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Draft Minutes of the kick-off meeting

COST Action IC0604

Action IC0604: Anatomic Telepathology Network (EURO TELEPATH)
Tuesday, November 6th 2007, Brussels

1. Welcome

The participants of the inaugural meeting of COST Action IC0604 were welcomed by Dr. Stamm, the responsible Science Officer for the Action.
The first part of the meeting was chaired by Dr. Stamm, including the election of a Chairperson for the Action, which was carried out under agenda item 8.

2. Approval of agenda

The draft agenda for the kick-off meeting was adopted, item 7 was presented first as Dr. Ferreira had to leave early (Annex 1).

3. General information on COST mechanism and the Annual Grant Scheme

Dr. Ferreira, COST Head of Science Operations, and Dr. Stamm gave a brief orientation on the COST mechanism presenting the general framework created to promote the scientific and technical co-operation in Europe (Annex 4). Relevant information can be found on the COST website at: http://www.cost.esf.org/

The participants were informed about COST and the current situation in general and the COST Actions in the field of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT).

The Science Officer informed the delegates about the principles and procedures related to the COST Actions and about the possibilities of getting activities funded from the COST budget. Dr. Stamm informed about the reimbursement rules and regulations as well as the process. The following relevant documents can be found at the official COST website:

- Rules and procedures for implementing COST Actions
- Financing of COST activities from the COST budget
- Information Guide for the implementation of Short Term Scientific Missions in the COST Framework

4. Presentation of the delegations

The delegates presented themselves in a “tour de table”. (Annex 2)

5. Status of the Cost Action

CSO Approval: 20/11/2006
Entry into force: 08/05/2007
End of Action: 05/11/2011.
Total number of Signatories at date: 9

6. Agreement on the internal rules of procedure for the Management Committee of the COST Action

The Rules of Procedure for the Management Committee (Annex 3) were discussed and agreed upon.

7. Election of the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Management Committee

Dr. Garcia Rojo and Dr. Gonçalves were unanimously elected respectively Chair and Vice-Chair for the Management Committee of the COST Action.

Dr. Stamm passed the presidency of the meeting to Dr. Garcia.

8. Election of the Grant Holder Institution & 2 Financial Rapporteurs

Grant-holder: Dr. Garcia Rojo proposed FISCAM (Fundación para la Investigación Sanitaria en Castilla-La Mancha) as Grant holder for the Action. He will check with them if this is feasible.

Dr. Della Mea and Dr. Schrader volunteered for the role of Action Financial Rapporteurs.

9. Working plan for the implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding

(Presentation of the Action by the proponent and new Chair – Annex 5)

a. Objectives and working programme
b. Working method, organization, and management (including working groups)
c. Distribution of tasks
d. Time-table
e. Budget

Proponent: Dr. Marcial García Rojo

A general overview of the COST Action IC0604 Memorandum of Understanding is presented below.

9. a. Objectives and working programme

An adequate technological framework for the management of multimedia electronic healthcare records and informatics applied in Anatomic Pathology is needed. Previous European Projects have only covered partial aspects (pathology information systems, three dimension images, digital images). In the last five years, standardization bodies (IHE, DICOM, HL7, CEN) have focused their effort on the Pathology field. COST Action IC0604 can collaborate with other related COST actions, such as 237 (Multimedia Telecommunications Services) or 292 (Semantic multimodal analysis of digital media).

A brief summary of activities of the research groups that were initially included in the proposal was presented, as well as the history of the proposal.

The general objective of the proposal is:

To evaluate and validate - in a networked environment - the common technological framework and communication standards required to access, transmit and manage digital medical records by pathologists and other medical specialties.

The 10 specific objectives (automation, productivity, compression, viewer, DICOM, messages, European scientific leadership, pathology information systems, European teleconsultation, and metasearch engine) are described. These objectives will constitute the working programme of the Action.

A reminder of expected medical, technical and socioeconomic benefits is mentioned.

