



*TWINNING TO ENABLE BALTIC SEA
MARITIME TRANSPORT MEET FIT-FOR-55
REGULATIONS IN DECARBONIZATION*



Best Practices in EU Project Management

Workshop on 19.11.2025

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Introduction



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Introduction

Kaisa Vehmas

- Senior EU Project Specialist
- Project Manager (IPMA-C)
- Researcher (2002–2023)
- Research support and management (2023–)

LinkedIn:



Camilla Halinoja

- Senior EU Project Specialist
- Project Manager (IPMA-C)
- Research support and management (2019–)



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VTT – beyond the obvious

Established in
1942

2,390
employees

32%
a doctorate or a
licentiate's degree

296 M€
operating
income

No. 1

Recipient of EU
R&D funding in
Finland

353

Horizon Europe
projects funded

70+

Coordinated HE
projects

260+

HE funded partner
projects



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Interactive questions

1. How many ongoing EU projects you have / coordinate in TalTech?



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VTT's support for EU projects



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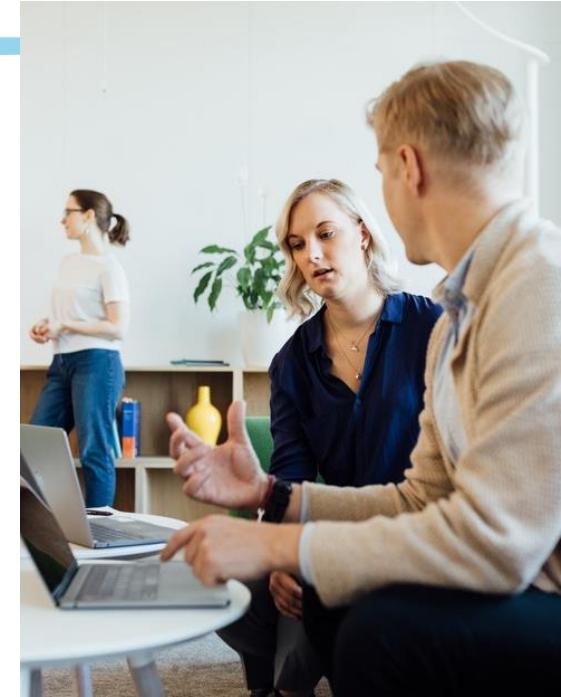
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In-house support for EU projects

Organisation-wide assistance, complemented by project-specific tailored support

- EU pre- and **post-award support**
- EU project finance
- Legal support
- Business development
- IPR management
- Other (e.g., data management, ethics, EU-level networking & influencing, Business Intelligence)



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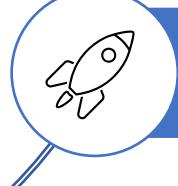
VTT's post-award support – main elements



Tailored support for individual projects



Organisation-wide EU capacity building programme



Support for exploitation of research results



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Tailored support for individual projects



- After positive funding decision, support is provided by Specialists
- Tailored support for coordinated projects based on their needs
- At the moment, ~15-20 projects supported by each Specialist
- Grant Agreement & Consortium Agreement preparation
- Kick-off and other meeting preparations
- Advisory Board
- Progress monitoring and project implementation
- Data management
- Deliverable preparation process, admin deliverables, deliverable reviews
- Amendments
- Reporting and review
- Exploitation of results
- Project closing



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Interactive questions

2. How does your project support services been structured for EU projects?
3. Which types of support (financial, legal, IPR, business development, etc.) are most valuable to your project teams?
4. Are there areas where you feel support is lacking?



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Organisation-wide EU capacity building programme

- Training Offer
- Tools & Templates Library
- Coordinators' Forum

EU Training Offer

Yearly training calendar designed to provide necessary skills and knowledge to manage projects effectively

- Expert presenters
- Topics covering various phases of project implementation
- Time for questions and discussion
- Sessions recorded and shared



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Interactive questions

5. Do you offer training activities for EU project coordinators or other researchers?
6. Are there topics or skills you wish were covered more thoroughly in your training sessions?



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Tools & Templates Library

Tailored set of checklists, guidelines and templates covering the whole project lifecycle

- Prepared and updated by the VTT in-house experts
- Accessible on VTT's file repository
- Covering all phases of project implementation (e.g. GAP, kick-off, deliverables, reporting, amendments, project closing)



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Interactive questions

7. Do you have similar tools & templates library available for EU projects?
8. If so, how do you use it? If not, what kind of templates or checklists would be most helpful for you?



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Coordinators' Forum

A community for coordinators to share experiences, challenges, and best practices

- Monthly online / hybrid meetings
- Different topics each time
- Invited speakers & peer-presentations
- Main focus on discussions
- File repository and online chat platform



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Interactive questions

9. Is there a forum or community at TalTech where coordinators can share experiences and challenges? How effective is it?
10. Would you find value in regular peer meetings or a coordinators' forum as described in the VTT model?



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Our experiences



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Our experience on different actions

- EU training offer
 - Improving skills and knowledge to manage projects effectively
 - Sharing information about EU funding requirements
 - Learning by leveraging best practices and individual experiences
- Tools and templates library
 - Saving time from both support staff and project coordinators
 - Promoting consistency and efficiency across different projects
- Coordinators' forum
 - Fostering a supportive community
 - Facilitating peer learning
 - Sharing best practices and challenges

→ Making it easier for the first time coordinators to take that role

→ Enable the more experienced coordinators to work efficiently

→ High quality project management



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Challenges

- Post-award support covers a broad range of topics
- Allocating resources efficiently to support multiple projects simultaneously can be challenging
- Ensuring that all partners have a clear understanding of grant requirements, compliance, and reporting obligations is essential for successful post-award management
- EU Project Officers might have different expectations and requirements



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Interactive questions

11. What are the biggest challenges you face in managing EU projects at TalTech?
12. How do you share best practices and lessons learned within your organization?



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Development of the post-award support

- Continuous development of the post-award support since January 2023
 - Feedback from the coordinators
 - New tools and templates
 - Ways of working
- Communication is the key in tailored support
 - Case-by-case agreements
- Increased visibility
 - Internally at VTT but also with national and international stakeholders
- New measures for supporting exploitation (=further utilisation) of results are being developed
 - Workshops, templates, guidelines



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Interactive questions

13. What new tools, templates, or support services would you like to see developed at TalTech?
14. If you could change one thing about how EU projects are managed or supported at TalTech, what would it be?
15. What advice would you give to a new project coordinator starting at TalTech?



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Key takeaways

- Our VTT post-award support for EU projects seems to work well
- Continuous development is needed to meet the requirements of the European Commission and improve our project management skills and practices

Last assignment – please answer to this feedback form
<https://forms.office.com/e/Nm5Qw7HiKd>



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Thank you!

Any questions?

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