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**Deliverable D.4.1 Training workshops report and training materials**

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## 1. Executive Summary

This document describes the overall aims, results and impact of the project **Innovation Training Workshop** developed and delivered within first 18 months of the project. Also, the document outlines the planning for the remaining 2 workshops foreseen by Task 4.1 of the project work plan.

Document History			
Version	Date	Contributors	Description
1	15/03/2024	S. Jasic, D. Ostroverkhov	Initial draft of the report
2	20/03/2024	S. Jasic, D. Ostroverkhov	Final version



## 2. Introduction

The project activities integrated in the work package 4 “Innovation and Research Management/Administration Capacity Building” have the goal to address the problem identified within the SWOT analysis implemented before the project start, namely – insufficient research and innovation management skills of the staff of MICM hampering the further development of the Institute as a national centre of research excellence in the field of Artificial Intelligence (AI). In order to transform its traditional basic research strengths into the success in “producing” societal/economic values and match in this field the European peers, the project plans to implement the following:

- Develop and deliver 3 face-to-face training workshops on the topics related to Innovation Management aiming to extend the knowledge and skills of the Institute’s staff to the areas allowing to successfully attract competitive funding for application-oriented RTD activities; to transform the new knowledge generated by the research projects into societal/economic values through Technology Transfer; and to ensure the Institute’s sustainability and steady development.
- Develop and deliver at least 2 webinars on innovation tools and practices in Europe in order to complement the knowledge and skills obtained through the workshops with more practice-oriented skills.
- Provide the key research staff of the Institute with the insight into the research administration and management practices of leading European research organizations.
- Last, but not least – practically design and implement a small-scale innovation project in order to (1) pilot the obtained skills in realistic settings and (2) make results obtained through the GAIN research activities available for real-life applications in the Health sector of Georgia.

As for the Deliverable D4.1, it concerns with the training workshops (the first bullet), which represent a foundation for all subsequent activities in WP4.

## 3. Overall Aims

The Innovation training workshop represent the activity building the fundamental knowledge about the Innovation and Technology Transfer on the basis of best European practice. Both European research partners possess extensive practical experiences in this area. Also, the WP4 leader, EXOLAUNCH, is a real example of the successful Innovation and TT activities having an academic origin. These practices lay a foundation for the workshops’ design.

The goal of the workshops’ organization is to enable the cohort of young research leaders trained through the project to complement their scientific competences with the package of knowledge and skills in the field of Innovation, thus allowing them to

- Successfully compete for application-oriented research funding and, through that, to enable the sustainable composition of the MICM’s research project portfolio;



- Consider research results as an economic and societal value and, therefore, convert them into properly identified and protected Intellectual Property;
- Organize effective Technology Transfer (IP transfer) into the society and economy applying various TT approaches, such as spinning-off and/or licensing.

## 4. First GAIN Innovation Training workshop

### 4.1. Venue

The First GAIN Innovation Training workshop was organized on January 16, 2024 in Tbilisi in the conference and meeting room of MICM.

### 4.2. Agenda

<b>GAIN</b> <b>Georgian Artificial Intelligence Networking and Twinning Initiative</b> <b>HORIZON EUROPE - WIDERA-2021-ACCESS-03 (Twinning )</b> <b>Project #101078950</b>			
Innovation training workshop for researchers and managers			
<b>Date:</b>	January 16, 2024		
<b>Start Time:</b>	15:00 PM		
<b>End Time:</b>	18:00 PM		
<b>Location:</b>	<a href="#">Grigol Peradze 4, Tbilisi, Georgia, MICM, Meeting Room, 2nd floor</a>		
Time	Minutes	Topic / Discussion	Comments
14:30 PM	Arrival		
15:00 PM	60	Competitive research proposals writing for Horizon Europe Programme. Part 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Working with info sources</li> <li>• Finding/reading the call</li> <li>• Developing the project concept</li> </ul>
16:00 PM	15	Coffee Break	
16:15 PM	60	Competitive research proposals writing for Horizon Europe Programme. Part 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consortium and proposal writing</li> <li>• Example of AI RTD proposal</li> <li>• Evaluation</li> </ul>
17:15 PM	45	Q&A, Discussion, Networking	All



18:00 PM		Closing	
6:00 PM	180 min	End of Meeting	

### 4.3. Audience

The workshop's audience included 24 participants: tenure-trackers, other research staff involved in the GAIN project, several representatives of the Institute's administration and senior researchers. The list of participants is available on demand at the coordinator.

### 4.4. Content of training

As an important remark, the workshop was organized as an interactive event, where the audience played the role of a dialogue partner and contributor. At several points the presentation was turned into a discussion/brain storm together with the participants. The goal was to replicate in the audience the real processes typical in the situation of a European research proposal design. Also, despite being focused on EU-funded research opportunities, the training was generic enough to apply the obtained knowledge in the context of research funding acquisition within any other funding scheme in the field of application-oriented AI research. The real-life illustrations have been used to a maximal degree.

