

BioHorizon Newsletter No. 9 December 2018



EDITORIAL

Dear Bio-NCP colleagues,

The year 2018 has been an intense period of work for all of the NCPs involved in BioHorizon. Behind us are many interesting and inspiring training courses, workshops and the high level 'Sustainable & Circular Bioeconomy' event. I encourage you to read about these events, and the personal feedback and opinions provided in this latest edition of the BioHorizon Newsletter.

Thank you to all Bio-NCPs for your great contribution during the 4th Advisory Board meeting in Brussels on 23 November 2018. All of the discussions and your feedback have provided us inspiration for future BioHorizon activities.

Next year we plan to provide an interactive, on-site training event focusing on 'Impact'. We have also started preparations for the next BioHorizon International Brokerage Event for the 2020 calls in Societal Challenge 2. The event will take place in Brussels on 3 July 2019! Have a look below to learn more...

I wish you a wonderful Christmas and a prosperous New Year!

Enjoy this newsletter and please send any comments to info@ncp-biohorizon.net.

Bożena Podlaska (IPPT PAN) – BioHorizon Coordinator

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BIOHORIZON TOOLS

CHECK OUT THE NEW BIOHORIZON PRACTICAL GUIDE FOR SC2 APPLICANTS

NEW

Following several requests from Bio-NCPs we have produced a guide specifically designed for SC2 applicants, so they can get a better understanding of the funding opportunities. This guide for applicants is available on the public part of the BioHorizon website.

Also, we remind you that there is a second guide available: the BioHorizon Handbook for Bio-NCPs, which is a practical guide compiling a comprehensive collection of information and guidelines on how to perform the daily work of a Bio-NCP. It consists of three large chapters: (1) Introduction, (2) What you need to know, and (3) NCP activities and covers 21 thematic subsections. The 'What you need to know section,' provides general information about SC2, KET-B and related networks and instruments. The second 'NCP activities' part provides an overview of the most common tasks and challenges encountered in the daily work of a Bio-NCP.

Contact: RVO, Saske Hoving (saske.hoving@rvo.nl) and Willemien Van Asselt (willemien.vanAsselt@rvo.nl)

[Check out the guide for SC2 applicants here](#)

[Check out the Handbook for Bio-NCPs here \(intranet\)](#)

CHECK OUT THE NEW BIOHORIZON SELF-ASSESSMENT TOOL FOR BIO-NCPs!

The BioHorizon self-assessment tool was launched at the beginning of April 2018 and is available for Bio-NCPs to complete all year round. Don't miss the opportunity to make use of this self-assessment tool, as it will give you valuable insights into your capacities and the services you provide. The self-assessment tool comprises two questionnaires, one for all NCPs and one specifically addressing NCPs responsible for Societal Challenge 2 and KET Biotechnology. The exercise is very important, as it gives each Bio-NCP the opportunity to compare their performance and practices with those of other Bio-NCPs and NCPs from other thematic areas. In addition, Bio-NCPs who participated in last years' exercise can assess changes in their performance by comparing their benchmarking results with the results from the previous year. The questionnaires are short and will take up no more than 10 minutes of your time. So make sure you participate!

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NCP assessment

The benchmarking tool for the year 2018 is updated and has changed for you! Within 10 minutes, you can assess your strengths and weaknesses compared to the Bio-NCPs around the world. For those who participated last year, the benchmarking tool gives them the opportunity to monitor their annual progress comparing their results with those of last year. The self-assessment tool will be available here all year long!

You can access the benchmarking tool here: <http://benchmarking.help-forward.gr>

Here you can find a [brief explanation how to use the benchmarking tool](#).

Contact: FORTH, Katerina Papadouli (papadouli@praxinetwork.gr)

[Checkout our the tool here](#)

FUTURE BIOHORIZON ACTIVITIES: SAVE THE DATES!

5th BioHorizon International Brokerage Event, Brussels, 3 July 2019



The **5th BioHorizon International Brokerage Event** will be dedicated to consortium building to address the 2020 topics in the current work programme for Societal Challenge 2 'Food security, sustainable agriculture and forestry, marine, maritime and inland water research and the bioeconomy.'

The main part of the event will comprise a series of **pre-arranged bilateral meetings** between people interested in the same call topics.

The brokerage event is one of a series of events that will take place over two days, starting with the brokerage event on the 3 July 2019 and finishing European Commission's SC2 Infoday on the 4 July 2019. Both of these events can be attended free of charge by any interested parties, but require prior registration and validation by the organisers. Additional information will follow as soon as registration opens.

More information will follow on the BioHorizon website in the spring.