9. b. Working method, organization, and management (including working groups)

Considering the Action's objectives, the scientific programme was divided into 8 activities:

1. ***Automation procedures*** *in Pathology. Best technology available and under research.*
2. ***Scanning solutions*** *for Pathology microscopic slides.*
3. ***Technological*** *solutions for* ***compression and storage*** *problems with large image files.*
4. ***Virtual slide*** *standard* ***viewer specifications*** *which allow efficient reviewing of pathology images.*
5. ***International standards*** *(DICOM, HL7, SNOMED, CEN) and IHE initiative.*
6. ***Model*** *for pathology and other hospital* ***information systems***
7. ***An European****-scope* ***telepathology network***
8. ***Collection*** *of interesting and typical samples, and clinico-pathological sessions*

As an example, in slide production scanners, IC0404 Action should focus on the elaboration of intelligent scanners, operating jointly with integrated analysis, annotation and search and retrieval multifunctional workstations, and secured storage and networking management resources.

An initial distribution of 4 Working Groups to achieve the scientific programme was presented:

WG1. Users and working models

WG2. Standards in Pathology

WG3. Technological

WG4. Implementation of Telepathology Networks

9. c. Distribution of tasks

Each Working Group will cover a part of the scientific programme. The proposal for this distribution of WG tasks can be summarized in the following table:

4 Working Groups	**Scientific Program (item #)**
1. Users and working models (6 tasks)	Automation / Artificial Intelligence for classification studies (1) Scanning solutions / Clinical eval.(2) Proposal on PIS changes)(6)
2. Standards in Pathology (5 tasks)	DICOM, HL7, IHE, SNOMED, CEN (5)
3. Technological (8 tasks)	Compression and storage/search and retrieval (3) Image viewer / Image analysis (4) Compiling cases (8)
4. Implementation of Telepathology Networks (5 tasks)	Telepathology integration guidelines(7)

The dissemination plan should aim at e-health researchers, IT scientists, standard bodies, pathologist community, and the medical-scientific community in general.

Working Groups tasks can be assigned to different research profiles: ICT, clinical, pathology, and industry. The initial distribution of theses partners is shown below:

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Action kick-off	Clinical	Pathology	ICT	Industry
1. Finland: Tampere University and University of Helsinki	●	●	●	
2. France: INSERM, and Tribvn			●	●
3. Germany: University of Regensburg, Charité Universitätsmedizin Berlin		●	●	●
4. Italy: University of Udine			●	
5. Lithuania: National Centre of Pathology, Kaunas University of Technology		●	●	
6. Poland: Institute of Tuberculosis and Lung Diseases, Warsaw	●	●		
7. Portugal: Hospital Espirito Santo		●		
8. Serbia: University of Belgrade			●	
9. Spain: University of Castilla-La Mancha, Hospital General de Ciudad Real, SESCAM	●	●	●	
10. Switzerland: EPF Lausanne			●	
11. United Kingdom: University of Nottingham		●		

The Action is open to new research groups from other COST countries.

9. d. Time-table

Milestone	Year 1				Year 2				Year 3				Year 4			
	1st Quarter	2nd Quarter	3rd Quarter	4th Quarter	1st Quarter	2nd Quarter	3rd Quarter	4th Quarter	1st Quarter	2nd Quarter	3rd Quarter	4th Quarter	1st Quarter	2nd Quarter	3rd Quarter	4th Quarter
MC Meetings	X		X		X	X			X		X		X		X	
WG1 Meetings	X		X		X	X			X		X		X		X	
WG2 Meetings	X		X		X	X			X		X		X		X	
WG3 Meetings	X		X		X	X			X		X		X		X	
WG4 Meetings	X		X		X	X			X		X		X		X	
Workshops			X								X					
Telep.Congress						X										
STMS		X											X			
Final Conf.															X	
Reports				R				R					R			Final
Publications						X								X		
Website	X X X	X X X	X X X	X X X	X X X	X X X	X X X	X X X	X X X	X X X	X X X	X X X	X X X	X X X	X X X	X X X
TrainingSchool										X						

9. e. Budget

On average, financial support of some € 90.000 p.a. as grant for up to 4 years can be expected.

