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Access to Research Infrastructures: Process and Modalities

Module 6 - Access Financial framework

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Module Overview

- Sustainability of access

- (Access to) Service cost estimation

- Hands-on session for the service cost estimation
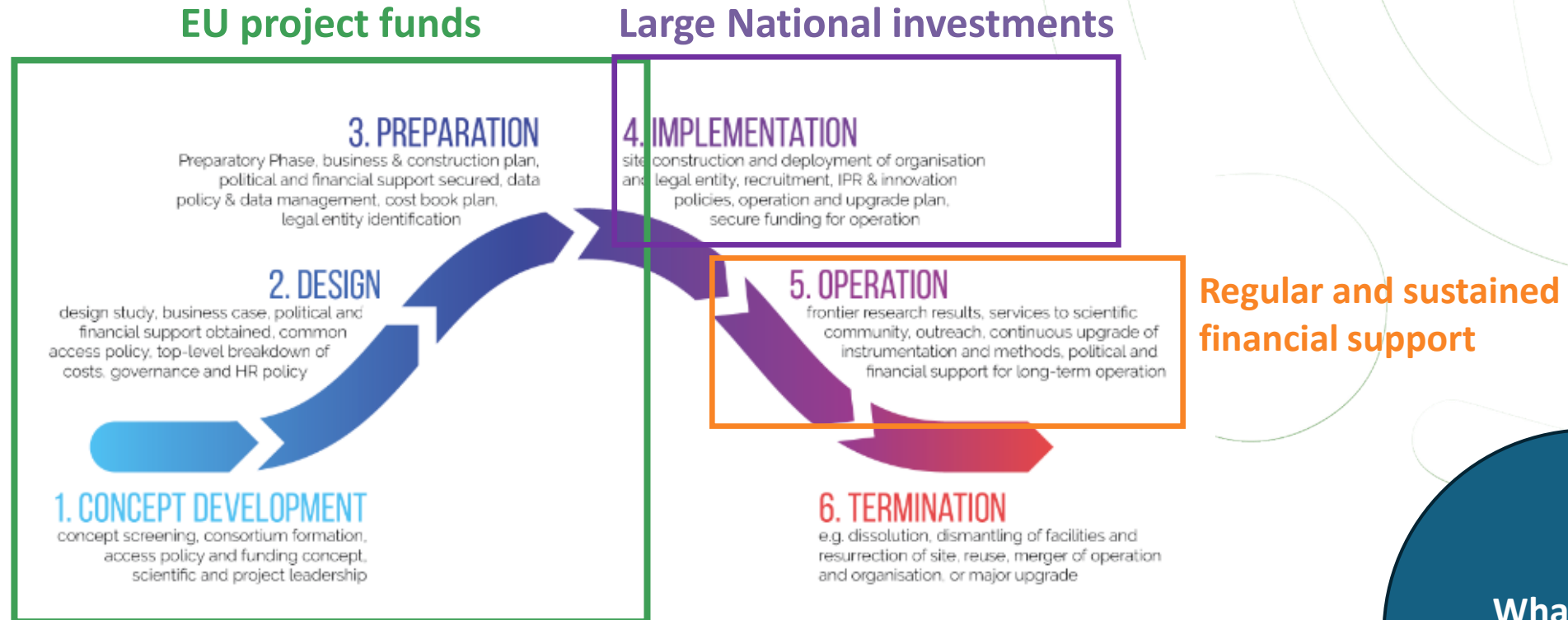
    Break

- Questionnaires

What is Sustainability?

"Having the resources and the policy framework to deliver services and support users into the future"

Long-Term Sustainability of Research Infrastructures

MAIN RECOMMENDATIONS

1. **Establish and maintain excellence** through the entire lifecycle of RIs by all appropriate means, by securing adequate framework conditions, and by opening the RIs up to the world.

2. **Ensure that RIs have the right people in the right place at the right time** by strengthening and harmonising national research and educational systems to make sure that all essential skills are available.