[Check out the video from our brokerage event!](#)

BioHorizon Staff Exchange Programme



BioHorizon has organised **13 staff exchanges events** in various countries in Europe since 2015, with a total of **62 Bio-NCPs** taking part to date. In 2018 we organised **four staff exchanges, in Italy, Iceland, Belgium and the Netherlands**. All of the Bio-NCPs were given an opportunity see how their counterpart Bio-NCPs in Europe work and to share knowledge and best practices with the other participants. According to the feedback provided by the attendees, these mentoring visits are also very useful as a means to build new networks and implement good practices at home .

We plan to hold one more staff exchange in the coming months and, as always, travel and accommodation expenses incurred by Bio-NCPs from the Member States and Associated Countries will be covered by the BioHorizon project! So why not avail of the opportunity to join in the final round of staff exchanges? Be sure to follow our e-mails and social media for announcements...

Contact: TUBITAK, Cinar Adali Oner (cinar.adali@tubitak.gov.tr)

[Check out the staff exchange service here](#)

Staff exchange in The Netherlands: feedback from Edita Bagdonaité, Bio-NCP from Lithuania



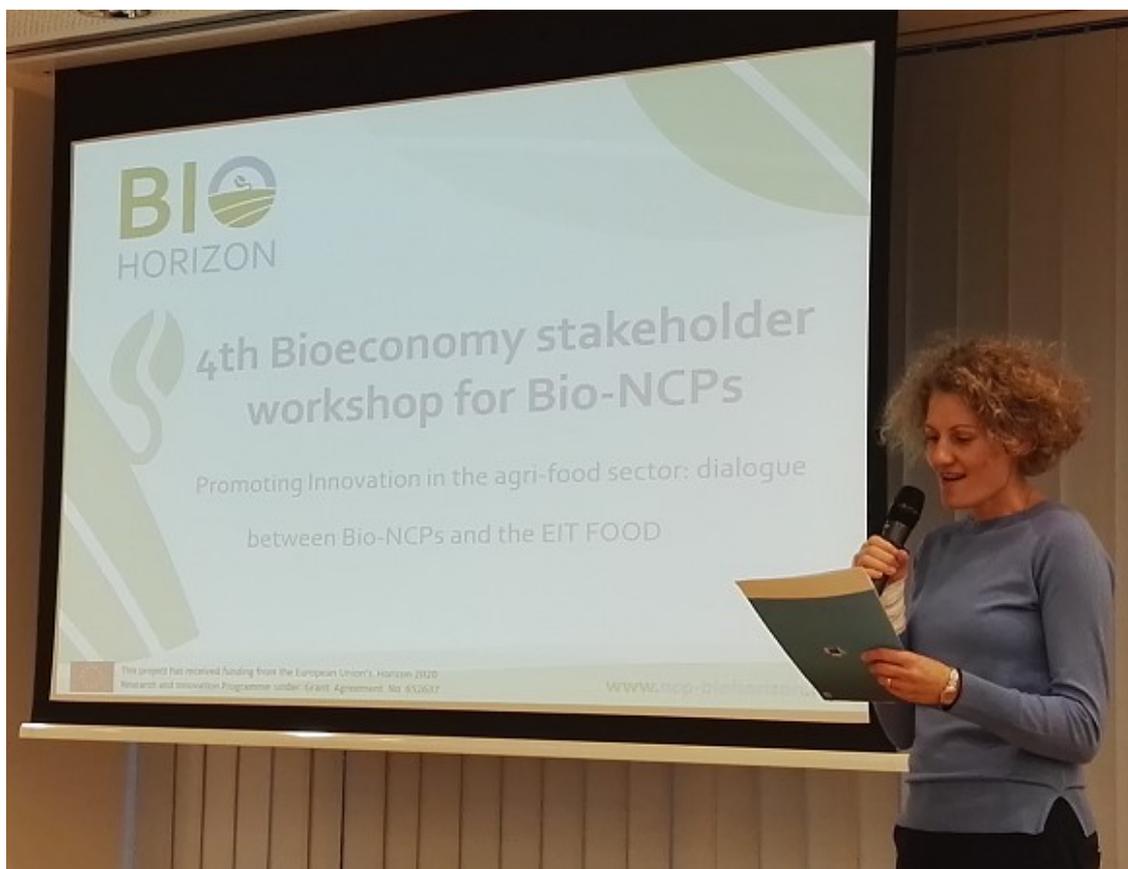
On 3-4 November 2018 a BioHorizon staff exchange was held at the offices of RVO in the Hague, where the Dutch NCPs work. Edita Bagdonaité, Lithuanian Bio-NCP (working at the Agency for Science, Innovation and Technology, MITA), took part in the staff exchange and provided us with her feedback:

“I believe this staff exchange was one of the most productive I have had in the BioHorizon project. The success was due to the support provided by the Netherlands Enterprise Agency. It was an excellent opportunity to learn a lot of useful things in a very efficient way and a friendly atmosphere. I found the information I took home very useful in preparing myself for the challenges arising in my work in Horizon 2020. I've learnt about the best ways to train and to motivate clients. Based on the experiences from the staff exchange I will be implementing some new techniques in my work, especially in planning training events and information days. A warm thanks!”