With this expected budget, the COST IC0604 Action would be able to finance the activities of MCs, WGs, including the following items:

- travel expenses and daily allowances for delegates to meetings;
- workshops/conferences;
- short term scientific missions (STSMs) - inter-laboratory exchanges;
- training schools
- Action Grants
- publications and dissemination;
- high level research conferences organised jointly with ESF;
- studies, reviews, assessments, strategic activities
- special provision for researchers from "near neighbours" countries.

For instance, in meetings, MC should propose a budget allocation. The contribution should not exceed € 10,000 for a meeting (if request is up to € 3,000, it will be granted as fixed grant).

The printing of proceedings is financed separately from organization costs.

Eligible participants were described.

Short Term Scientific Missions (STSM) and training school are important tools. The grant should normally cover only travel and subsistence (up to 2500 €).

For reports and publications, there are two options: a) External Publisher (choose 2 different publishers), and b) OPOCE (The European Union's publisher). Final publication can be supported by COST Office. For other publications, MC must apply to COST Office to ask if they can be supported.

10. Open technical discussion

Action web site: The Action Chair announced the Action web site: http://www.conganat.org/eurotelepath/

Dr. Thomas Schrader proposed that apart from Action website and e-mail messages, a web forum should be created to collect all messages related to IC0604 Action.

Action secretary: Nomination of Chair and Vice-Chair was done during this kick-off meeting, but still the MC still has to decide on Action Secretariat and Grant Holder. The secretary of the Action can help in the coordination of activities, producing MC meeting minutes, and control of the WGs meetings minutes. In a next step, a secretary for the Action should be selected.

Working Groups: A very active debate was started on the need to change the titles of Working Groups before we could distribute specific tasks. This change can be necessary not only for a better distribution of tasks, but also to have a better impact in the research community that can be invited to participate in their activities.

Prof. Michael Ansorge proposed to open a discussion on Working Groups classification before the distribution of tasks is agreed on or a steering committee for each working group is designated.

Dr. Bernd Blobel stated that, as modelling is an essential part of global IT project, the initial WG1 title "Users and working models" can be a bit confusing. Interoperability, including business understanding, terminology and policies are tasks that should be included.

Mr. Jacques Klossa stressed the need of taking out the practicace of technology in Pathology, but the original proposal of titles could not reflect the research in new intelligent scanners.

Dr. Thomas Schrader's was in favour of creating a transversal Working Group that could deal, for instance, with automation.

Prof. Mohammad Ilya's contribution reinforced the need for research in image analysis.

One of the proposals for WG classification is:

WG1. Automation (transversal)

WG2. Standards in Pathology

WG3. Image Analysis

WG4. Scanning

The different contributions of MC members related to Working Group classification were related to terms like: technical, users, standards, workflows, integration models, distribution of information, interpretation of images, implementation, image analysis/interpretation of data.

Since there was not a complete agreement in WG classification, and some of the delegates proposed the creation of a new WG, the MC decided to continue this discussion by email and a web forum.

Work and budget plan for 2008: STMS: This is considered a very important tool in the Action activities. The work and budget plan for 2008 should allocate resources for this activity. Also, workshops on IHE, HL7 and DICOM were commented.

The number of experts that can be invited to each Working Group is about 10.

Experts from non-COST countries that want to participate in the COST Action must follow a pre-defined procedure in order to become non-COST institutions in this Action (see Template in Annex 6). Special agreements exist with relation to near-neighbour countries, as well as with New Zealand and Australia.

11. Place and Date of next meeting

The MC agreed that the next MC and WG meeting will take place in Madrid, in the week from January 28th to February 2nd. A tentative proposal was January 31st and February 1st, and another possibility was February 1st and 2nd.

12. Closing

Dr. Garcia Rojo concluded the meeting by thanking the participants and the ICT team.