

EFBIC Red

The EFBIC Red project has successfully united European and Chinese scientists across half the globe creating networks, new applications and research areas for some of the major global important disease areas with diabetes and infectious diseases in front.

Coordination & Strategic and Scientific Management Board

Assisted by the Strategic and Scientific Management Board (SSMB) the two EFBIC Red Offices has throughout the project ensured the coordination, management and monitoring of the EFBIC Red project and provided the infrastructural services required for the project.

Within coordination the specific objectives have been to:

- plan, manage and coordinate the partner's roles and tasks so as to ensure the achievement of the project objectives
- optimise communication flow with the partners
- oversee that Chinese partners had the needed support for expected performance and support to European partners during events in China

Especially the communication and coordination task has periodically been extremely demanding as basic communication and information dissemination rules very often lacks including different cultural aspects.

The SSMB with equal representation from Europe and China with extensive experience and recognition in their fields of activity performed. In average a little more than half the members have participated in each meeting and according to their predefined role have exercised the different roles to our satisfaction.

EFB has together with CNCBD closely monitored progress and impact of the project and reported to the Scientific and Strategic Management Board during each of its meetings.

Liaison with the European Commission services and China Ministry of Science and Technology; EC & MOST Officials were invited to all meetings.

The SSMB members have been interviewed on their view and experiences with the EFBIC Red project. The summary head lines of the interviews are presented hereafter:

- The SSMB members were satisfied with the level of science from both China and Europe
- Many useful new network contacts in promising new science application areas as well as research areas
- Potential new networks growing out of exchange visits between China and Europe are considered a good source for future conquests in combating the major global diseases
- The support from EFBIC Red partners in FP7 possibilities along with the helpdesk and other support have greatly helped the participating science community in entering into useful future collaboration possibilities.

As usual EFB paid a preparation visit to the venue at the Novo Nordisk headquarter in Copenhagen and met with organizers to go through the program, logistics and

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facilities. This preparation visit was considered very important for the overall success of the program activities.

Fora and workshops

Fora events under the EFBIC Red programme are especially aimed to encourage the participation of Chinese scientists in European Programmes and for the first time for European scientist in Chinese research programmes to plan future EU-China scientific cooperation.

Research Workshops on topics of urgent common interest was organized on subjects chosen by the SSMB in collaboration with the EC and MOST. The thematic areas of urgent interest were discussed and re-evaluated during kick-off and SSMB meetings. However it was agreed repeatedly that the thematic themes were well chosen from the start.

The emphasis in these workshops is put equally on reviewing cutting-edge topical subjects for both Europe and China in Diabetes research and on establishing a joint research strategy for the development of long-term cooperation between Europe and China. Thus EFB was constantly aware of new topics or related areas that should be covered. EFB was core part of the organizing and scientific committee.

The workshops:

- reviewed the current state of knowledge in the relevant science and technology of shared interest and define strategies for the application of this knowledge to selected objectives of common purpose
- monitored, evaluated and discussed future strategic planning of the health research practises of the EU and China

The success of the Information and Partnering Fora as well as Workshops was evaluated by the participants in the event and feed-back forms were used. The 2 organizational concepts can be recommended for future events. Participation was satisfactory.

Exchange visits

A number of exchange visits, in the specific research areas as well as in relation to political scientific agendas, have contributed to new networks within the thematic areas covered by EFBIC Red.

The basic foundation for the work with exchange visits started during the 1st forum in Barcelona and has build on networks and contacts established through the Information and Partnering Fora. Pilot action 1 gathered experience for successful launch of the next calls with promotion done via mailing to multipliers using researchers and SMEs in addition to EFBIC Red website, EC and EFB website.

To facilitate networking, establishment and consolidation of trusting personal relations between scientists in Europe and China, establishment of joint partnerships and consortia for participation in the EU Framework Programmes in relation to obtaining Chinese government grants to the Life Sciences was done.

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The EFBIC Red-actions for reciprocal exchanges and visits, was initiated by EFB and as a "pilot action", focussing on arranging scientific exchange visits between China and Italy and Austria only. Experiences gained with this pilot action were meant to serve to ensure smooth operation of the subsequent calls which were meant to be open for applicants from entire Europe.

A number of exchange visits between Chinese and European universities have taken place. It has been proven difficult to achieve a broader spreading of "European" applications outside Italy and Austria researchers. Although the actions were broadly promoted via EFBIC Red homepage and newsletters, Fora and workshops to thousands of potential targets, as well as the SMEs go Health network, the response outside of EFBIC Red partner countries was low. Judged from personal communications, there is no doubt that an exchange visit scheme as offered by EFBIC Red responds to unmet needs amongst researchers interested in a cooperation with China. Many researchers came to the Fora and Workshops in China and Europe and contributed to new networks.

Our recommendation is that signing up for exchange candidates should already start during the events. Thus more candidates would probably contribute to the success.

Supporting activities

Within the consortium, the SMEs go Health database was agreed as the central tool to offer both profiles of SMEs and research institutes interested in becoming involved in FP7 research projects as well as partner searches of research consortia looking for SME partners.

At each forum undertaken an experienced team from the consortium was available to advice on FP7 opportunities and was able to guide all participants.

EFB/EFBIC Red offices performed information and promotion activities along with information and links about existing collaboration programmes, projects and networks. Further also an important activity was information and links on funding sources and other support schemes for collaboration and exchanges. One of the most powerful tools was the production of EFBIC Red newsletters.

Through the course of EFBIC Red many opportunities for conferences have been identified for the EFBIC red themes in Europe as well as in China. These opportunities have been communicated thoroughly within networks in Europe and China although no direct follow-up on participation has been done.

A helpdesk for information on EU Framework Programme procedures and proposal submission together with practical support for partner search was successful

The use of the Cordis partner database has been promoted during Information Days and on the EFBIC Red website.

The consortium finished work to build a researcher database, containing names etc. of all of Chinese and European contacts that actively participated in EFBIC Red activities

More dissemination activities were undertaken by the consortium:

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1. Dedicated EFBIC Red website activities
2. Contribution to 4 Electronic newsletters
3. Miscellaneous promotion activities

Milestones, deliverables and objectives

Overall the objectives, milestones and deliverables of EFBIC Red were addressed by the partners. Milestones were met and deliverables supported the achievement of the milestones.

The learning curves in the thematic areas have been updated and integrated between China and Europe for the benefit and progress in population disease treatment and future promising new discoveries.

The groundwork for synergies has been established. It's now up to the Life Science networks to use the results in establishing new development platforms and learning curves.

The take-away message is that the project has been a success and greatly contributed to the development of important scientific collaboration areas between Europe and China.