



EUROPEAN PROJECTS ADVISORY *Working Group Charta*

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1. Purpose and Vision of the Working Group

The European Projects Advisory Group (EPAG) exists to serve as a central information and advisory hub on European funding opportunities for the CETAF community. It aims to simplify and streamline access to EU funding, especially in biodiversity and taxonomic research. EPAG addresses the fragmented and complex funding landscape by helping institutions – particularly those with limited internal capacity – navigate opportunities, build partnerships and strengthen collaboration among CETAF institutions, and initiate project proposals. Long-term, it aspires to become the go-to resource for all EU-funded related initiatives within CETAF.

2. Strategic Relevance to CETAF

EPAG contributes directly to CETAF's mission by:

- Enabling greater collaboration among member institutions on common Natural Science Collections (NSC) research fields.
- Facilitating access to research funding.
- Supporting scientific advancement through improved project initiation and success.

Its role in information, dissemination and support to the community aligns with CETAF's goals of strengthening European taxonomic and biodiversity research capacity. As a cross-cutting working group, EPAG's work is linked to almost every strategic area of CETAF. More specifically, the EPAG activity falls under *II.1d) Foster collaboration among specialists and EU-funded projects*.

3. Main Themes and Objectives

Themes:

- EU funding mechanisms (e.g. Horizon Europe, LIFE).
- Advisory support on European funding calls.
- Collaboration and capacity-building on funding programmes.

Objectives:

- Disseminate funding opportunities.
- Guide CETAF members in consortium building.
- Provide practical tools and resources (e.g., guidelines, databases).
- Foster inter-WG cooperation by identifying and sharing funding-related needs and guiding them to pre-identified opportunities.

4. Work Plan and Deliverables

Existing and Planned Deliverables:



- **EU Calls Database** – A centralised, member-accessible tool for identifying and responding to funding opportunities.
- **Newsletters** – Regular updates (possibly in collaboration with CETAF e-Pulse).
- **Guidelines & Best Practices** – Practical documents for navigating EU calls.

Work Plan (by term):

- Short-term: Regular dissemination of funding opportunities (targeting EPAG Contact Points); Continuation of monthly meetings.
- Mid-term: EPAG community engagement (implementation of regular webinars and surveys to gather feedback and new ideas).
- Long-term: Fully operationalise the EU Calls Database

5. Evaluation and Success Metrics

Level of member engagement with the Calls Database.

- Frequency and quality of information dissemination (e.g., newsletters).
- Feedback from EPAG CPs, CETAF WGs and institutions.
- Number of successful proposals supported/advised.

6. Timeline and Lifetime

The group is ongoing and not bound by any specific conditions.

7. Roles and Responsibilities

- Coordination: Ana Casino (CETAF), Marko Lovric (CETAF).
- Members: Carole Paleco (RBINS), Patricia Mergen (BGMeise, RMCA), Eva Haeffner (FUB BGBM), Stefanie Vogel (Senckenberg), Peter Warth (SMNS), Joana Solleliet Ferreira (MNHN), Vanessa Demanoff
- EPAG Contact Points (CPs): one (in some cases more) representative per institution for structured communication and database access.

8. Governance and Decision-Making Structure

The governance of EPAG is collaborative, non-binding model, with coordination led by CETAF and supported by core team members. An additional layer of governance was recently introduced via Contact Points – external contacts acting as liaison between EPAG and their institutions.

9. Communication and Collaboration Tools

- CETAF mailing lists for information exchange (separate for EPAG core team and contact points); webinars for more in-depth interactions
- Planned: newsletters or more structured periodic messages
- Calls Database for direct collaboration on funding opportunities.
- EPAG Contact Point List for keeping track of contact points.



10. Stakeholder Engagement (Internal & External)

- **Internally:** ongoing effort to increase structured interaction with CETAF members (via CPs) and other CETAF WGs to better identify needs and opportunities. Challenges of low engagement could be mitigated, notably through members' research topics raised for common projects. Similarly, the WGs joint meeting with the CETAF Executive Committee will be used for capturing specific interests from them to be tackled in EPAG. Better acknowledgement of the scope and responsibilities of the EPAG group as well as the expected contributions of members could be addressed through specific seminars and workshops around critical topics (e.g launching of a EU Framework Programme). This expanded awareness of EPAG activity among CETAF members may attract new team members to the group and increase active participation of institutional representatives thus leading to strengthening EPAG capacities.
- **Externally:** engagement includes reaching out to National Contact Points (NCPs) and potential project partners.

11. Resource Planning – Human, Technical, Financial

Participation is sought recurrently. Specific expertise and knowledge on the functioning of the EU and its funding activity is recommended to complement expertise within the group and escalate capacity. Support from the CETAF IT developer (if available) would be advisable in case of a further development of databases/specific tools are envisaged.

12. Appendices

- Contact email: cetaf_epag_core@cetaf.simplelists.com
- Reference links to shared resources: [EPAG Funding Calls Database](#); [EPAG CP List](#)