3. Harmonise and **integrate a vision for convergent operation of RIs and e-Infrastructures** in Europe to ensure cost-effective service provision to the user communities.

4. **Fully exploit the potential of RIs as innovation hubs** by incorporating strategies for their development into national and European innovation policies.

5. Set up effective means of **determining the economic and wider social value of RIs**, and incorporate these benefits into science-policy-society dialogues.

6. Establish adequate framework conditions **for effective governance and sustainable long-term funding for RIs at every stage in their lifecycle**, together with effective management.

7. Foster broader **coordination at National and European levels** when designing processes for planning and supporting national and pan European RIs and so enhance their strategic value.

Training current RIs staff and user communities: "Access to Research Infrastructures: Process and Modalities", Rome, 23-25/10/2024

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Funding the RI lifecycle

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EU project funds

Large National investments

3. PREPARATION
Preparatory Phase, business & construction plan, political and financial support secured, data policy & data management, cost book plan, legal entity identification

4. IMPLEMENTATION
site construction and deployment of organisation and legal entity, recruitment, IPR & innovation policies, operation and upgrade plan, secure funding for operation

2. DESIGN
design study, business case, political and financial support obtained, common access policy, top-level breakdown of costs, governance and HR policy

5. OPERATION
frontier research results, services to scientific community, outreach, continuous upgrade of instrumentation and methods, political and financial support for long-term operation

Regular and sustained financial support

1. CONCEPT DEVELOPMENT
concept screening, consortium formation, access policy and funding concept, scientific and project leadership

6. TERMINATION
e.g. dissolution, dismantling of facilities and resurrection of site, reuse, merger of operation and organisation, or major upgrade

What about ACCESS?

Sustainability as a recommendation

European Strategy Forum on Research Infrastructures
Long-Term Sustainability Working Group

2017

Long-Term Sustainability of Research Infrastructures

Recommendations

Effective RI governance, long-term funding and effective management

6.1 **At the European level** continue to launch initiatives which improve the management of RIs through the exchange of best practices and lessons learnt, and contribute to strategic planning, evaluation, and training.

6.2 **European and National Authorities** should contribute to the development of a feasible business model that exploits innovation potential, support for costs for Open Access and incorporate these into the national governance models.

6.3 **European Commission** together with **National Authorities** should explore improving the ERIC regulation so that its potential may be more fully exploited.

6.4 **National Authorities** should consider governance models which provide the right balance between long-term funding commitments (including operation costs and strategic developments) and regular evaluation of the RI performance.

6.5 **Research Infrastructures** must develop, right from the start of the planning phase and prior to the roadmapping exercise, a comprehensive business plan covering all stages of their lifecycle including upgrading and decommissioning.

ESFRI European Strategy Forum on Research Infrastructures

ESFRI Report
Access to Research Infrastructures and Charter on Access to RIs
December 2023

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

There are still challenges to **broader and effective access** to research infrastructures (RIs) as needed by users to tackle scientific and societal challenges and to underpin the new European Research Area (ERA)

[…]

Legal, institutional, financial, and other dimensions

- Help identify **diversified funding streams** for access, advocating for long-term support.
- **EU support**: ensure continuity and appropriate budget and a better balance between curiosity and challenge-driven access.

2017 − 2024

- Why is this taking so long?

- Are we (us/you) anywhere near the solution?

- Do we need to change perspective?