PREVIOUS EVENTS

4th Bioeconomy Stakeholder Workshop for Bio-NCPs



The **4th BioHorizon Bioeconomy Stakeholder Workshop** was dedicated to the European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT), in particular to the **innovation community addressing sustainable supply chains from resources to consumers (EIT Food) and its portfolio of activities**. The purpose of the workshop was to deepen Bio-NCPs knowledge and understanding of the EIT Food.

The workshop began with an initial presentation of the EIT model and landscape (including an overview of the EIT Innovation Communities and the EIT Regional Innovation Scheme) by the Head of the EIT Liaison Office. This was then followed by a presentation of the vision and missions underlying the EIT Food, and the corresponding implementation plan over the period of its 7-year strategic agenda. This information was shared by representatives of the South and North-

East Co-Location Centres. A special emphasis was given to the EIT Food innovation programmes, with concrete examples of projects initiated to date. The last part of the workshop was on the EIT ecosystem as a whole and on the specific actions of possible interest to Bio-NCPs and their clients. As with all of the BioHorizon Stakeholder Workshops, the event was conceived to allow for interaction and for intensive discussion, this time on how to promote and foster synergies between Bio-NCPs and EIT Food activities in order to develop a common action plan for the future.

The 28 participants of the workshop included 18 Bio-NCPs, from 11 EU Member States and one from a Third Country. Besides the Bio-NCP and EIT communities, there was also one representative of TP Organics, one SC5 NCP and two representatives of the University of Warsaw.

This workshop took place in conjunction with the 'Sustainable and Circular Bioeconomy, the European Way' event hosted in Brussels by the European Commission's Directorate General for Research and Innovation on 22 October 2018. This high-level event was held to discuss the Action Plan of the 2018 update of the Bioeconomy Strategy.

Contact: FCT, Maria João Fernandes (mariajoao.fernandes@fct.pt) and José Antão (jose.antao@fct.pt)



Access the presentations and other relevant materials [ere](#)

4th BioHorizon Training for Bio-NCPs: The EIC Instruments for innovation



The 4th BioHorizon interactive training event was conceived to provide Bio-NCPs with basic knowledge of the various funding instruments associated with the European Innovation Council (EIC). Launched under the current EIC Pilot, these instruments are FET Open, the SME Instrument, FTI and the Horizon Prizes.

Through a balanced mix of presentations, success stories and interactive exercises, active and fruitful discussions took place between the group of 31 participants and the nine speakers (five EC officers and four representatives of

bioeconomy-related initiatives funded by EIC instruments [Future Agriculture, FreshDetect, Cold Energy, Tellspec]) and one SME-NCP from the Netherlands. The knowledge gleaned from the event will help Bio-NCPs to better assist national applicants to these funding instruments with a bioeconomy focus.

Although most of the participants were Bio-NCPs (68 %), there were also NCPs from other Horizon 2020 programme areas (20 %) and EEN sector group representatives (11 %). In spite of measures undertaken by the BioHorizon project, participants came mainly from EU Member States, with only 13 % from Third Countries.

The training took place on 22 November 2018, in the Albert Borchette Congress Centre in Brussels. The event was hosted in conjunction with the 5th BioHorizon Consortium Meeting (21 November) and the 4th BioHorizon Advisory Board Meeting and the meeting of Bio-NCPs organised by the Commission (23 November).

Contact: APRE Serena Borgna (borgna@apre.it) and Matteo Sabini (sabini@apre.it)

[Check the presentations from the event here](#)

Below you can read testimonials provided by two Bio-NCPs who participated in the EIC training.

Feedback from Liliia Kalachniuk, Bio-NCP from Ukraine



On 22 November 2018 I was granted the very good opportunity to be a participant of the Bio-NCP training on 'The EIC Instruments for Innovation - Technicalities and Success Stories'. The aim of the training was to provide guidance to Bio-NCPs on the EIC pilot in Horizon 2020, including an overview of its instruments (FET Open, SME Instrument, Fast Track to Innovation, Horizon Prizes) and some individual success stories relevant in the bioeconomy context. With this information the attending Bio-NCPs possess a better foundation upon which to provide assistance to stakeholders in their national bioeconomy sectors.

