

Publishable executive summary:



Project objectives:

The objective of LifeCompetence is to develop state-of-the-art methods and tools for managing research information and competences, and by implementing these make the research competences in ongoing and future projects in the Life Science and Health priority accessible. The purpose is to leverage the research investments made by the EC by supporting increased collaboration between academia and industry, in particular involving SMEs. This shall in the long term serve to strengthen the European Research Area.

An Internet-based Competence platform is the key deliverable in LifeCompetence. The Competence platform will allow the users to identify research projects, researchers and organisations holding a certain competence. The platform will also offer possibilities to analyse research strengths and networks in European Life Science. This can be used by the European Commission to answer policy related questions or university managers to obtain a better self-view of their own competences, ongoing research projects and collaborations. By allowing universities and regions to analyse their involvement in EC funded research projects there will be an increased transparency. This will make the organisations and regions more successful in finding the correct partners for future research collaborations.

Intentions for use:

The Competence platform can be described as a two-sided coin. The “Public view” allows you to make free text searches or browse through thematic structures to identify projects or researchers holding a certain competence in Life Science. The intention is that this will allow the industry, as well as academia, to quickly identify scientists or projects that may be interesting for a potential collaboration.

The “Reporting view” of the Competence platform offers extensive possibilities for analysis of the research landscape in European Life Science. Examples on questions are:

- With which organisations and researchers do we collaborate in cancer research?
- To what extent do the new member states participate in stem-cell research, and what is their development over time?
- Which actors in academia work the most with industry?
- Which regions are most successful in terms of number of projects?

The possibilities for analysis serve to provide:

1. An improved self view supporting proactive marketing and matchmaking.

2. A more efficient management of the research portfolio and of the research competences.
3. An increased transparency which will make it easier to track the impact of research investments.

Impact:

LifeCompetence will make a significant part of the research competences in European Life Science more accessible. This is expected to stimulate to increased collaboration with these researchers, e.g. from industry.

LifeCompetence will give universities and regions a better self-view of their research competences. This is expected to make them more prone to enter collaborations, proactively market themselves internationally and thereby strengthen European research. Finally, it is expected that LifeCompetence contributes to make EC and university administration more cost efficient, as they no longer need to collect, quality assure and manually handle as much data.

In the long term, these impacts are expected to leverage the investments made by the EC through the framework programmes.

Work performed:

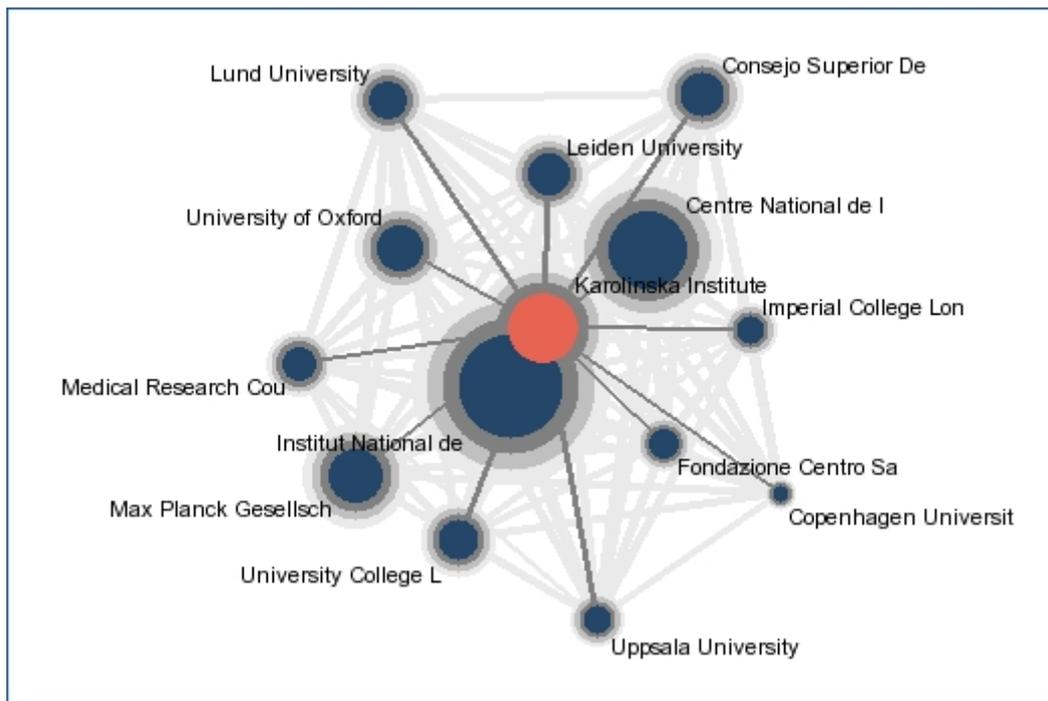
The project has in period 1 focused on developing a prototype for the Competence platform. This has primarily consisted of:

- Defining information sources and processes to use for keeping the Competence platform continuously up-to-date
- Collecting and quality assuring the required data.
- Carrying out interviews with key persons in university management at leading universities in European Life Science.
- Carrying out interviews with coordinators and other Principal Investigators participating in EC funded research projects.
- A best-practise analysis of how research information and competences are handled at European top universities and at leading universities and research organisations in the United States.
- Software development.

Results achieved so far:

The main result so far is the development of the prototype. The prototype is based on data about projects in FP5 and FP6 in the area of life science. The data is organised in such a way that there are links between projects, persons and organisations. This allows the user to make analyses out of different perspectives, e.g. for a field, organisation or region.

The prototype is a valuable tool to collect feed-back from users as well as to test the processes for handling the data. In the next release both the data and the functionality will be updated based on the input from the test users. The prototype can already be used for searches as well as strategic analyses. An example of the use is to see how a certain organisation or region interacts with other organisations. As an example, the analysis of Karolinska Institutet's collaboration with other organisations within FP6 Life Science and Health gives the following network graph:



The network graph shows the collaboration network of Karolinska Institutet based on the FP6 projects they are involved in. The size of the circles indicates the number of projects that organisation has in total in the selected field. The distances to Karolinska Institutet's circle (orange) indicate the number of joint projects. The closer the circles are, the more projects they have in common.

Expected end results:

The final product will be an Internet-based Competence platform for accessing the competences in European Life Science. The vision is that LifeCompetence will be the prime source of information about Life Science projects and research competences in Europe, especially for the European Commission, university and regional managers and industry representatives.

We also envisage that university managers will use LifeCompetence as both an approach and tool to improve their internal information on research competences. This will decrease the burden on research administrators and allow them to be more pro-active when initiating collaborations. LifeCompetence also provides an opportunity for funding bodies to assess the output of their own research investments and to get an overview of the current status of European Life Science.

Future activities:

In the next period we will focus on:

- Technical development to finalise the Competence platform and achieve state-of-the-art.
- Data handling to further improve the data quality and reduce the time-lag between contract signature and making the data accessible in the Competence platform.
- Dissemination and marketing of LifeCompetence and the Competence platform.
- Development of a business plan to ensure the sustainability of LifeCompetence and the Competence platform.

The future development will focus on the issues being identified by the test users. Particular attention will be paid to the needs and wishes from the industry, in particular the SMEs. We will also develop the infrastructure (software and data) needed to make LifeCompetence even more powerful.

A key to success will be to disseminate the results. This will in many cases be made in combination with training sessions for the key target groups to make them get a deeper understanding of the use of LifeCompetence and thereby make them more prone to use the system in the future.

We will also develop a sustainable business model for the LifeCompetence platform. There are several options how to do this and we will perform in-depth analyses on the needs and wishes of the target groups from a business perspective. This includes negotiations with the EC to ensure their continued support.

Dissemination of knowledge:

LifeCompetence will throughout the project disseminate the project results to make the individual outputs known to the target groups (including industry, academia, European Commission, grant offices and multipliers to one of the previous target groups).

The project as such, and its results, will be disseminated to some of the target groups already from the beginning of the project, though more intensively towards the end when substantial results will be at hand. Several tools and/or methodologies are being and will be used for disseminating the knowledge, including:

- Existing marketing channels and networks (e.g. use of the 25 National Biotech Association that are members of EuropaBio)
- Information package, including marketing brochure, project website and PowerPoint presentation
- Periodic electronic newsletter
- Publications in semi-scientific/commercial journals and/or EU-focused journals
- Promotion and demonstration at international life-science related conferences and exhibitions

Contractors involved:

The LifeCompetence Consortium is headed by **Karolinska Institutet** (KI), one of Europe's leading Medical Universities.

AVEDAS AG is a leading provider in Europe of solutions for managing research information and competences.

EuropaBio is the European Association for Bioindustries.

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