INNOVATION &
EXPLOITATION PLAN

▶ **PRO**FEEDBACK ◀

Action Details

MoU - 052/21
CSO Approval date - 25/05/2021
Start date - 18/10/2021
End date - 17/10/2025
Reference number - CA20112
Full title - PROFEEDBACK PlatfoRm OF policy Evaluation community for improvED EU policies and Better ACKnowledgement
Grant holder institution - HÉTFA Research Institute, Hungary

Description

The Action PROFEEDBACK aims to foster the networking of the policy evaluation community at EU-level, raise awareness on the importance of evaluation policy research and improve its impact on policy-making. The Platform, following a bottom-up and open approach, will gather researchers and professionals from various scientific fields and sectors to present and evaluate theories, topics, tools and methods of policy evaluation. Results of the Europe-wide assessment of good practices will provide direct and high-quality inputs for national and EU bodies responsible for policy evaluation.

Policy evaluation is a key tool in understanding, developing and modernising EU policies, thus there is a growing demand for EU-wide and high quality evaluation services. The main challenge is that currently there is no bottom-up platform for European researchers and professionals working in policy evaluation. They have limited possibilities to discuss common problems, assess country specific practices and share their knowledge in a mutually beneficial and effective way.

COST

This document is based upon work from COST Action PROFEEDBACK, supported by COST (European Cooperation in Science and Technology). COST (European Cooperation in Science and Technology) is a funding agency for research and innovation networks. Our Actions help connect research initiatives across Europe and enable scientists to grow their ideas by sharing them with their peers. This boosts their research, career and innovation.

www.profeedback.eu   www.cost.eu

HÉTFA RESEARCH INSTITUTE

cost
EUROPEAN COOPERATION
IN SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

Funded by
the European Union

1. Introduction

1.1. Deliverable information

DELIVERABLE NAME	Innovation and Exploitation Plan
DELIVERABLE NUMBER	D.3.1.
TARGET DELIVERY DATE (MOU)	Month 6
UPDATE DATE (MOU)	after the 2nd year of the Action by Month 25

1.2. Deliverable baseline

This document describes the Innovation and Exploitation Plan (hereinafter called the Plan) for the COST Action PROFEEDBACK - PlatfoRm OF policy Evaluation community for improvED EU policies and Better ACKnowledgement (hereinafter called the Action).

The Plan drafts the strategy and specific actions for the exploitation of results and innovation methods produced by the Action. It contains the main strategic and operative guide that shall govern the overall innovation and exploitation activities, ensuring that relevant information is shared with appropriate audiences on a timely basis by the most effective means.

The development of the Plan is under the responsibility of the Innovation and Exploitation Manager and the Core Group.

Amendments, comments, and/or suggestions should be sent to profeedback@hetfa.hu.

The Plan will be updated and corrected after the second year of the Action.

2. Action background

2.1. Description of PROFEEDBACK

Policy evaluation is a key tool in understanding, developing and modernising EU policies, thus there is a growing demand for EU-wide and high-quality evaluation services. The aim of the PROFEEDBACK COST Action-funded project that runs between November 2021 and October 2025 is to foster the networking of the policy evaluation community at EU-level, raise awareness on the importance of evaluation policy research and improve its impact on policy-making. The Platform, following a bottom-up and open approach, gathers researchers and professionals from various scientific fields and sectors to present and evaluate theories, topics, tools and methods of policy evaluation. This objective is achieved by the assessment of good practices that provides direct and high-quality inputs for national and EU bodies responsible for policy evaluation.

2.2. Implementation of PROFEEDBACK

Smooth project implementation is ensured by the following management structures:

- Management Committee (MC), responsible for decision-making
- Core Group (CG), responsible for the coordination and management:
    - o Action Chair
    - o Vice-Chair and Grant Holder
    - o WG Leaders and WG Vice-Leaders
    - o Grant Awarding Coordinator
    - o Training School Manager
    - o Science Communication Manager
    - o Innovation and Exploitation Manager

Underpinned by the work of the:

- Working Groups (WGs):
    - o WG1 - Theoretical concept of policy evaluation
    - o WG2 - Quantitative methods and data collection
    - o WG3 - Qualitative and participatory methods
- Task Forces:
    - o Training School Task Force
    - o Science Communication Task Force
    - o Innovation and Exploitation Task Force

3. Innovation and Exploitation Plan

3.1. Innovation – what is it and why is it needed?

Addressing innovation management in collaborative environments, such as the PROFEEDBACK Action, first requires understanding the concept of innovation. In the context of this document, innovation management will be based on the definition of innovation given by the European Commission (1995), which is "the successful production, assimilation and exploitation of novelty in the economic and social spheres". Therefore, innovation finds solutions to various problems on different levels – individual, organisational or country.

Following up on the definition above, innovation management of the Action could be understood as the overall management of all activities related to:

- understanding the challenges and practices in the field of policy evaluation,
- generating new ideas, and
- developing new approaches which respond to the identified needs.

