

Framework for joint EPTA projects

The EPTA network has a light structure with neither common funds nor a permanent secretariat. To assume a more active role at the European level, EPTA acts as a forum that enhances synergies, exchange and cooperation between its members. In this context, EPTA encourages bottom-up initiatives for the realisation of Joint EPTA Projects.

The initiative for joint projects comes from groups of EPTA institutions. The outcomes of such projects represent the opinions of the participating institutions and not necessarily of all EPTA members.

This framework gives the basic guidelines for Joint EPTA Projects.

1. **Criteria for Joint EPTA Projects**

1. A proposal for a Joint EPTA Project must be backed by at least three EPTA institutions
2. The project must be presented and accepted as a Joint EPTA Project at an EPTA Directors' or Council meeting. A description of the project should be communicated to the boards of the EPTA institutions for approval in due time before the meeting
3. Joint projects should be about issues of European relevance that involve technology assessment and where EPTA has a role to play.
4. Other EPTA members or associates can join the project, if they fulfil the criteria for partnership within the timeline for new partners.
5. EPTA members will be informed about the progress of the project at EPTA Directors' and Council meetings.
6. The participating members can disseminate the project conclusions as results of a Joint EPTA Project

2. **Criteria for partnership**

The fundamental conditions underlying participation in any Joint EPTA Project are: a) all partners work actively towards the aims of the joint project, b) all partners contribute actively to producing internal as well as external deliverables, and carrying out project-related activities and administrative procedures, and c) observer status is not an option.

The following criteria will thus apply to each partner institution – both the initiating institutions and new partners:

- 1) The institution is a member or associated member of EPTA.
- 2) It has finished, ongoing or upcoming projects of its own that are relevant to the specific aims of the Joint EPTA Project. Such projects should result in documented syntheses, conclusions and policy options that can be brought into the joint project. As *upcoming projects* are meant only projects that have been formally ratified by a competent body of the institution, and which have been allocated the necessary resources for execution.
- 3) The institution will allocate the necessary resources for its own expenses as well as common expenses of the joint project.

- 4) The institution accepts this Joint EPTA Project Framework as the basis for the partnership.
- 5) The institution will present the necessary proof of eligibility and resources for the above points to the Coordination group of the project.

In the above, a *project* is defined as a) a time-limited process, b) which has specifically been allocated resources in terms of funds and personnel, c) to pursue certain project objectives, d) by making use of an explicit project plan. Outside this definition are for example: i) general obligations to research in a specific area, ii) general mandates to debates and policymaking in an area.

By *documentation* is meant generally available public documents, in which analysis, synthesis, conclusions and/or recommendations are systematically described. Outside this definition are for example i) press releases, media quotations, etc, ii) minutes, transcriptions of debates, etc, iii) personal articles, scientific papers etc, unless these are supplements to documentation.

2.1 Timeline for new partners

After acceptance, expressions of interest for partnership can be submitted *within three months*. Time-limited partnerships will be granted to potential partners for a period of *one year* from the expression of interest. Within this period they have to provide evidence that they fulfil the partnership criteria, whereupon they become partners with the same rights and obligations as the initiating institutions. Time-limited partnerships expire after this period if such evidence is not provided. During their probation period, potential partners will be given access to all project activities and organisational groups.

3. Internal structure

The joint project needs an internal structure, which is slim and work-focused without neglecting the need for certain formal procedures.

The organisation consists of two elements:

Coordination Group (CG)
Project Manager Group (PMG)

3.1 Coordination Group

The Coordination Group (CG) consists of directors or international officers of the partners or their designated representatives. At least one member of the CG should be a director. The CG can decide to expand to ensure stronger internal coordination.

The role of the CG is to:

- Carry overall responsibility for the execution of the Joint EPTA Project.
- Be a forum for the institutional relations in the project.
- Ensure proper dialogue between the partners and maintain relations to the EPTA network.
- Decide about new partners. As a consequence, the CG has the competence to judge whether certain projects or documentation fulfil the definitions.

- Decide on changes in the objectives of the joint project.
- Decide on any project-related matters, which cannot be handled by the PMG.
- Take responsibility for the national ratification of the results, if required.

3.2 Project Manager Group

The core of the project organisation is the Project Manager Group (PMG), which will:

- Prepare all project deliverables.
- Coordinate with and give input from national projects.
- Carry direct responsibility for contributions from national projects.

The PMG consists of one or more project managers from each partner.

4. Budget and funding

- The projects have no common accounts.
- The basic work will be done on the national level by project managers and hence be financed through established projects.
- Expenses concerning common activities such as printing and hosting of meetings will circulate between the participating institutions. The Coordination Group ensures a fair sharing of costs.
- The participating institutions themselves will cover travel and accommodation expenses of their staff.

5. Dissemination

The project can disseminate its conclusions as results of a Joint EPTA Project.

Findings should be presented and discussed at a Directors' or Council meeting before dissemination. An EPTA meeting can object to a deviation from the accepted project plan, but the results and conclusions are the sole responsibility of the participating institutions, and can only be changed by the partner group.

The findings will be communicated with the EPTA logo. The report should carry a short disclaimer stating that the results of the project are the responsibility of the project members, and not all the members of the EPTA network.

The results should be presented and discussed at an open workshop with addressees and policy makers. A full presentation of the project, with project plan, reports, press releases and minutes from open workshops should be posted on the EPTA web site.

The CG is in charge of developing standard presentations that can be used by the partners on external conferences and workshops.