the whole process – should be forwarded to the international evaluation;
- For a fair implementation of procedures, and although each funding agency has the right of applying internal rules for the pre-checking (as far as these rules are public, when launching the call), emphasis should be put on administrative check, in order to avoid scientific evaluations outside the peer review process;
- The allocation budgets to the projects of the ranking list should not have the aim of changing the order of the scientific evaluation, but to optimise the process of investing all the available budget of all countries on funding the maximum number of projects of good scoring;
- Finally, once projects are accepted and start their activity, it is important that the results achieved are publicly presented. For this reason, dissemination activities should be linked to other activities such as workshops, and other open events that may give maximum audience to the presentations of SIINN funded projects, rather than connecting the dissemination activities to internal SIINN consortium meetings;



- In the same direction, partners of funded projects are advised to introduce the results achieved from their research in the most valuable databases internationally available for Nanotoxicity.

6. Conclusions

SIINN has set-up a successful procedure for launching scientific transnational calls on the nanotoxicity of Manufactured Nano Materials (MNM). This activity is the main outcome of the project together with the important documents elaborated that summarise the State of the Art on characterisation techniques and on results achieved in the past. Such documents are a reference for the Funding Agencies when taking decisions at national level, but they are also available and open for the whole Nanotoxicity community.

Three calls have been launched, the last one lasting three years after the end of SIINN ERA-NET. The administrative procedures for the SIINN joint calls have been elaborated on the basis of the different management procedures in the partner organisations and set common standards for the joint calls. All necessary documents prepared have been approved by the partners participating in each joint call and templates have taken into account previous expertise of the partners.

The topics covered in the three calls are a combination of generic aspects to be covered in all projects and also specific applications on topics of key importance, like exposure, characterisation, toxicity and effects of MNMs on human health.

For the benefit of the whole Nanotoxicity Community, outcome of all relevant activities and SIINN funded projects will be available through the web page, and also transferred to the new PROSAFE Coordination and Support Action, that will continue the leading and coordination of activities at transnational level, after the end of the ERA-NET SIINN.