Co-UDlabs
2nd call for Transnational Access proposals

JULY 3 – OCTOBER 13, 2023

User selection procedure

The facility providers partners of Co-UDlabs agreed on a common user selection procedure to perform the evaluation and selection of TA proposals submitted for the 2nd call. This procedure will be carried out by an External Evaluation Panel (EEP), composed of independent experts from the research and practice fields covered by the research facilities of Co-UDlabs. Independent experts will not evaluate proposals in which they have a conflict of interest with any of the user-group members, nor proposals that compete for a slot at the same facility.

All proposals will be evaluated according to two main dimensions: a) the proposal's **feasibility and eligibility** for the facility of their choice; and b) **excellence, impact, and potential** of the proposal's contents and performance.

Feasibility and eligibility

Before proposals are ranked, they must meet two essential selection criteria, which are assessed by facility providers: a) the user group must be eligible according to EU rules; and b) the project must be practically feasible within the access period timeline and calendar. If one of these conditions is not met, the proposal will not be valued by the EEP and will be rejected.

Eligibility means that a user group must satisfy the following conditions:

- **It is possible to apply from all over the world**, but user groups where all or most users work in third countries (defined as not EU or Associated country – see Annex I) can be supported as far as the cumulative access provided to them is below 20% of the total amount of days of access provided under the grant.
- The total number of user group members from Co-UDlabs partners may not exceed 1/3 of the total number of members in the user group.
- Both the **user group leader and the majority of the user group members must be settled in a country other than the country where the facility is located**.
- Only user groups that are allowed to disseminate the results they have generated under the action may benefit from the access under the grant agreement. Exceptions to this condition is foreseen when users work for SMEs.
- **The user group members should normally not have access to a similar facility** in their working countries.

Feasibility is defined as technical feasibility: a) the facility setup and equipment should be suitable for the proposed research activities; b) the workplan and requirements of the proposal must be compatible with the facility providers' logistics and time availability.

Evaluation and reporting

EEP members will be responsible for the independent evaluation of access proposals according to the following criteria:

- **Confirmation of Feasibility and Eligibility** (yes/no)
- **Excellence of the proposal** (weak: 0 – outstanding: 10)
- **Impact** (weak: 0 – outstanding: 5)
- **Potential for academic or industrial innovation** (weak: 0 – outstanding: 5).

The **final score** of the proposal will be the **sum of the scores obtained in the three assessment criteria**.

In the evaluation phase, in order to maximise the impact of Transnational Access and urban drainage community-building, if two proposals obtain the same score, the **number of new users** (defined as those who have not been granted in previous Co-UDlabs Transnational Access calls and those who have not already had access to the requested facility beyond the scope of the project) and the **gender diversity** of the user group will determine the selection. Institutional **diversity, multi-nationality, and interdisciplinarity** in the composition of user groups will also be **valued positively**.

The user groups applying for Transnational Access for research facilities within the same scope will be selected — if possible — in a single EEP session. **All institutions** whose research facilities have received at least one TA proposal **will be represented in the EEP session**: they will be tasked with advising the EEP on the **technical feasibility and logistics** of submitted proposals. The EEP reserves the right to reject proposals that it considers to be of insufficient scientific and/or technical added value or quality to be eligible for Transnational Access.

The **user-group leaders of awarded proposals** will be informed of the outcome and re-directed to the facility providers to coordinate their TA and negotiate and **sign the User-Facility Agreement (UFA)**, which officially marks the beginning of the TA collaboration.

Non-selected applicants will be informed by e-mail, alongside a **summary of the evaluation** and comments by the EEP and their final scores. Where appropriate, the report may also include **recommendations and suggestions to improve and re-submit** a new proposal for consideration of the EEP and the facility providers. Specific proposals may be recommended re-submission at a **potential extraordinary call**, which Co-UDlabs will take into consideration for **late 2024**.

Co-UDlabs coordinators will also draft a summary report of the evaluation process, annexed to the detailed evaluation of all assessed proposals. The report will be shared with and approved by the EEP chair and the Co-UDlabs Steering Committee. The report will be officially stored as part of Co-UDlabs' Project Management tasks and requirements.

Annex I: Selection, Ranking, and Feedback form

The following Selection, Ranking, and Feedback form is applied:

Co-UDlabs COLLABORATIVE URBAN DRAINAGE RESEARCH LABS COMMUNITIES	**Project title:**	
	User group leader:	
	Research facility:	

To be completed by facility providers (before distributing this form to EEP members):		
1	User group is eligible, and project is feasible and fits within the logistics and dates of availability of the facility provider	Y/N
Remarks:		
2	Conformity with objectives of the EU	
Representation of non-academic sector		Y/N
Number of institutions in user group		
Number of work countries in user group		
Number of female users in user group		
Number of first time[1] users in user group		
Remarks:		
3	The days of access required for the project are suitable	Y/N
Remarks, suggestions to adapt the dates and/or the number of required access days, etc.		
To be completed by EEP members:		
4	Excellence of the proposal	0-10
- Effectiveness of the research approach and fit to Co-UDlabs. - Quality and novelty in the field of urban drainage. - Composition and competence of the user group.		
Remarks:		

[1] New users are defined as those who have not been granted in previous Co-UDlabs Transnational access call and those who have not already had access to the requested facility beyond the scope of the project.

5	Impact of the expected results	0-5
- Project publication and data storage plan. - Relevance of the expected datasets and publications.		
Remarks:		
6	Potential for academic or industrial innovation	0-5
- Potential end-user applications. - Further development feasibility outside the facility.		
Remarks:		
7	**Final score (4+5+6)**	**0-20**
8	**Does the EEP consider the proposal to be of sufficient scientific and/or technical quality to be granted?**	**Y/N**

When appropriate, this form will be sent to non-granted user groups as part of the feedback for the improvement of their proposals for the second call.

Co-UDlabs

COLLABORATIVE URBAN DRAINAGE
RESEARCH LABS COMMUNITIES

This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement N°101008626