Key components of sustainability

- Cost Management

- Diverse Revenue Streams
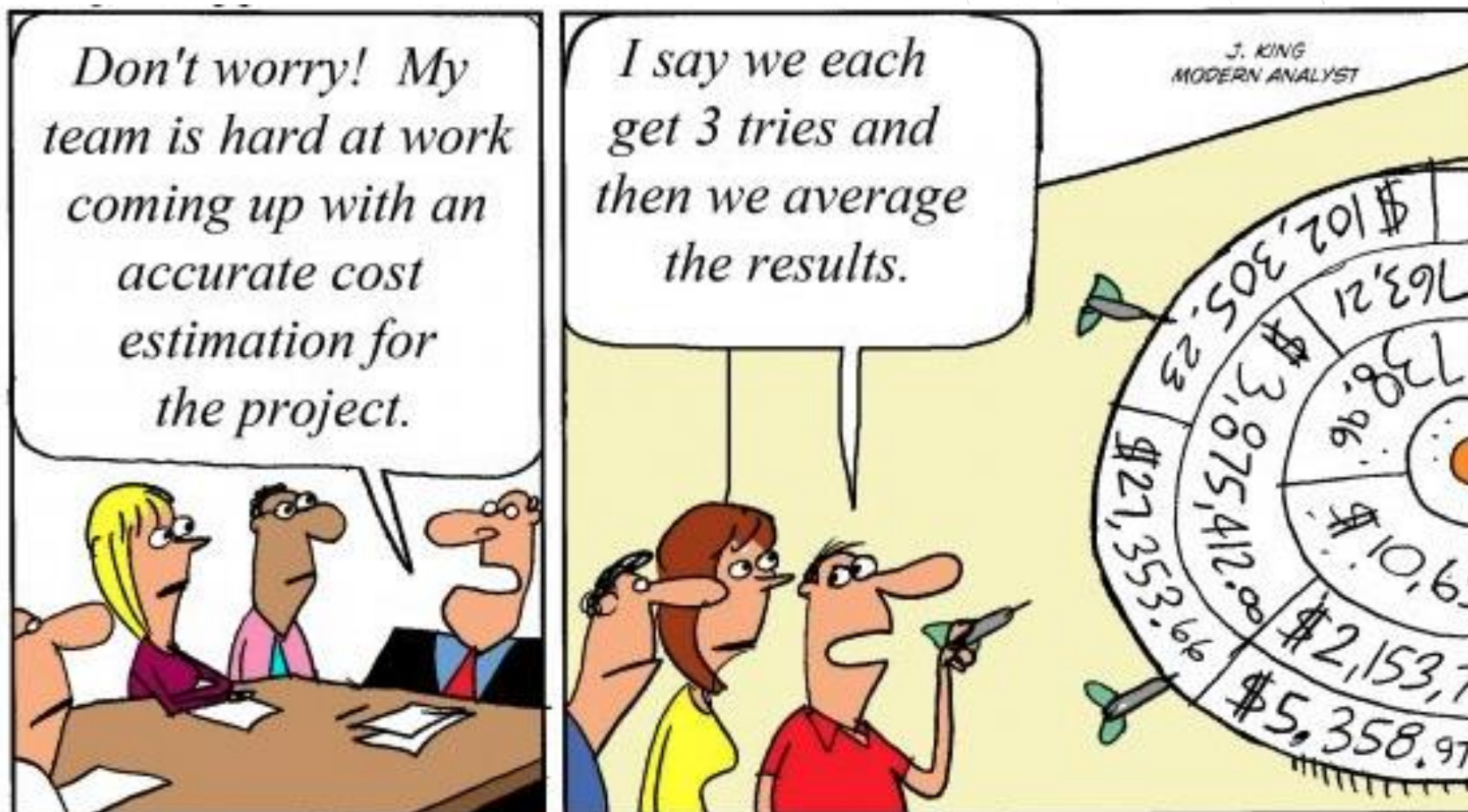
- Stakeholder Engagement

Cost Management

- **Budgeting and Forecasting**:
  - Accurate, actual estimations
  - Regularly update budgets and financial forecasts to anticipate and manage expenses effectively.

- **Operational Efficiency**: Optimize processes to reduce costs, such as through energy-efficient technologies and streamlined operations.

Accurate, actual estimations

Training current RIs staff and user communities: "Access to Research Infrastructures: Process and Modalities", Rome, 23-25/10/2024

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Accurate, actual estimations?