The workshop content was structured into the following blocks:

- **Introduction and definitions.** Here the participants gained insight into what is a research project and how it distinguishes from any other project-based activities; role and place of a research project proposal; factors defining the competitiveness of a project proposal.
- **Working with information sources.** The EC's Funding and Tenders portal was presented, including the overview of the main relevant features and search engine functionalities. The demonstration included the search for the real Horizon Europe Call for proposals with the topic extremely relevant to the scientific foci of the GAIN's research project (HORIZON-CL4-2023-HUMAN-01-01 Efficient Trustworthy AI – making the best of data).
- **Reading the Call.** The texts of the EC's HORIZON Calls for proposals represent a perfect example of the broad scientific area description. Reading the Call and, actually, understanding what it implies aiming at designing the research idea responding/ being relevant to the Call, requires experience and scientific competences. In this exercise, the audience together with the moderator read the call text and discussed each sentence to have a clear understanding of the meaning and the impact on a potential project idea. In this discussion (brain storm) the participants used examples from the GAIN research activities.
- **Coming up with a project formula.** One of the most complex activities in proposal design is to formulate, in very general and simple terms, the basic project idea and main project outcomes. On that basis the skeleton of the work plan can be further developed. On the basis of the call



text discussion and in the context of the GAIN research project, the participants together with the moderator developed the very general outline of the project sketch (initial one-pager), which can be used for the consortium composition.

- **Consortium and proposal writing processes.** The work plan's skeleton is the basis for defining the typical profiles required for the consortium, which will pursue the designed project. In this exercise the audience defined major mutually complementary profiles needed for a concrete project idea developed earlier, including scientific core and non-scientific functions (e.g. use-case partners, dissemination, management). The proposal writing process was briefly presented to demonstrate how it can contribute to the quality of the final outcome.
- **Example of a quality RTD proposal.** The real proposal addressed the call HORIZON-CL4-2023-HUMAN-01-01 with very high evaluation result (14 points out of 15) was presented. Using this example, the moderator demonstrated to the audience how the project background and justification can be presented, how the project objectives can be made SMART ([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/SMART\\_criteria](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/SMART_criteria)), how to present the project methodology and impacts, other integral parts of the document. At each point, the moderator indicated what makes this part of the text competitive.
- **Evaluation and decision making.** In this block the audience was exposed to the organization of the proposal evaluation process, evaluation criteria and how the evaluation results are communicated to consortia. The example of the real Evaluation Summary Report was presented, the remarks of evaluation experts were analysed, and the decision-making process was explained.

The feedback received from the audience at the end of the workshop during the final Q&A session confirmed a high satisfaction level of participants, their motivation to try EU proposals writing themselves. It was also confirmed that the high degree of illustrations' relevance to the actual research activities the participants are involved in helped them to get a feeling of being a "co-creator", process participant. Briefly, the participants discussed the plans for the future workshops. Special attention was paid to their thematic focus in order to synchronize the innovation capacity building with other activities in the project.

## 4.5. Training materials

The following training materials have been provided by EXO to the coordinator in order to make them available to the audience and future training:

- The integral PP presentation. The presentation includes clickable links to the major information sources, which allowed the swift switching from presenting slides to illustrative activities on the web.





- The official sealed and time-stamped copy of the proposal submitted in response to the call HORIZON-CL4-2023-HUMAN-01-01 (hand-out). The document was used as an illustration and served for proposal text analysis.
- Evaluation Summary Report of the same proposal (hand-out). The document was used as an illustration and served for analysing evaluation experts' feedback.

Due to the large size, the documents are not included into the deliverable, available on demand. The presentation is downloadable from the project website. When it comes to the proposal and ESR related to proposal EM2AI submitted in 2023, these documents are owned by the EM2AI consortium, which prefers not to make them available from the website (although, can be shared in demand under the non-disclosure conditions).

## 5. Plans for the remaining workshops

Within Task 4.1 the consortium will organize 2 more training workshops:

- **In autumn 2024. The tentative topic “Economics of Research”.** Economic models of research organizations in Europe (institutional vs competitive financing, potential revenue streams), project-based internal organization (cases of DFKI and INRIA), personnel management and motivation in research organization, etc. The training will be focused on building research leadership skills of tenure trackers, also the MICM leadership will be invited.
- **In spring 2025. The tentative topic “Spinning-off research results and Innovative business development”.** Examples of successful start-ups in high-tech area (e.g. EXO, ki elements, etc.). The choice of the topic was done on the basis of consultations with the coordinator and discussed with the GAIN research team. The high interest to this topic is explained by the fact that the members of the MICM's research team have already experiences of setting up a start-up company in Georgia. The European experiences in this context can help with achieving even more practically valuable results of the planned pilot innovation project. There is a potential for spinning-off.

## 6. Conclusions

- The first training workshop demonstrated high interest and motivation of the GAIN team to improve the Innovation-related knowledge and skills. The chosen topic was assessed by the trainees as relevant and interesting.
- Real-life relevant illustrations are important to stimulate interest and strengthen the impact of training.
- The skills obtained will be used and further developed through the joint proposal development already in planning at this point.
- The future training activities will utilize the experiences obtained so far (practice-oriented approach, maximal degree of relevance, etc.)