3.2. Exploitation – concept and importance

The term "exploitation" is defined under the EC Research & Innovation Participant Portal Glossary as follows: "The utilisation of results in further research activities other than those covered by the action concerned, or in developing, creating and marketing a product or process, or in creating and providing a service, or in standardisation activities." Exploitation refers to using PROFEEDBACK results during and after the project implementation - for commercial purposes, in further research activities, to improve policies, and/or tackling economic and societal problems - by Action members or other actors.

Each Action member involved in PROFEEDBACK must take measures aiming to ensure the exploitation of their results, either by themselves (e.g. for further research or for commercial or industrial exploitation) or by others (other beneficiaries or third parties) to ensure that the results are used.

In PROFEEDBACK, all members are encouraged concerning exploitation in order to foster and ensure awareness and transfer results for the highest possible impact.

3.3. Aims and objectives of Innovation and Exploitation Plan

The innovation and exploitation plan of PROFEEDBACK will pave the way towards the future exploitation of the activities and results generated considering the necessary character of the deliverables of the project and the target groups. It will be based on thorough analysis and identification of innovative elements of the Action that will lead to breakthroughs in the areas of policy evaluation.

The timeframe of the Plan to be followed and applied by the PROFEEDBACK Action members will be 3 years after the end of the implementation period of the Action. Some partners will take a lead role throughout these years of applying the Plan, nevertheless, for the successful exploitation of the results, the active involvement of all members is required.

The overall aim of the Plan is maximising the impacts created by the Action by facilitating the use of its outputs and findings.

The specific objectives of the Plan are to:
- Present a clear vision of the intended impacts of the Action.
- Outline expected exploitation procedures, plans and strategies, as well as summarise the specific actions related to the exploitation of results.
- Engage different target groups with information adjusted to their needs.
- Maximise the impact of the Action on stakeholders.
- Raise general public awareness of PROFEEDBACK activities and results.
- Engage with policy makers and practitioners in the field of policy evaluation.
- Identify complementary projects/approaches and explore options for synergies and cooperation.

The aims of exploitation activities are to create conditions for sustaining project outcomes after the funding period and supporting the use and benefits from the outcomes during and beyond the project lifetime.

3.4. Exploitable results, target audience and exploitation routes

The first step for developing an Exploitation Plan is to perform a mapping of potential valuable and exploitable results and their potential user groups (Table 1). In addition, identifying possible, most appropriate exploitation routes for the expected key exploitable results corresponding to the nature of the different results and their target users is also key for developing an appropriate Exploitation Plan.

TARGET GROUP	KEY EXPLOITABLE RESULTS
Broader scientific community of policy evaluation with multidisciplinary background	> PROFEEDBooks (D.4.1-8.) > PROFEEDCourses (D.5.1-4.) > PROFEEDBase (D7) > Policy briefs (D.6.1-2.)
Professionals from the business sphere	> PROFEEDCourses (D.5.1-4.) > PROFEEDBase (D7)
Associations dealing with policy evaluation at national and European levels	> PROFEEDBooks (D.4.1-8.) > PROFEEDCourses (D.5.1-4.) > PROFEEDBase (D7)
University and PhD students from various scientific fields	> PROFEEDCourses (D.5.1-4.)
Policy-makers responsible for policy evaluation at national and European level	> Policy briefs (D.6.1-2.)
General Public interested in science and science policy	> PROFEEDBase (D7)

Table 1. Key exploitable results and target groups of PROFEEDBACK

The planned exploitation routes will include:

- Commercialization, identification of market opportunities
- Promotion through social media and other dissemination channels of the Action
- Promotion through events related to the topic of the Action
- Promotion through relevant academic events (conferences and webinars)
- Promotion by the Action's grant beneficiaries (STSM, ITC etc.)

3.5. Action plan

3.5.1. Vision

It is of paramount to have a clear vision of the intended impacts of the Action and plan exploitation accordingly. The Innovation and Exploitation Plan aims to exploit the results generated by the Action by ensuring a smooth transfer to all potential beneficiaries (scientific community, policy makers, businesses, general public) and for tapping into the potential of "valorization" of Action results (either commercially or scientifically) as far as it is possible.

3.5.2. Strategy and specific actions

The strategy for exploitation of Action results will be focused on the identification of PROFEEDBACK results, mapping the target groups and execution of different exploitation activities. The objectives of PROFEEDBACK exploitation strategy are the following:

- Identification of target groups and stakeholders.
- Spreading, as effectively as possible, the Action results among relevant stakeholders on a timely basis.
- Establishing and maintaining mechanisms for effective exploitation of Action results.

The Action results are both tangible and intangible. Tangible results include practical tools such as courses, policy briefs and academic publications. On the other hand, intangible results may consist of skills, knowledge and networking opportunities gained by the Action members.

In order to achieve and ensure maximum impact and high visibility of the Action results, the innovation and exploitation activities will be executed on two levels: 1) key exploitable results and 2) general level (Table 2). This will enable emphasis on specific results and its potential implementation, but also on promotion of Action activities and opening possibilities for collaboration.