I liked very much the relaxed yet energetic environment of the training, the kind and respectful relationship between the trainers and trainees, experts, and both the more and the less experienced Bio-NCPs in attendance. With the opening 'ice breaking session' led by moderator Rafael Garcia-Villar I was quickly made comfortable and opened my mind to new aspects of the activities of a Bio-NCP. I think that the event widened my view on some of the particulars in relation to the assistance we can provide to stakeholders in the bioeconomy sector.

All of the presentations made as part of the training introduced important knowledge in relation to EIC, FET Open, the SME Instrument and Fast Track to Innovation, but also the experiences of innovation made by SMEs, NCPs, etc. I learned about some very successful bioeconomy projects. I was particularly impressed by the presentation on the 'Turboalgor - Cold Energy' project made by Agnese Manni. I think I have become more confident in my knowledge of the EIC instruments. My regards and best wishes to everyone I met at this event.

Feedback from Grace Prospero Lonyo Ochengan, Bio-NCP from Uganda



The BioHorizon EIC training event held at the Albert Borschette Congress Centre in Brussels on 22 November 2018 was my first time attending a BioHorizon interactive training session.

The interactions with other NCPs gave me insights into their professions and how they go about implementing Horizon 2020-related activities in their countries. What I learnt will greatly enrich my own support services and I am sure that more Ugandans will benefit from future calls for funding as a consequence. I was grateful just to be at the European Union premises, something many people only dream about, leave alone seeing the faces of some of the big shots who evaluate the proposals!

The training provided an insight into the fine details of the calls, keys to success, how to support proposal writers and sources of information for grantees. It was a novel and positive experience for me. I learned a lot of new things and gained experiences on how to better benefit from the BioHorizon project through linking projects to partners and experts.

I found the BioHorizon team so welcoming. They made my stay very comfortable! I enjoyed the dinner later in the day and generally interacting with Bio-NCPs from different countries. In particular, Serena, Antoine and Rafael were very helpful in ensuring that I had all I needed to facilitate the processing of my visa and travel to Belgium. Serena's invitation letter was exceptional and contributed to my getting the visa in less than three days when usually it takes up to fifteen. I am also so grateful to Rafael for the opportunity to attend the training and for the facilitation (and for the translations from French to English).

I look forward to future training events and meeting even more Bio-NCPs, especially from Africa, Asia and the Americas.

Sustainable & circular bioeconomy, the European way



On 22 November 2018 a high-level conference took place in Brussels under the title 'Sustainable & Circular bioeconomy, the European Way'. The conference focused on the need to have a sustainable and circular bioeconomy in order to enhance the transition towards a new environmental, social and economic reality in a changed EU policy context. The main purpose of the event was the presentation and adoption of the updated Bioeconomy Strategy for Europe.

The 2018 update of the Bioeconomy Strategy aims to accelerate the deployment of a sustainable European bioeconomy so as to maximise the Union's contribution to the United Nations' 2030 Agenda and its Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and to the Paris Agreement.

The update also responds to new European policy priorities, in particular the renewed Industrial Policy Strategy, the Circular Economy Action Plan and the Communication on Accelerating Clean Energy Innovation, all of which highlight the importance of a sustainable, circular bioeconomy to achieve their objectives.

The update proposes a three-tiered action plan to:

- Strengthen and scale up the bio-based sectors, unlocking investments and markets
- Deploy local bioeconomies rapidly across the whole of Europe
- Understand the ecological boundaries of the bioeconomy

WHAT the new Bioeconomy Strategy aims to achieve....

- Link the sustainable use of renewable biological resources for food, feed, bio-based products and bioenergy, with the protection and restoration of biodiversity, ecosystems and natural capital across land and water
- Step up action to ensure that the bioeconomy provides a long-term balance of social, environmental and economic gains

... and HOW

- Adopt a system-wide approach
- Expand beyond research and innovation
- Deliver on policies across sectors, addressing trade-offs
- Strengthen circularity and sustainability
- Deliver for citizens – on jobs, sustainable growth, well-being – and on planetary health
- Implement in local contexts, valorising local resources and adapted to local needs

A DAY IN THE LIFE OF A BIO-NCP CZECH REPUBLIC



Nada Konickova, Czech Bio-NCP, explains the Czech Bio-NCP system, and outlines the main tasks she deals with daily.