Participant number		Organisation short name		Short name of Infrastructure	
Installation number		Short name of Installation		Unit of access	

Calculation of the Unit Cost (UC) for Trans-national Access [1]

Reference period		from:		to:	

			Eligible Costs (€)
A. Direct eligible costs of providing access over the last two years [3] excluding personnel costs	Describe the direct eligible costs [2] for providing access to the installation over the reference period (the last two closed financial years [3] preceding the current one). Capital investments (including depreciation costs of equipment, infrastructure or other assets) and internally invoiced goods and services are ineligible costs unless otherwise specified in the Work Programme.		
		Total A	0.00
		of which subcontracting (A')	

	Category of staff [4]	Person-Months	Personnel Costs (€)
B. Personnel direct eligible costs needed to provide access over the last two years [3]			
	Total B		0.00

| C. Indirect eligible costs: 25% x ([A-A']+B)	0.00
D. Total access eligible costs over the last two years [3] = A+B+C	0.00
E. Total quantity of access provided to all normal users of the installation (i.e. both internal and external) over the last two years [3]	1
F. Unit cost =D/E	0
G. Unit cost charged to the project	0
H. Quantity of access offered under the project (over the whole duration of the project)	0
H	0.00

Some guidelines

- **Identification of the unit of analysis**

- **Service costs should be estimated as actual costs**
  - necessary for the provision to the selected users
  - identifiable, verifiable and recorded in the access provider's accounts
  - reasonable, justified and sound

GUIDELINES ON COST ESTIMATION
OF RESEARCH INFRASTRUCTURES
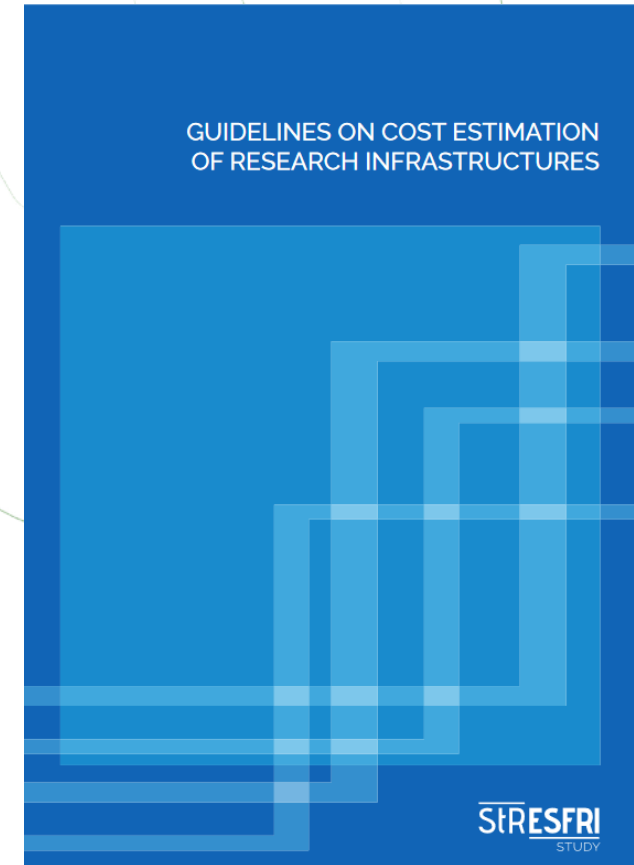
Direct and indirect access costs

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DIRECT COST

Costs that can be easily traced and allocated to the provision of each service:

- Direct personnel costs: technical, scientific, administrative staff
- Other direct costs, consumables, maintenance
- Transport, travel
- (Capital investment and equipment)

INDIRECT COST

Costs incurred by the usage of shared resources not directly traceable to each service

- Space rental
- Utilities (water, gas, fuel, electricity)
- General administration, insurance, taxes, overhead costs related to communication, office supplies, communication, …

HANDS-ON
EXERCISE

DEFINITION OF SERVICES

Total time: 40 minutes

Background: In this exercise, you have to try estimating the actual cost of providing a service to a user.

Tips: Choose one of the services described in the exercise on Day 2 and forget the HE TNA calculation sheet! Consider the time, resources, and overall effort required to provide that service.

THANKS!