▶ PROFEEDBACK ◀

ACTION ITEM DESCRIPTION	DELIVERY DATE
ACTIONS ON THE LEVEL OF KEY EXPLOITABLE RESULTS	
Mapping of key exploitable results (KERs) of the Action	**M25-M48**
Exploration of innovative and commercial potential of each KER	**M25-M48**
Identification of potential user of each KER	**M25-M48**
Direct promotion of KERs to the potential users	**M25-M48**
GENERAL ACTIONS	
Identification of PROFEEDBACK stakeholders (individuals, organisations, networks, projects) on national and international level	**M25**
Establish permanent, regular links with other projects and initiatives to ensure stakeholders' engagement, including European and national stakeholders	**M25-M48**
Identify sustainability opportunities of the Action	**M25-M48**
Activate synergies both at national and European level with already existing initiatives that address one or more of its aspects	**M25-M48**
Identify market opportunities	**M25-M48**
Promotion of Action results through identified exploitation routes (social media, relevant events, newsletters, etc.)	**M3-M48**

Table 2. Actions of the Innovation and Exploitation Plan

The first set of activities will be related to the key exploitable results (KERs) of the Action. It will include its description, exploration of innovative and/or commercial potential and identification of potential users. Each KER will be directed to the potential users (e.g. policy makers, professionals, researchers) using different communication channels. The exploitation will also include the promotion of PROFEEDBACK activities and results in a more general manner – targeting a broad range of stakeholders and potential users of Action results. This activity will cover the identification of relevant stakeholders, establishing links with similar initiatives/projects, exploring sustainability and market opportunities, and presenting results using established exploitation routes.

4. Roles and responsibilities

This section defines the roles and responsibilities related to the innovation and exploitation activities of the Action.

While all network members are encouraged to contribute to the innovation and exploitation of the Action's results in their local and national context, the coordination and proper implementation of these activities is the responsibility of specific Task Forces set up by the network. The main responsibility for the innovation and exploitation of the Action belongs to the Innovation and Exploitation Task Force.

INNOVATION AND EXPLOITATION TASK FORCE	> led by the Innovation and Exploitation Manager > responsible for coordinating the innovation and exploitation activities > responsible for the development of the Innovation and Exploitation Plan and its execution > responsible for facilitating the uptake of Action results and monitoring synergies with other initiatives

5. Additional guidelines

5.1. Open Access

Open Access (OA) refers to making research outcomes available in a digital format, free of charge, and increasingly free of most copyright, licensing restrictions and technical or other barriers to access. These barriers include digital rights management or requirements to register to access research outcomes.

COST encourages Open Access to promote the availability of results published thanks to COST funding. Open Access is a means to boost the worldwide visibility and accessibility of publicly funded European science and technology research. To achieve this goal, COST facilitates Open Access publishing strategies for COST Actions and contributes to their costs, according to COST rules and principles for dissemination activities.

In regard of the above, the PROFEEDBACK Action's Management Committee addresses Open Access in the context of the Action's communication and dissemination strategy. All results and deliverables of PROFEEDBACK are freely available online, without any barriers to access, for the benefit of the research community and society at large. In addition, the Management Committee chooses a repository for archiving the results with the aim to keep them available for long-term.

5.2. Intellectual Property Rights

COST Actions seek to generate breakthrough ideas, concepts and products, involving Intellectual Property Rights (IPRs), helping inventors create value from their ideas, turning inspiration into sustainable business success.

PROFEEDBACK

The PROFEEDBACK network, in accordance with the principles set out in the Code of Practice annexed to the Commission's Recommendation on IP management, is fully aware of the COST framework ensuring appropriate IPR management.
During the PROFEEDBACK Action, participants can seek advice from the Action Chair and the Vice Chair, in addition to seeking support at national and EU levels. They can discuss any issue with the Management Committee, which shall ensure the appropriate coordination of IPRs management.

6. References and related documents
The following documents have been used to set up the present Plan:
- PROFEEDBACK description: https://www.cost.eu/actions/CA20112/
- COST Annotated rules: https://www.cost.eu/uploads/2022/12/COST-094-21-Annotated-Rules-for-COST-Actions-Level-C-V1.3.pdf
- Guidelines for communication, dissemination and exploitation of COST Action results and outcomes: https://www.cost.eu/uploads/2020/08/Guidelines-for-the-communication-dissemination-and-exploitation-of-COST-Actions_final-draft.pdf
- European Commission. (1995). Green Paper on Innovation. Luxembourg: EC: https://europa.eu/documents/comm/green_papers/pdf/com95_688_en.pdf

COST

This document is based upon work from COST Action PROFEEDBACK, supported by COST (European Cooperation in Science and Technology). COST (European Cooperation in Science and Technology) is a funding agency for research and innovation networks. Our Actions help connect research initiatives across Europe and enable scientists to grow their ideas by sharing them with their peers. This boosts their research, career and innovation.

www.profeedback.eu   www.cost.eu

HÉTFA
RESEARCH INSTITUTE

cost
EUROPEAN COOPERATION
IN SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

Funded by
the European Union