Since the start of the EU's 5th Framework Programme NCP services in the Czech Republic have been provided by the Technology Centre of the Czech Academy of Sciences (TC CAS). TC CAS also coordinates the European Enterprise Network (EEN) in the Czech Republic, runs the Czech Liaison Office for Research, Development and Innovation in Brussels (CZELO) and provides analytical support and expertise for the decision-making processes related to the integration of the Czech Republic in the European Research Area.

The activities and services provided by Czech NCPs are funded by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports (MEYS) within the framework of the national project 'Czech Republic in ERA 3' (CZERA3). Similar to many of the NCP services provided in other countries, the core activities of Czech NCPs include providing information, consultation and expert support to facilitate the participation of national research teams in Horizon 2020. Within TC CAS, the National Information Centre for European Research (NICER) is host to 15 NCPs responsible for all areas of Horizon 2020 and EURATOM. The members of the

NICER team also provide complementary expert services such as monitoring and analysis of Czech participation in Horizon 2020.

Our portfolio of services includes:

Information services for involvement in ERA. On-demand seminars are held for R&D organisations (24 in 2017), each of them reflecting on the needs and the field of research of the organisation in question. **Expert seminars and training courses** addressing various aspects of Horizon 2020 aim to improve the preparedness of both individual researchers and national teams of researchers for participation in Horizon 2020 projects (42 events in 2017). Seminar and course topics include writing research proposals for Horizon 2020, administrative and financial management of projects, preparation of individual projects for applicants for ERC grants, intellectual property rights and open access issues in Horizon 2020, communication and dissemination, coordination of Horizon 2020 projects, etc. Seven training modules have been developed and can be combined by participants. Following the publication of the Horizon 2020 work programmes we host separate **national information days** for virtually all areas of Horizon 2020. In 2018 a series of short **e-learning videos** was produced, dealing with various administrative aspects of participation in Horizon 2020.

The **Czech Days for European Research (CZEDER) Conference** hosted in cooperation with MEYS has been held yearly since 2002. The conference programme always reflects current topics relevant in the European Research Area.

The Czech NCP team co-organises **international events** (eight in 2017), including partnering meetings seeking to facilitate the establishment of partnerships for Horizon 2020 projects. EC representatives and other foreign speakers have participated at many of these events upon invitation by TC CAS and offered their experience in transnational research cooperation. Czech NCPs are often **invited to lecture** at national and international seminars and conferences. Lectures have also been held for **doctoral students** within courses

offered by the Czech Academy of Sciences. Other information services include publishing the **periodical Echo** (five issues per year), the **electronic newsletter Horizon 2020**, **twitter** (https://twitter.com/H2020_Czech), and maintenance of the **National Horizon 2020 Portal** (www.h2020.cz) and the Czech ERA Portal in cooperation with MEYS.

Consultation activities. Expert consultations are provided for everyone interested in participating in Horizon 2020 and represent an important part of our work. The team of NCPs provides **assistance with the preparation of proposals and the running of successful projects**. Twice every year the team convenes **consultation work groups of university and CAS representatives**, which serve to exchange information, experiences and best practices in the financial aspects and administration of Horizon 2020 projects. As part of our consultation activities we also publish **specialised brochures in the series Vademecum H2020**.

Analyses of Czech participation in Framework Programmes. The team continually monitors and analyses the participation of the Czech Republic in Horizon 2020, processing the funding data provided by the Commission. An extensive report on the participation of the Czech Republic in Horizon 2020 is published yearly (as a supplement in the journal Echo). The report is also made available in digital form online at www.tc.cz. Datasets and outputs with commentaries on the participation of the Czech Republic in Horizon 2020 are regularly provided to meet **the needs of the TC CAS** and upon request **for external users**. Data about participation by organisations from the Czech Republic are also published on the national portal www.h2020.cz/cs.

Supporting the Czech State Administration. Regular updates are made to the Czech ERA Portal (www.evropskyvyzkum.cz) in close cooperation with MEYS. The portal also has a non-public section (intranet) for the sharing of working documents between the members of expert groups and delegates of the various Horizon 2020 Programme Committees. The NCPs are members of these expert

groups and participate in the preparation of background materials for meetings of the Programme Committees. Ongoing support is provided to MEYS and the Permanent Representation of the Czech Republic to the EU in Brussels in the form of commentaries and suggestions on Czech Republic positions and negotiating mandates.

Contact: TC CAS, Nada Konickova (konickova@tc.cz)

Check our team that can support you



The content of the BioHorizon newsletter has been prepared by the project consortium.

BioHorizon Coordinator: Bożena Podlaska (bozena.podlaska@kpk.gov.pl), IPPT PAN (Institute of Fundamental Technological Research of the Polish Academy of Sciences)



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